

# Westside Neighborhood Association



## The Westsider

A Quarterly Publication for Lansing, Michigan's Westside Neighborhood

### 2012 Board Members & Responsibilities

**Danielle Casavant** – President,  
Fiesta & Yard Sale

**Cassandra Nelson** - Vice Presi-  
dent & Grants

**Joshua Boehme** - Treasurer

**John Stratton** - Secretary

**Dan Boutell** - Newsletter Editor

**Cathy Bacile Cunningham** - Voter  
Education/Civic Engagement

**Mark Harvey** – Westside History  
Project

**Keith Kris** - Communications

**Sara McCormick** - Summer Quar-  
terly Event

**Jackie Payne** - Crime and Safety

**Paul Pratt** – Scholarships & GM  
Liaison

**John Putnam** – Silent Auction

**Mike Schury** - Neighborhood Im-  
provement and Community Center  
Liaison

**Randy Watkins**

**TBD** - Annual Meeting

To contact the board, email  
**board@wnalansing.com** or  
call **517-618-WNA1(9621)**  
and leave a message. To  
learn more about the work of  
these committees visit our  
website: **http://**  
**wnalansing.com/?p=736**  
Committee chairs are al-  
ways looking for volunteers  
to help!

## Thank You LNC!

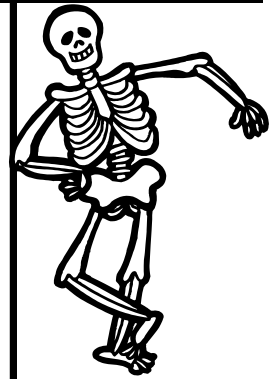
Some people have commented that the WNA Newsletter looks different this year. Most comments have been positive.

The WNA would like to thank the Lansing Neighbor-  
hood Council for their help this year.

In the past, the Newsletter was one of the biggest expens-  
es for the WNA. So much so, that there were talks of dis-  
continuing it or limiting delivery due to the cost. Many  
people were opposed to this so, we sought other options.

The LNC graciously offered to print our newsletters for  
free and only charge us for postage. This has resulted in  
huge savings! The newsletter has gone from being one of  
the most expensive endeavors, to one of the cheapest.

Thank You to the LNC for helping to save the WNA  
Newsletter!



Ready for  
Halloween?



“Like” us on  
Facebook!

## Follow the WNA

The WNA tries to connect with everyone in  
our neighborhood. There are so many things  
going on. Be sure to check out our website at  
**www.wnalansing.com**. You can also “like” the  
Westside Neighborhood Association on Face-  
book. Be sure to check it out!

Access to the WNA Website



## ***A Word from Our County Commissioners***

By Rebecca Bahar-Cook, and Andy Schor

Often when we meet people we are asked, “What does a County Commissioner do?” Our aim with this piece is to try to answer that question, as well as tell you a little bit about ourselves.

Andy Schor has been on the Ingham County Board of Commissioners for 10 years; Rebecca Bahar-Cook has been a member of the Commission since 2005. We currently each represent portions Lansing: Rebecca represents the Westside Neighborhood Association and Andy represents the Sycamore Park and Forest View neighborhoods, among other areas south of I-496. We can all say that we have learned a tremendous amount about how county government helps residents of our districts! Ingham County plays a dynamic, active role in enacting policies to serve the community represented, and we are humbled by your trust in what we find a rewarding undertaking.

Andy will not be running again for re-election. Instead, he is running for the open State Representative seat that term-limited Representative Joan Bauer will vacate as she wraps up her final year in the Michigan House. Rebecca is running for her fourth term on the County Commission and will be one of the senior and experienced members. We wanted to share our reflections on how we have served you as County Commissioners in order to help articulate the ways that the role has prepared us for each of our future endeavors.

As many residents are aware, the Ingham County Board of Commissioners is the governing body for Ingham County. The sixteen members of the board (which will be reduced to fourteen starting in 2013) are tasked with exercising legislative and administrative functions on behalf of the county. We work year-round to determine the type and level of services Ingham County provides to its residents, oversee the implementation of those services, adopt a county budget, and equalize property values. We also make appointments to over forty different advisory boards and commissions. The full Board of Commissioners meet monthly, but various committees meet throughout the week to tackle issues facing our community.

The County Board consists of several committees, including: Finance; Law Enforcement; County Services; Human Services; and Judiciary. Andy has chaired four of these committees and also served as Vice Chair of the Board. Rebecca has served on Human Services, and currently serves on Finance and Judiciary.

As Chair of the Finance Committee, Andy has proven to be cautious with how we spend tax dollars at the county level. Last year, he was able to lead efforts to take a budget in deficit and balance it without service cuts for Ingham County residents, and managed to put police back on the streets for the protection of the community. He has also taken up the mantle of creating tax fairness for Lansing residents during tough economic times for the area, leading efforts to have the rural areas of Ingham County fund their own police patrols instead of having Lansing and Lansing Township subsidize these efforts.

In addition to his work on the Finance Committee, he was able to successfully pass a county smoke-free policy before the Legislature passed Michigan’s state-wide smoking ban, helping to create a healthier atmosphere for area workers and residents. Additionally, he passed a policy requiring the Ingham County Health Department to aggressively enforce the law when other counties refused to do so. He also fought against measures to eliminate funding for Hawk Island Park. His advocacy ensured that funding for the park—a resource very important to Lansing’s quality of life—was protected.

Rebecca has been a leader on juvenile justice issues and was a key partner in opening up the Ingham Academy – an alternative day school for adjudicated youth allowing them to get a high school diploma. Rebecca, on her first year on the board, coordinated the efforts between the City of Lansing and Ingham County to take over the operations of Potter Park Zoo. Thank you, to many of you reading this article, for your support of both county mileages for these programs.

Continued on page 7

## Share your Westside News!

### Advertise your Westside Business!

Deadlines for article and ads are February 28, May 31, August 31, & November 30 of each year. The newsletter is delivered to about 2,000 addresses in the Westside Neighborhood. Articles for upcoming events should refer to dates at least one month after the submission deadline.

The Westsider also welcomes ads from your business!

Email for more information [westsider@wnalansing.com](mailto:westsider@wnalansing.com).

Per issue advertising rates are:

- ◆ Eighth-page = \$40 (2.5" h x 3.5" w)
- ◆ Quarter-page = \$60 (5" h x 3.5" w)
- ◆ Half-page = \$100 (5" h x 7.5" w)

There is a 25% discount for purchasing identical ads in four consecutive newsletters with full payment due upon first ad placement.

Sat, Sept 29, 9:30 am – 1:30 pm

Not One More Life Asthma Screening and Education

Partnership between Mid-Michigan Asthma Coalition and North Westminster Presbyterian

743 North MLK, Lansing MI 48915

NOML is an information and screening event designed to identify and assist individuals at risk for asthma, especially uncontrolled asthma that might be life-threatening. In Ingham County, our childhood asthma hospitalization rate is 36% -- second highest in Michigan and double the state rate of 18%. The event includes presentations, screenings, snacks, prizes, displays and valuable one-on-one consultations with physicians and nurses who are certified asthma care specialists. It takes approximately one hour to visit all of the stations at the event. Full details here:

<http://tinyurl.com/asthma2012>

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517-485-3054 [mike@mikevasas.com](mailto:mike@mikevasas.com)

For the Experience  
Lansing Needs,  
Vote November 6th!



Democrat for State Representative

[www.andyschor.com](http://www.andyschor.com)

## Westside Neighborhood Home Tour!

Back by Popular Demand:

The 2012 Westside Home Tour is scheduled for Sunday, October 7, and will take place from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Come explore some of the most historical and picturesque homes in Lansing and get inspired with unique ideas for interior décor and stunning fall landscape!

Proceeds from the Tour benefit the Westside Neighborhood Association scholarship fund and Advent House Ministries, a non-profit organization that creates a community of hope for those struggling with poverty or homelessness in the Lansing area.

Tickets for this event are \$15/each and can be purchased at the following locations:

Advent House Ministries (743 N. MLK Jr. Boulevard, Lansing, MI 48915)

Biggby at the Triangle (2002 W. Saginaw, Lansing, MI 48915)

The Mole Hole (4756 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI 48864)

Tickets can also be purchased on-line at the WNA website or on the event day, October 7th, at the former Fire Station #7 (corner of Jenison and W. Saginaw).

For more information, please contact Advent House Ministries at 517-485-4722.

If you are interested in putting your home on display for this Tour, please contact Jennifer Sweet  
at  
517-323-8438.

## ***CRIME! What You Can Do?***

There has been an increase in criminal activity in our neighborhood over the past year. Here are a few things you can do to protect yourself and your home.

- 1) Lock Your Doors and windows. Although this seems like a no-brainer, if a door is unlocked, it's an easy way for criminals to access your home. Make sure your doors and windows are locked, even if you are only going to be gone for a few minutes.
- 2) Outside Lights: Leave them on, front and back door, and side door if possible. Consider installing motion activated lights for further security. Install LED lights in place of incandescent. The brilliance is quite noticeable.
- 3) Become involved in your Neighborhood Watch. This is a good way to get to know your neighbors and also know what's going on in your neighborhood.
- 4) Report Suspicious Activity! If it looks suspicious, it probably is! Don't wait until it's too late. Stay in touch with your neighbors and tell them when you are going on vacation. Do the same for them in return.
- 5) If you notice that your home has been broken into, call 9-1-1 right away. Stay on the phone with them and do not enter your home. Wait for a police presence to arrive. Stay with a neighbor, if possible.
- 6) Keep valuables locked up. Credit card information, bank balances, anything that could potentially be stolen and used to rob you even further.
- 7) Contact your home insurance agent to make sure you have the best coverage possible in case of theft or damage to your home. Keep receipts for valuable items in a safe place.

Remember, it's just stuff. All of it can be replaced. You and your family can't. Be safe.



## Eastside Holding Candidates Night in October

What: Candidates Night 2012

When: Wednesday, Oct. 3, starting at 6 p.m.

Where: Room 213, Foster Community Center, 120 N. Foster

With so many races on the ballot in November, it's important to hear from the candidates themselves about what they will do to serve Lansing and Ingham County. That's why Westside Neighborhood residents are invited to attend the Eastside Neighborhood Organization's Candidates Night on Wednesday, Oct. 3, at Foster Community Center.

The event will feature candidates who are running for the following offices:

68th District in the Michigan House of Representatives

30th Circuit Court Judge

Ingham County Register of Deeds

Ingham County Clerk

Ingham County Commissioner Districts 2, 4, 5 and 10

The event will kick off at 6 p.m. on Oct. 3 with a Meet and Greet to give residents the chance to talk one-on-one with the candidates. A moderated Q&A session will begin at 6:30 p.m. Residents are encouraged to submit questions for the candidates in advance by emailing them to [abcneighborhood@sbcglobal.net](mailto:abcneighborhood@sbcglobal.net). Event organizers also will try to have pro/con literature available for any proposals or millages that will appear on the November ballot. Light refreshments will be served. Any questions about the event can be directed to Denise Kelley, (517) 484-9109 or [abcneighborhood@sbcglobal.net](mailto:abcneighborhood@sbcglobal.net). We hope to see you there!

### Thank you EC3!

On August 26th Lis of EC3 played host to the Westside neighbors for the summer picnic. Neighbors were given access to the lovely playground and play structures as well as an open field play area. It was a warm but gorgeous Sunday afternoon as families and neighbors gathered to enjoy snacks, refreshments and each other's company. Many thanks to Lis and EC3 and the neighbors that were able to come out for the Westside summer picnic. Hope to see you all at the next neighborhood event!! Good-bye Summer!

Sara McCormick

### Letts Community Center Pavilion Now has Grills!

Using grant money, the Westside Neighborhood Association purchased and installed two new permanent park-style grills near the pavilion north of the Letts Community Center (1220 Kalamazoo). Let the fall grilling commence!



## FIX THAT DOG/CAT

You might like to know about a local non-profit organization that is helping pets, pet-owners, and cat-lovers. Voiceless – Michigan has a grant to spay/neuter dogs and cats at a very low cost for owners who cannot afford the surgery. They also have a grant to spay/neuter feral (stray) cats. Starting in September, Voiceless-MI will have a Fix-a-Bull for free spay/neuter for any pit bull/bully breed/pit mix dogs.

Voiceless-MI is in partnership with the new Capital Area Humane Society spay/neuter clinic located at 5919 S. Cedar Street in Lansing. The sole purpose of this clinic is to reduce pet overpopulation by making spay/neuter available to every pet owner. Licensed veterinarians perform the surgeries.

What do you need to do to qualify for the greatly reduced cost? If you are a Michigan resident, at least 18yrs old, low income, cannot afford the surgery without financial assistance and can get your pet to the CAHS clinic, then you qualify. Complete the online form at [www.voiceless-mi.org/neuter](http://www.voiceless-mi.org/neuter) and you will be contacted by a Voiceless-MI representative within 4 working days. You can also call Voiceless-MI at (517) 993-8600 to be mailed a paper application.

Help feral cats get fixed! Voiceless-MI offers free spay/neuter, rabies vaccination, and free live trap use for those that want to participate. You catch the kitty and take it to the CAHS clinic with a printed voucher for payment by Voiceless-MI. The organization offers support and advice to help out, and there's no cost to you. By fixing stray cats you can help reduce the number of homeless cats and kittens.



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## County Commissioners Continued

Continued from page 2

Andy was a founding member, and Rebecca serves as a current member, of the Ingham County Land Bank. This has been a tool to allow for rehabilitation of housing and foreclosed properties in the area. While many have questions about the Land Bank and we try to address these concerns, the Land Bank has saved numerous properties from foreclosure and turned them into beautiful homes that are now occupied and bringing value back up in Lansing's neighborhoods. These rehabilitation efforts have also helped to create a number of jobs for area residents.

Andy is also a former board member of the South Lansing Community Development Association, which works on economic development for South Lansing. Andy is also a board member of the Tri-County Office on Aging, where he advocates for services like Meals on Wheels that so many of our seniors depend on. Finally, Andy helps to create small business jobs as a member of the Smartzone Board, which oversees a number of incubators and entrepreneurial activities in Lansing and East Lansing. As a member of the board, he works with other community leaders to create opportunities for entrepreneurs and small businesses, helping to spur job growth in our region. In this capacity, he has also assisted many entrepreneurs in creating jobs through the Technology Innovation Center and helping to create the Hatch.

Rebecca is the current Chair of the Tri-County Office on Aging, sits on the board of the Women's Commission and the local Michigan Works! board that helps unemployed workers retrain themselves and find good jobs. She also sits on the Saginaw Corridor Improvement Authority working with local business and neighborhoods to make our busy streets safe and pedestrian and bike friendly.

County Commissioners are also very involved in neighborhood activities. Andy is an active member of the Sycamore Park Neighborhood Watch, which is the neighborhood organization that serves his family (Andy, his wife Erin, and their two children—Ryan (8) and Hannah (6)). He is also an active participant in the Old Everett, Forest View, and Clifford Park Neighborhood Associations, and is a member of the Mt. Hope Elementary School Parent Teacher Student Association (PTA), where his children have attended school.

Rebecca's first experience in local government was as board member for the Westside Neighborhood Association. She has also been active with the Old Town Business Association and has worked professionally with the Allen Neighborhood Association assisting them with their fundraising efforts. Additionally, Rebecca helps raise money for the Greater Lansing Food Bank, The Children's Trust Fund (to prevent child abuse) and the Volunteers of America. Rebecca has a strong commitment to lending a helping hand when needed. She is also a member of Shaarey Zedek's Sisterhood and Religious School boards. She lives with her husband, Todd and children Benjamin (12) and Sara (9).

This extra service also ensures countless opportunities to interact and work closely with area residents on a regular basis, which helps keep us informed and up to speed on the challenges and issues facing the community.

Our record of results as Ingham County Commissioners, and strong involvement in activities important to our community, have helped shape us into leaders who are willing to confront tough issues, unite individuals in providing solutions to those issues, and advocate for bold, creative measures aimed at helping Lansing, Lansing Township, and our state thrive.

Andy is energized about advocating for our community in a new capacity as our next State Representative and would love to hear from you about what issues you believe are important for Lansing and Lansing Township. You can email him at [andy.schor@gmail.com](mailto:andy.schor@gmail.com), call his cell phone at 517.618.1666, or check out his blog at [www.andyschor.com](http://www.andyschor.com).

Rebecca's email is [rbahar-cook@ingham.org](mailto:rbahar-cook@ingham.org). You can also send her a message on Facebook or call her office at 517-485-9127. If you have ideas, constructive criticism or concerns about the Ingham County Health Department, services to the aging or upcoming budget decisions, please feel free to contact Rebecca directly.

We look forward to working with Westside neighbors as important issues and policies are debated at the county and state levels over the next few years.

Lansing Neighborhood Council  
for the Westside Neighborhood  
Association  
5815 Wise Road Room F208  
Lansing, MI, 48911

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Volume 1 Issue 3

## ***October 10, 2012 Public Informational Meeting – 7 to 9 p.m.***

Sexton High School Cafeteria  
Hosted by RACER Trust and the Westside Neighborhood Association  
Cleanup and Redevelopment – GM Plants 2, 3 and 6 (Fisher Body)

***The RACER (Revitalizing Environmental Communities Environmental Response) Trust*** was established by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in March 2011 to manage, cleanup and prepare for redevelopment 89 former GM properties in 14 states, including properties in Lansing and Lansing Township.

RACER is committed to partnering with communities, local and state governments, elected officials and economic development professionals as we seek beneficial reuses for these properties. To that end, we are delighted to host an informational meeting with the Westside Neighborhood Association from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, October 10, in the Sexton High School cafeteria.

Patricia Spitzley RACER's Deputy Redevelopment Manager and a Lansing resident, and Grant Trigger, RACER's Michigan Cleanup Manager, will attend. Representatives from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the City of Lansing, Lansing Township and the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) have been invited, as well.

Topics to be covered include:

- Overview of the RACER Trust and its mission
- Summary of RACER Trust-owned properties in the Lansing area
- Status of cleanup activities at Lansing-area properties and a schedule for completion
- Demolition debris removal
- Status of marketing efforts and prospects for reuse

After a brief presentation, there will group discussions and an opportunity for questions and answers.

Residents who have questions regarding activities related to the former GM Plants 2, 3 and 6 (Fisher Body) are encouraged to send them in advance. Our email address is [info@racertrust.org](mailto:info@racertrust.org). For letters, the mailing address is RACER Trust, 2930 Ecorse Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198