



5 Acres, 3 Buildings, 1 Community Living Room, Rockwood Town Center Design Is Chosen

Ground breaking expected this summer

By **Josh Fuhrer**
Executive Director
Gresham Redevelopment Commission

The [Rockwood Rising Redevelopment](#) project is well underway, and is expected to break ground this summer.

The project's goal is to create an "economic engine" in the heart of Rockwood Town Center that will bring new life, vibrancy, and economic opportunity to the area without displacing local residents. The site at the former Rockwood Fred Meyer on 185th & Burnside will be a place for residents to shop for healthy food, find training in technical and employment skills, and gather with the community for events like a farmers' market, concerts, and neighborhood events in a safe and inviting community space.

On July 13, 2016, the [Gresham Redevelopment Commission](#) (GRDC) approved the schematic design for the project and directed developer Roy Kim of



Rockwood Town Center concept, 187th & E Burnside (view west)

RKm Development to proceed with the next phase of the project. The design they approved was a three-building schematic, which included a market hall to provide affordable grocery staples, retail space for local entrepreneurs, office spaces for community service organizations, workforce housing, and a vibrant public plaza.

The Urban Renewal department at the [City of Gresham](#) has made community engagement a priority on this project, and has been gathering community input for over three years, including from the Wilkes East Neighborhood Association.

See **ROCKWOOD** Page 2

Friends of the Children in Rockwood



Mentoring At-Risk Kids From Kindergarten to High School Graduation. 12 1/2 yrs. No Matter What.

By **Justine Reimnitz**
Friends of the Children

[Friends of the Children](#)—a long-term, intensive professional mentoring program—built a new program facility in the Rockwood neighborhood and opened its doors in November 2015. The building has since then become a vital community space, both for the 450 youth and families served by the program and for the Rockwood community at large.

Founded in 1993 in inner NE Portland, Friends of the Children commits to stand-

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ing alongside youth as they work to overcome significant barriers to success. Each child receives 1:1 support and guidance from a salaried, professional mentor (called a Friend), from kindergarten through high school graduation.

See **FRIENDS** Page 3

Download this newsletter with active links at: wilkeaseastna.org/newsletter.htm

Mark Your Calendar!

Wilkes East Neighborhood

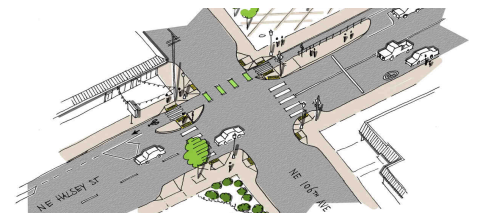
Spring Meeting
March 13th • 7PM

Albertina Kerr Campus, Bldg C I
722 NE 162nd Av

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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Bicycle Transportation: Improving Rider Safety Along Halsey Street



By **Bart Skondin**
Biking Enthusiast
Wilkes East Resident

Halsey Street is in the midst of a major transformation from the west, with bold visions brewing to the east. To our west, Portland has prioritized and funded improvements from 92nd Ave to 162nd Ave while to the east, another project aims to build a shared vision for Halsey, the stretch that leads into Troutdale, the "Gateway to the Gorge", and ultimately to the Sandy River itself. On the Wilkes East swath of Halsey, we have our own set of changes coming by way of two proposed high density residential developments.

Under the auspices of the [East Portland Action Plan](#) and [Vision Zero](#), Portland has prioritized both livability and safety improvements along the Halsey corridor. Improvements include: a protected bike lane, to include the I-205/Halsey Street overpass a reduced speed limit along the entire corridor, including a reduction from 45mph to 35mph between 137th and 162nd and Halsey (Glendoveer) pedestrian friendly sidewalk infill.

To our east, the cities of Fairview, Wood Village, and Troutdale have partnered to create the "[Main Streets on Halsey](#)" project, whose mission is to forge a shared vision to rally around, to share with business and community partners, and to eventually work to make a reality.

See **BICYCLE** Page 4

Wilkes East Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Published three times a year. Over 1500 copies distributed throughout Wilkes East.

The Wilkes East Neighborhood Association (WENA) is a non-profit organization in Gresham, Oregon. Deadline for submission is the 10th of the month prior to publication. Submit material to info@wilkeeastna.org. WENA reserves all rights, and all copy may be edited for clarity and length. Download a PDF of this newsletter online at: www.wilkeeastna.org/newsletter.htm.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Chair **Kris Freiermuth**
chair@wilkeeastna.org
- Vice Chair **(Vacant)**
vicechair@wilkeeastna.org
- Secretary **(Vacant)**
secretary@wilkeeastna.org
- Treasurer **Billy Simmons**
treasurer@wilkeeastna.org
- Land Use **(Vacant)**
landuse@wilkeeastna.org
- At-Large **Bob Lundbom**
webmaster@wilkeeastna.org
Juanita Null
member2@wilkeeastna.org

BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 6:30PM. See [website](http://www.wilkeeastna.org) for details.

SPECIAL THANKS

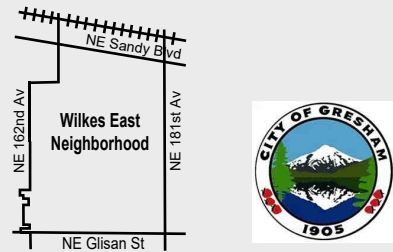
- The Wilkes East Neighborhood newsletter is funded, in part, through a generous grant from the [City of Gresham](http://www.cityofgresham.org).
- Printing by [Print Results Inc.](http://www.printresults.com) 503-287-9566
- Meeting hall: [Albertina Kerr](http://www.albertina-kerr.com), 722 NE 162nd Av "C1"

Got an interesting story to share?

Email it to: info@wilkeeastna.org, or mail to: PO Box 536 • Fairview, OR 97024

Volunteer Opportunities

Get involved. Let us know how you'd like to help. Email info@wilkeeastna.org for details.



Dear Neighbors • a message from your WENA President

It looks like winter will soon be over. And what a winter it has been. The non-stop parade of storms and bitter cold will be remembered by all for years to come. Re-joyce! Today I smelled the Daphne outside the front door giving off their familiar scent. Spring is coming!

Land-Use applications continue to be much of WENA's work. Rick's Fence & Decking's new store at 180th & NE Halsey is moving forward; the public presentation is set for Wednesday March 1, 2017, 7PM at Albertina-Kerr Campus, 722 NE 162nd Ave Bldg. "C I". The proposed apartment complex on the southeast corner of 162nd & NE Halsey had their design hearing with the City of Gresham on February 15th. Stark Firs apartment project at 641 NE 162nd seems to have stalled. A new hotel project to be located at 180th & NE Sandy Blvd has come to our attention; more details in this newsletter.

You may have noticed following the recent storms the City had the street sweepers out to clean the curbside of debris & gravel. If you swept or piled debris alongside the curb you need to place it in your yard debris container for pick up. [Regular street sweeping will resume the 2nd Monday of each month](#), March through November. Please keep cars, boats, campers, basketball hoops, and garbage & recycling carts off the street on that day.

Mark your calendars for WENA's public meetings for 2017: Monday March 13th,

Monday August 14th & Monday November 13th. All meetings will be held at Albertina Kerr Campus, Bldg "C I", 722 NE 162nd Ave (located center north on the campus).

Speakers for WENA's March 13th meeting include: Steve Fancher, City of Gresham, Transportation Department to explain the new Utility Tax; Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County Chair to update us on the homeless shelters in and around our neighborhood; & hopefully our new Chief of Police Robin Sellers to speak about crime & her goals for our community.

We've noticed a decline in Neighborhood Watch groups. They do make a difference! Please consider getting together with your neighbors and forming a watch group on your street. WENA and City Hall will be happy to assist you in with getting your watch group up & going.

If you have a passion or concern we encourage you to write us about it. We will share it in the newsletter and on WENA's website www.wilkeeastna.org.

Let's be proactive, not reactive, & make where we live a better place to live.

Thank you to our volunteers for sharing your time & talents.

See you around the neighborhood!

Your Neighbor,

Kristen Freiermuth

ROCKWOOD (Page 1)

In conjunction with Roy Kim of Rkm Development and Matt Brown of YBA Architects, the City has sought to ensure that citizen comment directly informs both the project's design and the types of services it will provide.

As design development concludes and the construction phase of the project begins, Urban Renewal continues to seek community input on the nature and character of the development. One such opportunity will occur on April 1st, as the City will host an international food festival including local food entrepreneurs for the community and potential tenants of Rockwood Rising. The festival will be located at the Sunrise Center (18901 E. Burnside), just a block away from the project site. For more information on this and other engagement opportunities, sign up for the Rockwood Rising newsletter at rockwoodrising@greshamoregon.gov.

The Design Development phase of the project is expected to go to the GRDC for approval in May. Following this approval, construction will break ground in the summer of this year, and the entire project is expected to be complete by fall 2018. For more information on the Rockwood Rising Redevelopment project, or to voice your ideas and express interest in participating with us, visit the project's website at www.rockwoodrising.com. ■

SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS

Being a Board member is a great opportunity and experience for any neighbor, whether you've been on a board before or you're considering the idea for the first time. Members serve for 1-year. Learn more about this exciting opportunity,

email info@wilkeeastna.org.

"Together WE Can Make A Difference"

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Providing responsive, accessible transportation for seniors and people with disabilities at no cost

www.rideconnection.org

RSD Breaking Ground on Four Schools



With designs complete three new elementary schools and Reynolds High School are nearly ready to progress into construction. Wilkes, Troutdale and Fairview elementary schools will be replaced with new schools on the existing sites. RHS will receive significant renovations and additions. Students will remain in their schools while construction is underway. All schools will be ready by fall 2018. Visit www.reynolds.k12.or.us/bondprojects ■

Celebrate the Replacement of Wilkes Elementary
Tuesday, March 14, 2017 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
[17020 NE Wilkes Road](http://www.wilkesna.org)

FRIENDS (Page 1)

Over the past 6 years, Friends of the Children has been investing more of its resources in East Multnomah County, culminating in the construction of a new 8,500 square-foot program center at Pat Pfeiffer Park. Friends even dedicated a staff position to maintaining the building as a community resource and developing meaningful partnerships. Jack Vollert, Rockwood Facility and Partnerships Manager, works with partner organizations who want to use the building's conference rooms, teaching kitchen, and gymnasium to hold meetings and programming that would not be possible at their own facilities.

Immediately after opening the site, Friends of the Children hosted its annual "Friendsgiving" for youth and families. While still moving into the building, they held a potluck meal for over 200 people. In addition to a second Friendsgiving, Friends has also held Pride, End of Summer Community Day, and Hispanic and Latino Heritage celebrations.

In partnership with [Human Solutions](#), Reynolds School District, and the [Rosewood Initiative](#), Friends recently launched an initiative to bring children living in a nearby homeless shelter to their gym once a week for fitness and free play. The first night of the initiative, 29 children rode over to the facility in a bus. They seem to have appreciated the opportunity to run and just be kids, because on the second night over 40 youth showed up.

The gym is popular with other non-profits and alternative schools, including the [East County Basketball Academy](#), Centennial Transition Center, and OPEN School. The gym is also home to "[Midnight Basketball](#)" supported by the City of Gresham. Expanding on the success of their Friday night basketball program at H.B. Lee Middle School, the City of Gresham and staff from POIC now run "Midnight Basketball" in the Friends gym from 8:00 p.m. to midnight every Saturday. This healthy activity opportunity is open to boys and girls from Rockwood in grades 6 – 12.

Local partners have also enriched programming for youth in the Friends program. Film instructors from the [Youth International Silent Film Festival](#) taught youth the art of storytelling through filming, lighting, and editing. [Growing Gardens](#) helped build a garden that produces herbs and vegetables used in cooking classes in the facility's spacious teaching kitchen. Jack Vollert plans to keep adding to the network of partners: "we are proud of our close relationships with other youth service organizations in the area and look forward to building more." ■

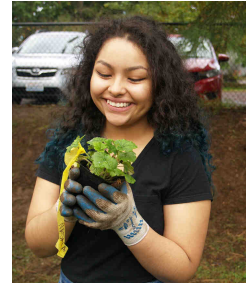
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Nadaka Nature Park & Gardens Spring Update & Events

by *Monica McAllister*
 Nadaka Nature Park Coordinator

It has been quite a winter for Oregon! With all the snow and rain, no doubt we have all experienced some cabin fever and can't wait to finally get outside with friends and family. Luck for the Wilkes East neighborhood, Nadaka Nature Park is just around the corner at 176th & NE Glisan Street and has many great free community events lined up for the year!

We got a head start on the 2017 outdoor season this past February at the Nadaka Community Planting Event where our volunteers planted over 300 native plants! For the second year in a row, we worked on the embankment on the front two acres for our [Backyard Habitat Certification](#) demonstration garden. On the west side of the forest, we restored habitat for wildlife by planting ferns, roses, and ponderosa pines. These species are just a few of the many we planted to create ground cover, shelter for wildlife, and provide pollinator habitat.



Planting Event Volunteer

In late February and March, two [HB Lee](#) after school programs have come to Nadaka weekly to learn how to plant natives and remove invasive plants. [Columbia Slough Watershed Council's Slough School](#) had 5 field trips where high schoolers taught 5th graders about native plants, why we plant them, and were able to restore much needed habitat. The [Friends of Nadaka](#) were able to purchase these plants thanks to grant money from [EMSWCD](#), [Metro](#), [Boeing](#), and the [City of Gresham](#). Other events that happened over the winter include our Pollinator Workshop with EMSWCD and Celeste Mazzacano., November Bird & Nature Walk with [Audubon](#), and the our Seed to Supper Free Gardening Workshops Series with [Oregon Food Bank](#), [OSU Extensions Service](#), and [St. Aidan's Episcopal Church](#). Unfortunately MLK Day of Service on January 16th was canceled due to the park being covered in snow/ice, but we will make up for it by doing a Fall Community Planting Event.

See **NADAKA** (Page 4)

New Suites Hotel Planned at 180th & NE Sandy

Wichita Kansas based [Woodspring Suites](#) recently submitted applications to build a 4-story, 122-room, extended-stay suites hotel near the southwest corner of 181st & NE Sandy Blvd. Watch wilkseseastna.org calendar for meeting notices.



Did you know? *The average American produces more than four pounds of garbage per day. Over the course of a year, that is more than 1,600 pounds of garbage per person.*

Start your Neighborhood Watch
 It's a great way to know your neighbors. Reduces crime. And most important, it works! It's easy to get started, simply visit: <https://greshamoregon.gov/Neighborhood-Ready/> for details.



Earth Day Recycling

Sat Apr 22, 2017 9AM-2PM

Gresham City Hall

Parking Lot

[1333 NW Eastman Pkwy](#)

Accepting small electronics, Bulky & rigid plastic, Plastic bags, Styrofoam, Paper only shredding, Fluorescent & CFL bulbs. Visit <https://greshamoregon.gov/Earth-Day> for details.

NADAKA (Page 4)

Looking ahead to the spring season, Nadaka is excited be hosting [Welcome Back Vulture Day](#) Saturday, March 18th from 12-3 PM in partnership with [Audubon Society of Portland](#) and [St. Aidan's Episcopal Church](#). This family friendly festival is filled with fun and educational activities. Come meet Ruby, Portland Audubon's Turkey Vulture, up close (along with many of Audubon's other education birds). Compare your "wingspan" to that of a California Condor, make a crafted vulture and mask, play "Upchuck Chuck!", and discover why vultures are important. For those bird watchers out there, we will be having a Spring Migration Bird Walk with the Audubon Society of Portland Saturday, April 29th at 9 AM. Meet us at the picnic shelter to borrow binoculars, bird guides, and enjoy light refreshments.

Don't worry plant lovers, we haven't forgotten about you. Register here (<http://emswcd.org/workshops-and-events/upcoming-workshops/>) for the Native Plant Workshop with East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD) Thursday, May 4th from 6:30-9 PM at St. Aidan's.

In May, we will host a Spring Plant Walk with the Backyard Habitat Certification Program and Ivy Watson. Late spring and summer, we will follow up our Seed to Supper series with hands on gardening workshops with [Outgrowing Hunger](#), OFB, & OSU Extension Services. Be sure to check our website for our finalized dates and times.

Come celebrate with Friends of Nadaka at our [3rd Annual Nadaka Tea Fundraiser](#) Saturday, June 17th from 12-2 PM St. Aidan's Murdock Hall! Enjoy a variety of delicious teas, scones, sandwiches and desserts. After a raffle for local art, gift cards, photography & more, join us for a guided tour of Nadaka Nature Park. This is your opportunity to dress up, mingle, and show Nadaka Nature Park how much you care! Prizes will be awarded for the best hat! This year we are welcoming well behaved children over the age of 5. For more information and to register by phone contact Monica McAllister- Nadaka Nature Park Coordinator.

Looking for more ways to be involved with Nadaka? Become a volunteer for one of our many events, train to be a Nadaka Nature Park Ambassador, or join an event committee team through Friends of Nadaka. For more information on how to volunteer, please contact Monica McAllister at monica@friendsofnadaka.org or call at 503-956-8558. For Nadaka updates and more information visit www.friendsofnadaka.org, "Friends of Nadaka" on Facebook, or visit wilkeseastna.org. We are look forward to seeing everyone at the park! ■

Did you know? Enough plastic bottles are thrown away in the United States each year to circle the Earth four times.

BICYCLE (Page 1)

The area of focus will be between NE 207th and Halsey and the Sandy River.

In Wilkes East we have our own concerns regarding Halsey; in its current form, it's kinda broken. The speeds are entirely too high for getting to our schools, for crossing, and for walking. This is something my family has personally experienced while trying to navigate a route to our young daughters' school, both by bicycle and by car. The dangerous and uncomfortable conditions will only get worse with the prospect of two more high density developments on the horizon.

Roads, even busy ones, are key elements of a neighborhood. In east county we are not blessed with a connected, pedestrian friendly grid, so a street like Halsey takes on a different kind of purpose not only a means of vehicle transportation, but one of place and of necessity. It is not just a road, it is a connector, a feeder to our elementary and middle school, a belt that cross-stitches the fabric of our neighborhood.

Given the millions of dollars in livability improvements being invested up to the 162nd border, the more pedestrian friendly speeds, and the plans being laid for Halsey east, we have an opportunity to tie in and proactively shape Wilkes East's identity along Halsey as one that is forward thinking, people oriented, and welcoming. By reducing speeds and prioritizing people, we improve not only the vibrancy and feel for our current residents, but we also set the stage to attract a more community minded lot of future residents when our new neighbors do finally come knocking. ■

Got a tip or story to share?

If you've got an interesting tip, story or article idea that you'd like to share email it to: info@wilkeseastna.org

Did You Know? Plugged-in cell phone chargers and other wall transformers consume electricity even when not in use.

Save the Date!

**Wilkes East Neighborhood
Spring Meeting**
Monday, March 13, 7-9PM

Albertina Kerr • 722 NE 162nd Av
Building "C1" (small bldg, center north)

- Gresham Utility Tax, Road Repair
- Homelessness in East County
- Crime in West Gresham
- Neighborhood news & more

See you there!

Nextdoor

Nextdoor.com is the neighborhood-centric social network for you, your neighbors and your community. It's the easiest way for you and your neighbors to talk online. And it's free! [Sign-up today!](#)

Have You Signed Up?