



Community Paints Rockwood Bright! Meet the new Plaza del Sol

Volunteers paint the plaza. Splashes of Color mark a new beginning.



Plaza del Sol, Rockwood Cultural Marketplace, 187th & Stark

Plaza del Sol comes to the Cultural Marketplace

When Rockwood coverage happens its commonly due to negative events. So, we felt it was very important to share an amazing community building event that took place recently in Rockwood.

Welcome Rockwood's "Plaza del Sol" painting!

Plaza del Sol is one of several new interim uses being sited by the Gresham Redevelopment Commission on the Cultural Marketplace (former Fred Meyer store) property in Rockwood at SE 187th & SE Stark St.

The plaza is the first piece of a recently approved interim use plan for the Rockwood Cultural Marketplace to transform the site with new sidewalks, paths, benches, a wildflower garden, play area, basketball courts, a food-cart area, and many other family friendly activities.

Using supplies donated by Parr Lumber and Miller Paint, volunteers worked throughout the day to paint the huge 13,000-square-foot "Plaza del Sol", a colorful scale model of the solar system on the Southeast corner of the site.

Hope Returns to Rockwood

"Today the community brought hope back to the site. Today marked a change in the attitude of the people in Rockwood" said Rockwood resident Dina DiNucci. The Plaza del Sol is the first step in the City's effort to turn the abandoned site into a gathering place for the future.

Please see **PLAZA**, Page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Meet the new Plaza del Sol
- Nadaka Nature Park expansion
- Rockwood courthouse redux
- Reynolds District rehires, news
- Columbia View Park neighbors
- Nadaka Nature Park gets a sign

Rockwood might get that courthouse after all. A rebirth for Rockwood?



County commissioners approve scaled-down facility. Finding funding for the multi-million dollar project still an issue.

By unanimous vote

Multnomah County commissioners approved moving forward with a plan for a new courthouse in Gresham's Rockwood area Thursday, Oct. 1. If built – *and it is still an if as the county has yet to approve funding for the \$17 million to \$21 million project* -- the courthouse will replace Gresham's old facility on Powell Blvd. It's the first step toward building the courthouse in that the resolution approves spending \$800,000 on a "schematic design process" for the facility, which is to house two to three courtrooms and space for the county's district attorney's office.

The process is to include preliminary plans, a site plan, architectural specifications, cost estimates and updated budget details.

Please see **COURTHOUSE**, Page 2

Did You Know? Gresham was named in May 1884 for the American Civil War general, and Postmaster General, Walter Quinton Gresham.



Nadaka Nature Park

Nadaka Nature Park Expansion

Be Part of the Process

What: Wilkes East Neighborhood Association (WENA) meeting to discuss expansion of Nadaka

Nature Park into 1.9 acres on south edge of Nadaka.

When: Thursday, Nov 19th 7:00 pm

St Aidan's Episcopal Church
NE 174th & NE Glisan

Please plan to attend this meeting and give your input to this project.

Background

WENA and the *Friends of Nadaka* have successfully applied for a Metro Nature in Neighborhood capital grant, received a contribution from the East Multnomah Soil

& Water Conservation District (EMSWCD) and worked with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Nelson Estate to acquire this 1.9 acre parcel. The City of Gresham has not contributed money for this purchase but the property will be owned and maintained by the City of Gresham. This acquisition will become part of Nadaka.

WENA meetings were held on Feb 16, May 4, Aug. 24 & Sept. 24, 2009 at which time the Nadaka grants and expansion were mentioned. The Sept. 24th meeting was held for the sole purpose of discussing the expansion of Nadaka.

Please see **NADAKA**, Page 3

Mark Your Calendar!

**Wilkes East Neighborhood
QUARTERLY MEETING
Thursday Nov 19, 2009 7PM**

**St Aidan's Church
174th & NE Glisan**

Wilkes East Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Published quarterly. 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 will be edited for clarity and length. PDF version of this newsletter is available online at: www.wilkeeastna.org

EXECUTIVE BOARD

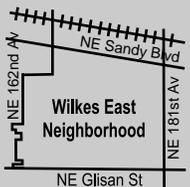
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BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month at 6:30PM. See website for details and location.

SPECIAL THANKS

Funding for the Wilkes East Neighborhood Newsletter was paid in part by a generous grant from the City of Gresham. Printing: Print Results Inc. 503-287-9566



COURTHOUSE (from page 1)

Once the process is complete, an oversight committee would review it before seeking approval from county commissioners to move forward with design and construction as soon as next spring. It's scheduled to open in spring 2012.

Reservations remain

Some county commissioners did question building cost contingencies, how the county would pay for the building and whether it would be more cost effective to lease space instead of building a county-owned facility.

"There are trade offs involved, we're looking at an \$8 million deficit next year," Commissioner Cogen said.

Decades in the making

For 25 years, Multnomah County has studied where to build a new courthouse in Gresham. In 2007, the county purchased 4.5 acres just south of SE 185th Ave and Stark St for a new justice center, complete with courtrooms and space for Gresham police and the county sheriff's office. But when the price tag more than doubled to nearly \$43 million and the economy collapsed, Multnomah County scaled down the facility to a simple courthouse in February. The county also decided – as a money-saving strategy – to move the project from Rockwood to county-owned land in downtown Gresham in May.

New plan

The 35,000- to 40,000-square-foot facility will house one large courtroom with space for a 12-person jury, a smaller courtroom for a six-person jury and medium sized flexible courtroom that could be used for after-hours community activities.

Plans call for continuing Southeast 185th Avenue, which now stops at Stark Street, through the site. The courthouse building would be where a closed KFC now sits south of Stark Street and west of where 185th will continue. A secured parking lot would be south of the courthouse with space for expansion farther south or to the east. Until demand creates the need for even more courtrooms, property for future expansion could be used as community gardens.

Rockwood resident Nick Kahl, D-Gresham, said the courthouse would not only provide a much-needed service to East County but could serve as an engine for economic development in Rockwood. "Rockwood could have a renaissance," said Kahl, a resident of the area. "It could see a rebirth. And for the people who live here this means a whole lot more than a courthouse."

Full story at: wilkeeastna.org/node/433

Check out CrimeReports.com for the latest on criminal activity in your neighborhood.

Reynolds rehires some laid-off teachers with extra funds from Legislature.

Finally some good news. District receives additional \$6.2 million in funding

Board votes \$2 million to rehire teachers, \$2 million for obligations. Places \$2.2 million in contingency fund.

Board votes to spend added millions now

A unanimous Reynolds school board voted to spend \$2 million to immediately hire back laid-off teachers in order to reduce class sizes.

Parents complained that students would suffer from a lack of attention and individualized instruction if the district stuck to its earlier plans to eliminate one of every four teaching positions and raise class sizes to 35 or larger at most grade levels.

The new smaller classes will give schools one teacher for every 27 students in the primary grades and one for every 30 students in grades three and higher.

The district has faced tough budget challenges this year as a result of past overspending.

In June, the board adopted a budget that required laying off more than 100 teachers, far more than in any other Portland-area district.

Full story at: wilkeeastna.org/node/403

Other Reynolds District news

Fisher to leave post in June 2010, Nelson resigns from board

Superintendent to leave next June

Robert J. Fisher, superintendent of the Reynolds School District, will leave the post Jun 30, 2010.

On Oct 1, the Reynolds district board asked Fisher to stay through Jun 30, 2011. However, on Monday, Oct 12, Fisher notified the board that he was declining its request.

Fisher said he decided to leave because he felt discussions surrounding his possible staying on would only distract from the work needed to be done to address various district challenges.

Fisher was hired in Sep 2009 following the resignation of then superintendent Terry Kneisler amid concerns over budgeting practices.

Please see **REYNOLDS**, Page 4

DOOR-to-DOOR Transportation

For seniors and people with disabilities

FREE, or LOW COST!



503.226.0700

NADAKA (from page 1)

The City of Gresham is in the process of hiring a consultant to assist in developing a comprehensive master plan for this expansion and it is expected that they will be in attendance at this meeting. This master plan process includes how the plan for the new expansion area will be integrated with the Nadaka master plan adopted in 2001 and may include revision of the 2001 master plan.

Metro Grant & Criteria for Development

In applying for Metro grant money this project is required to meet the following criteria:

1. "Re-nature" neighborhoods by increasing & recovering the presence and function of ecological features to protect water quality & plant habitat.
2. "Re-green" urban neighborhoods to enrich peoples' experience of nature and help strengthen a physical connection to the region's ecology.
3. Demonstrate multiple benefits for people & natural systems.
4. Demonstrate cost-effective ecological design solutions.
5. Increase the region's fish & wildlife inventory.
6. Restore and/or improve habitats of concern such as eligible lands identified under the land acquisition criteria for the program and/or headwaters and confluences of the region's important urban stream and river corridors.
7. Improve natural amenities to provide universal access to the public.

These criteria were met in the Metro grant application that was also considered when obtaining funding from EMSWCD and the assistance of TPL. Under #3 some of the things to be included in this master plan are: create a community garden, community orchard, native plant nursery, nature-based play equipment, picnic facilities, etc.

In addition, benchmark #3 of the inter-governmental agreement with the City of Gresham requires "Revision of the master plan that identifies the future use of the site and directs the use of sustainable site development practices in order to improve the biological functions of the site." n

Mention you saw it in the Wilkes East Neighborhood newsletter!

Help Prevent Crime

Support Your Neighborhood Watch Group

Visit wilkeeastna.org/node/180



Did You Know?
Gresham is the fourth largest city in Oregon.

PLAZA (from page 1)



Place Del Sol mural (Aerial view)

The 6.5 acre site, vacated by Fred Meyer in 2001, was purchased in 2005 by the City of Gresham for redevelopment. Unfortunately as the economy tanked so did Rockwood's hopes for a large-scale

development. Commissioners still plan to redevelop the property as a mixed-use development in the heart of the city's urban renewal area when the economy improves. (Pictures & video available on WENA website)
Full story at: wilkeeastna.org/node/422 n

Fact: 27.5% of Gresham's population is under the age of 18 (US Census)

Did You Know? Gresham was known as "Campground" because the forested site was where pioneers often stopped before moving on to Portland.

Volunteers remove invasives, install new signs at Nadaka Nature Park



Nadaka Park's new sign

"Nadaka Nature Park" sign and a new nature-based play area enhance local park

Volunteers fill drop box, create play area

Approximately 25 hearty volunteers showed-up to the July 11th "Gresham's Big Service Day" cleanup to help restore Nadaka Nature Park's urban habitat. Volunteers removed and disposed of wood waste, including invasive ivy, blackberries and holly, filling a 40 cubic yard drop box provided by the Wilkes East Neighborhood Association to capacity.

Volunteers pitched-in to create a small nature based play area at the south edge of the park beside the meadow.

Nadaka finally gets a sign

Volunteers also installed a beautiful new "Nadaka Nature Park" sign at the entrance to the park, and added "Friends of Nadaka" and "Wilkes East Neighborhood Association" to the list of groups contributing to park improvements on the park Supporter's sign post.

The signs, purchased by WENA through a generous grant from the City of Gresham, are a great addition to this wonderful park.

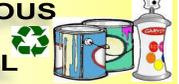
Full story at: wilkeeastna.org/node/406 n

Volunteer!
Help Restore Our Urban Habitat

Nadaka Nature Park
17500 NE Pacific St

- Sat Nov 14, 9AM-2PM
Columbia Slough Watershed Council
- Sat Jan 9, 9AM-2PM
Friends of Trees

Click the link!

HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL 

wilkeeastna.org
Click the link!

Is There Crime In Your Neighborhood?

 **CrimeReports**

wilkeeastna.org
Click the link!

Community Services & Hotlines RESOURCE GUIDE

wilkeeastna.org
Click the link!

Zimmerman House Tours
Monthly • Third Saturday
10AM - 3PM



Zimmerman Park
17111 NE Sandy Blvd
Gresham OR

Fairview-Rockwood-Wilkes Historical Society
Visit www.frwhs.org

Residential Compatibility Workshops to discuss transitions, buffers, flag lots, building size & more



Help ensure new and existing developments are more compatible

Join the discussion!

Good idea, bad idea?

The City of Gresham would like your help in ensuring new development and existing development are more compatible with each other.

Please attend one of their workshops to discuss alternative ways to address issues raised in the Residential Districts Review Compatibility project.

Workshop dates are listed on the City of Gresham website calendar at greshamoregon.gov, and the Wilkes East Neighborhood website calendar ☐

Fact: *Plugged-in cell phone chargers, laptop chargers, printer power supply and other wall "wart" transformers consume electricity even when not in use.*

Did You Know? *Gresham has a total area of 22.2 square miles.*

Got a story to share?

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



Columbia View neighbors pitch-in to help City care for the park!

Parks languish as funds dry up.

Columbia View Park

Gresham \$32 million behind in park maintenance

Due to lack of funds the City's Parks Department has only been able to mow the perimeter of Columbia View Park. Columbia View Park is located at NE 169th & NE Pacific.

Neighbors lend a hand

Neighbors who frequent the park have been picking up litter, mowing areas the City isn't, mulching around new trees, hauling debris to disposal stations and watering young trees that have been planted in the last couple of years. A big THANK YOU to these many volunteers.

How you can help

Some ivy is beginning to appear under the tree canopy areas and this needs to be removed before it spreads to the trees. This is something anyone can do anytime on their own. It is a good project to take your children to the park, teach them to identify ivy and remove it. This activity can be as simple as taking one grocery bag, filling it with ivy, taking it home and disposing of it.

Please see **COLUMBIA VIEW**, Page 4

COLUMBIA VIEW (continued)

Join the effort!

There is a *Columbia View Keepers* group but the above activities have not been done in an organized fashion.

These volunteers have continued doing what needs to be done at Columbia View Park to keep it beautiful. If you want to know what you can do to help Columbia View Park contact Lee Dayfield by email at leedayfield@wilkeseastna.org.

Full story at: wilkeseastna.org/node/428 ☐

REYNOLDS (from page 1)

Nelsen bids farewell to Reynolds School Board

John Nelsen, former chairman of the Reynolds School District Board officially announced his decision to resign position 6 at the Oct 8 board meeting citing family reasons. Nelsen has served on the board since 1999, and served as chairman from June 2007 through last July of this year.

The district board will vote for a new board member to complete Nelsen's term, which ends in June 2010 ☐

Thanksgiving -- A Season of Sharing

As we celebrate our blessings, we also must remember those less fortunate than ourselves. Give from the heart. Donate time or money to a local charity this Holiday and enjoy knowing your generosity has helped to brighten the season for those in need.



Wilkes East Neighborhood

Open to all residents and businesses in the Wilkes East Neighborhood. Be A Part Of Your Community, Plan To Attend.

QUARTERLY MEETING
Thursday Nov 19, 2009 7PM

St Aidan's Church, 174th & NE Glisan

Scheduled Topics

- **Master plan for Nadaka Nature Park with expansion**
- **NE Halsey St changes and bike lane (162nd-181st)**
Jonathan David
Gresham Transportation Dept
- **Park Safety Q & A**
Sylvia Milne
Crime Prevention Specialist
City of Gresham

Join Your Neighbors. Get involved. Make a difference!