



Rockwood Town Center Final Design Awaits Approval, Construction to follow

Seeking Local Construction Partners

Josh Fuher, Executive Director Gresham Redevelopment Commission, will be a guest speaker at the our next neighborhood meeting, Aug 14.



Rockwood Town Center, final design. 187th & E Burnside (view south)

The [Rockwood Rising Project](#) on the former Rockwood Fred Meyer site continues to march toward groundbreaking. The project's goal is to create an "economic engine" in the heart of the Rockwood Town Center that will bring new life to the area without displacing current residents. The project will include a public market for residents to shop for healthy, affordable food, a maker space and offices for training in technical and employment skills, a public plaza for community events, and workforce housing.

In Summer 2017, the [Gresham Redevelopment Commission](#) (GRDC) will review the final design of the project, which will allow the project to move immediately into the construction phase.

[The final design](#) is a more complete version of the schematic design approved

in July 2016, and consists of three buildings and a 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.

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Come Visit Zimmerman House



Right in Wilkes East Neighborhood's backyard, near [Sandy Boulevard and 171st](#), sits a white, Victorian house surrounded by lush grass and beautiful flower gardens. Have you ever noticed this beauty while driving by?

If you've always been curious or it's been a long time since you've visited, let us introduce you to the [Zimmerman House](#)

[Museum and Gardens](#). This slice of Oregon heritage is run by ECHO – [East County Historical Organization](#) (your local historical society) and they have big plans to reinvigorate this Gresham Park.

ECHO's new board has goals to make this former dairy farm into a thriving place of learning and an event space for the community. They are currently developing plans to add a paved driveway with designated parking spaces,

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Mark Your Calendar!

Wilkes East Neighborhood

Summer Meeting
August 14th • 7PM

Albertina Kerr Campus, Training Bldg
722 NE 162nd Av

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Backyard Habitat, Providing Community for Birds and Wildlife



By **Neta Courcey**
Certified Backyard Habitat
Wilkes East Resident

Like neighborhoods are to cities, cities to counties, and counties to states, backyard habitats connect our yards to greenways and to wilderness, providing the essential pathways of interconnectedness that nourish the larger community. Communities of humans thrive when they are connected to each other and to the larger community. Just as neighborhood groups like Wilkes East are essential to building and maintaining the larger community, backyard habitats are essential to the community of birds and other wildlife. The swath of habitat that neighbors create is vital, providing refuge areas containing food, water, nesting places and shelter. I am proud to have my little yard be a piece of the bigger network that creates a web of natural habitats throughout the Portland metropolitan area and the Pacific Northwest.

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

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@wilkeseastna.org. WENA reserves all rights, and all copy may be edited for clarity and length. Download a PDF of this newsletter online at: www.wilkeseastna.org/newsletter.htm.

BOARD MEMBERS

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chair@wilkeseastna.org
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vicechair@wilkeseastna.org
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- Treasurer Billy Simmons
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BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 6:30PM. See wilkeseastna.org for details.

CONTACT US

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Postal Mail: PO Box 536 • Fairview, OR 97024

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Get involved. Let us know how you'd like to help. Email info@wilkeseastna.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.albertinakerr.com), 722 NE 162nd Av, Training Bldg (center north on campus)



Dear Neighbors • a message from your WENA President

August begins WENA's eleventh (11th) year as a neighborhood association. Much has happened over this time. We've seen new housing as well as a new park built. We've seen long time businesses close & some new ones move in. And now, a new school is being built for Wilkes Elementary. The future is bright for ourselves, but especially for our children & grandchildren. Congratulations and thank you for caring for our community!

SAVE THE DATE: Monday, August 14th 7PM is our Summer Public Meeting at Albertina-Kerr Gresham Campus, 722 NE 162nd Ave, Training Building. (Directions: from Glisan turn north on 165th, go three blocks, turn left into driveway, drive forward, small gray building on the right). Plenty of on-campus parking. Scheduled guests include: Josh Fuhrer, Executive Director, Gresham Redevelopment Commission with a Rockwood Rising project update; Mario Palmero, Chair, Gresham City Council, highlighting what's going on at City Hall; Jay Higgins, Associate Transportation Planner, discusses City of Gresham City bike routes; plus a Nadaka update and neighborhood news.

Good news! The City of Gresham has approved our application for a matching grant for calendar year 2017-18. This grant pays for the printing of our newsletter. Neighbors who volunteer their time play a BIG part in

our eligibility for this grant. Volunteer hours spent delivering newsletters & flyers are matched at \$18.00/hr. Without you we wouldn't be eligible to receive this very important part of our annual budget. A BIG thank you to all our volunteers!

Gresham's Street Sweeping program is in full swing. Wilkes East's sweeping date is the 2nd Monday of each month, March through November. Please remove curbside obstacles like garbage cans, recycle carts, cars, boats, campers & basketball hoops on sweeping day.

Yard debris alert! Only leaves, grass clippings, weeds, and debris from vegetable & flower gardens should go into your yard debris cart. Yard debris collected is turned into quality compost for local gardeners. Contaminates required extra processing that can result in higher collection charges.

Please consider becoming active in your association. Remember, if we don't have a neighborhood association then we have no idea of what is going on at City Hall & how their plans impact our neighborhood!

Thank you to all who donate their time & energy to make Wilkes East a better community.

See you around the neighborhood!

Your Neighbor,

Kristen Freiermuth

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Looking back I realize that I started down this path many years ago when noticing yards with the Backyard habitat certification program signs. The yards with these signs were often the ones I was trying to emulate in my own yard. While I am a confident plant lover, and have researched and planted many native species, when I finally called about the certification program a whole new world of native plants and their usefulness in the urban garden opened to me. I gained a new understanding of the impact invasive species have on the native plants that birds and wildlife depend on for food and nesting. Soon, I found myself furiously pulling Lesser Celadine and English Ivy! With the help of clear instructions and colorful posters provided by the program, I identified and eliminated the worst offenders, and I still work on keeping at bay some of the lesser offenders.

I had been using some favorite natives in gardens over the years but when I was introduced to the Portland Plant List (<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/citycode/article/322280>) I was in love. Native to Oregon does not always mean native to our specific area and our specific birds and creatures. Now I had a reference to take with me to plant nurseries so that when I invest in a plant for my garden, it also benefits my favorite creatures. The Portland Plant list is only one of the many resources I received to help me in my journey toward certification. Coupons for native plant nurseries and educational posters and materials are still useful to me as I expand my natives and organize my garden around wildlife.

It is easy to be overwhelmed when walking through a garden center like Portland Nursery or Tony's or even Home Depot. See **BACKYARD** Page 4

SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS

Being a Board member is a great opportunity and experience for any neighbor. Members serve for 1-year. Learn more, email info@wilkeseastna.org. "Together WE Can Make A Difference"

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Nadaka Nature Park & Gardens Summer Update & Events



by *Monica McAllister*
Nadaka Nature Park Coordinator

Summer is here, delicious berries are ripe, baby birds are taking flight, and we hope you have been able to get out and enjoy it all at [Nadaka Nature Park](#)! The past couple of months have been bustling with families enjoying the new swing set, community members gathering for parties at the picnic shelter, gardeners tending their veggies and flowers, and nature lovers of all ages exploring the forest. The past few months 'Friends of Nadaka' (FON) has been hard at work providing environmental education activities, community events, and stewardship opportunities for our neighbors, schools, and partnering organizations.

We are most excited about the upcoming Seventh Annual Nadaka Nature Park Festival that will take place August 12th from 12-3pm. This family friendly event will include a visit from the [Audubon Society of Portland's Education Birds](#), free hot dogs and drinks, crafts, games, face painting, dance and music performances. Various partnering organizations will have information booths and fun hands on activities for the whole family. We would love to have volunteers from the Wilkes East neighborhood to help with the event. If you are interested please [contact Monica, the Nadaka Coordinator](#).

Another great way to get involved at Nadaka is to help restore a healthy habitat at Nadaka Nature Park with [SOLVE](#) for the Beach and Riverside Cleanup event on September 23rd 9-12pm! We will be removing invasive species such as English ivy & Himalayan blackberry from the forest. Tools, gloves, training and light refreshments will be provided. Dress to work in natural areas: long pants, brimmed hat, and closed-toe sturdy shoes. Please bring a water bottle and a friend! Businesses, schools and community groups are welcome! Activities include: native shrub and ground cover planting, invasive plant removal, litter cleanup, working in the community garden. This event is a great way to give back to the community and meet others in the neighborhood with similar interests. To register for the event, visit www.friendsofnadaka.org.

For those bird watchers out there, we will be having a Fall Migration Bird Walk with the [Audubon Society of Portland](#) Saturday, September 30th at 9 AM-10 AM. Meet us at the picnic shelter to borrow binoculars, bird guides, and enjoy light refreshments. We will have translators for Spanish speakers and bi-lingual birding cards to use! Birds are not your thing but bugs are? Come to the Beneficial Insects Workshop taught by Celeste Mazzacano with [East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District](#) (EMSWCD) Saturday, November 4th 9 AM-11:30 AM at [St. Aidan's Episcopal](#)

[Church Community Hall](#)! Beneficial insects work around the clock to protect your garden from pests. Meet the diverse cast of predators that provide free pest control, discover plant types and management practices that provide food, water, and shelter to attract and sustain beneficial insects that help your garden thrive. To register visit: <http://emswcd.org/workshops>.

Starting this past April, we have been hosting free hands on gardening workshops once a month in the garden with [Outgrowing Hunger](#) as a follow-up to our Free Seed to Supper Workshops with [Oregon Food Bank](#) and [OSU Extension Service](#) this past winter. The last two workshops will be held Thursday evenings 5:30 -7:00 PM on August, 24th and September, 21st; workshop topics are "Harvesting Your Bounty" & "Shutting Down the Garden" respectively. To save your spot, contact Adam Kohl at 971-231-4191 or adam@outgrowinghunger.org.

Since March, we have partnered with Audubon Society of Portland to host the "[Welcome Back Vulture Day](#)", Jim Labbe led a Bird Walk for Russian Speakers, EMSWCD to teach a Native Plant Workshop and SOLVE for our Annual SOLVE It for Earth Day Cleanup at Nadaka. Private stewardship events include the TIVNU youth group, US Bank volunteers, and Portland Adventist Academy. Our Third Annual Nadaka Tea Fundraiser in June was a huge success and profits from the event will go towards purchasing more education supplies! Partners and community members donated items such as refreshments, space, tea tableware as well as jewelry, home goods, gift cards, and more as raffle items. This event was a wonderful way for community members to meet their neighbors and support Nadaka Nature Park. We hope to see even more attendees next year!

Other events we held include our "Tadpole Tales" events for 2-5 year olds that were held once a month May through August, a Nature Art Camp June 26-30th, with St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, and one week of Camp Fire's Namanu Day Camp in the City at Nadaka Park. The Nadaka Coordinator (NC) & SummerWorks interns helped teach 2 classroom programs for People, Places, and Things and had them visit Nadaka for their "English in the Park" field trip for the "Exploring Nature, Exploring Language" program. [STRIVE](#) Team (Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere), City of Gresham AmeriCorps members, and the Nadaka Coordinator hosted a bilingual Nature Discovery Days the park for moms and children under the age of seven with Mount Hood Community College's "Early Head Start" group. The NC & interns have also been working consistently with the HB Lee SUN & I Have a Dream programs, Wilkes Elementary Books in the Park Program, Home Forward Apartment complexes and general community to provide environmental education, stewardship opportunities, and a safe place for students to explore and play both in the classroom and at the park.

We wanted to give a special shout out to our wonderful Nadaka Ambassadors, two [SummerWorks](#) Interns, and 8 STRIVE Team members who have been amazing at keeping the park clean, safe, and connecting with the community about upcoming events. The Nadaka intern team has been leading environmental education, doing stewardship, gardening, and outreach activities at the park since July. This wonderful group of young professionals are making a huge difference in the neighborhood and gaining experience for future job opportunities. As the Nadaka Coordinator, I am very proud of the Nadaka interns and the work they are doing to become leaders in this community. Please stop by the park and tell everyone what a wonderful job they are doing. Friends of Nadaka is able to providing the programming we do in the summer thanks to them!

See **NADAKA** Page 4

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ADA access to the gardens, and create an area for outdoor gatherings. Even though updates will be occurring, plans will hold true to the home's designation as a historic property on the National Register.

The group is also redefining their educational mission for the museum, so be on the lookout for new exhibits, community events, and stop by for guided tours with expanded content. To start off, they are hosting their first archeological survey in the park on Saturday, September 30. They hope to rediscover some of the home's former outbuildings like a bunkhouse, out-houses, and more. The public is welcome to join in.

Adding to their community engagement goals and starting in September too, the Zimmerman House Museum will be open every Saturday from 10am to 3pm. ECHO is looking to fill three part-time tour guide positions with those who have an enthusiasm for storytelling, can speak in front of groups, and are seeking supplemental income. For those interested, please send an email to info@echohistory.org for job descriptions.

Also, ECHO's decorating the Zimmerman House for the holidays is happening again this year. Some of you may have made it through the storms last year to visit their first event, and they hope you, and those that stayed safe at home, will come out for some holiday fun after Thanksgiving. This upcoming event will focus on the house itself with each room being decorated in a different theme. Santa will also be inside the house this year, taking photos, and checking his naughty and nice list.

With ECHO's increased activities and goals, they have a great need for interested volunteers. From board members to office help and beyond, there are all kinds of opportunities for the Wilkes East community to get involved and help their local historical society grow. You don't have to have experience or even a passion for history, just a desire to give back. Training is included, and it's a lot of fun, too!

Interested? Please contact ECHO at 503-618-0946 or email volunteer@echohistory.org. For more information and to stay up to date on ECHO news and events, visit their website at www.echohistory.org, like them on Facebook, and follow on Instagram and Twitter. ■

BACKYARD (Page 2)

One of the most helpful things about the backyard certification program is the organizing principle that it provides. I know the questions to ask myself when deciding on a plant. Your questions may be different than mine, but mine go something like this: Do I like it? Does it fit with the overall effect I am creating in that area of my yard? Does it feed me or the birds or my eyes? Will it get too tall? How much does it spread? Can it be fairly easily maintained? Is it a native? If not can I find a native that fits most of these criteria? I have the resources now to answer these questions and make my yard "my home."

Once you apply for Backyard Certification, a Backyard Habitat Technician will contact you to set up a site assessment. The Technician will assess the state of your entire yard – not just the backyard. They will identify invasive weeds, listen to your goals and desires for the space, and help make recommendations that are right for you. Following the visit, you'll receive a Site Report full of plant recommendations and recapping your steps toward certification.

I wanted to support the birds and other wildlife, but I also like to feed myself, cut flowers for the house, and decorate my yard with old favorites. The thoughtful combination of native plants, trees and shrubs and traditional garden plants has made my yard an ongoing expression of my respect for the natural world and my love of the plants and birds of my native Oregon. The partnership of the Columbia Land Trust and [Portland Audubon Society](http://PortlandAudubonSociety.org) along with many other supportive native plant groups and vendors make this amazing program possible. This article cites numerous references from [Columbia Land Trust](http://ColumbiaLandTrust.org) materials. For more information, or to become a part of the web of bird and wildlife support, contact backyardhabitats.org. ■

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You can also join us to create a positive social and environmental change in the Wilkes East and Rockwood community. Volunteer at an event or become a Nadaka Ambassador. Friends of Nadaka is currently accepting applications for Nadaka Ambassador Positions. For more information about the Ambassador Program and Nadaka updates, please visit www.friendsofnadaka.org, "Friends of Nadaka" on Facebook, or wilkeseastna.org. For picnic reservations, donations, or providing environmental education to your school, contact Monica at monica@friendsofnadaka.org or call at 503-956-8558. Help us fulfill our mission to nurture nature, food, and families in West Gresham. We look forward to seeing everyone at the park this summer! ■

ROCKWOOD (Page 1)

As design concludes and the construction phase of the project begins, Urban Renewal has partnered with several community organizations, such as Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon ([MESO](http://MESO.org)) and the Mt. Hood Community College Small Business Development Center ([SBDC](http://SBDC.org)) to provide support for local businesses interested in becoming tenants in the new buildings. In conjunction with organizations like [BestHQ](http://BestHQ.org), Rockwood Rising is also looking for local construction businesses interested in participating.

The project team continues to engage with the community and recruit local business as tenants for the project. For more information on the Rockwood Rising project, please visit www.rockwoodrising.com, or sign up for the Rockwood Rising newsletter by emailing rockwoodrising@greshamoregon.gov. ■