

A Neighborhood Begins

Sally Mitani

Al Feldt ran across this piece in a year-old issue of the Ann Arbor Observer and since these streets are the epicenter of DexMil, thought we should find out if there was any more to the story. We called Scott Westerman (whose most recent claim to fame is being photographed with Bill Ayers and Bernadette Dohrn during their recent visit to Ann Arbor—see the 1/27/09 Ann Arbor Chronicle, annarborchronicle.com). Westerman did have a few bits to add to the story. His grandfather, minister Paul Wuerfel, bought the farm which spanned the north and south sides of Miller in 1915 when he retired from the ministry. His doctor “recommended he

have a less stressful career.” Wuerfel lost the property on the north side of Miller for failure to pay taxes, eventually built three houses on Miller (1305 is one of them), and divided up the property between his children and grandchildren. As he says in the Observer article, Paul, Linda Vista, Wesley, and Arborview were streets named by him and various family members. Westerman believes Linda Vista might have been the western boundary of the Wuerfel property but he’s not sure.

The German M.E. church

December’s cover, depicting the 1896 Community of Christ church at Fourth Street and Jefferson, prompted a reminiscence from former superintendent of schools Scott Westerman. “My grandfather, Paul Wuerfel, was the pastor there from 1909 until 1915,” emailed Westerman. It was then First German Methodist Episcopal, and his grandfather preached in German. “It functioned until 1952, when it was sold to the Reorganized Church of [Jesus Christ of] Latter Day Saints and what is now known as the West Side United Methodist Church was built as a replacement,” Westerman wrote, citing Nancy Snyder’s history of the congregation. The Reorganized LDS adopted the name Community of Christ in 2001.

“My grandfather had a small stroke, which led him to buy a farm on the west side,” Westerman added. “He eventually laid out a subdivision. His seven kids were invited to name a street. Not all chose to do that, but my mother named Arborview.” Family members also named Linda Vista, Paul (for Paul Wuerfel), and Wesley (for the founder of Methodism).





NEW HOPE CLINIC

Winnie Northcross

Now approaching its eighth year of operation, the New Hope Outreach Clinic has become a well known health care resource for Washtenaw County residents.

Located downtown at the rear entrance of the large white house on the corner of Miller Ave. and Chapin St. (229 Chapin St.), the New Hope Outreach Clinic (NHOC) has been serving general health care needs of elderly people since April of 2001. Any person age 55 and above is eligible for care at NHOC. The clinic is a partnership between the University of Michigan's Geriatrics Center and New Hope Baptist Church. It is open to all, regardless of race, and was built to provide an accessible, welcoming and comfortable point of entry into the traditional health care system. Self referral is encouraged. The clinic offers primary care, health screening, health education and referral.



Primary care is provided by a clinical nurse practitioner supported by a medical assistant. The nurse practitioner works with and under the supervision of physicians at Turner Clinic, the main geriatric clinic at the University of Michigan. The health care team also includes a social worker and a community outreach coordinator. The social worker provides help with insurance, prescription assistance and other financial concerns as well as being available for both clinic and in-home counseling to patients and their families.

Special efforts are also made by the staff to reach under-served elderly patients, people who are neglecting their health care. If needed, transportation is provided for Clinic appointments via a local cab company, at no cost to the patient. In addition to provid-



ing general health care, special screenings for prostate cancer and memory loss are also offered annually, as well as free flu shots each fall.

A patient's health care costs are billed to his/her health insurance, ie. Medicare, Medicaid, Blue Cross/ Blue Shield and other private medical insurance agencies. If a patient does not have health insurance, assistance will be offered by the staff to obtain enrollment. Operating hours for the clinic are 8:30 a.m.–noon on Mondays and 1:30–5:30 p.m. on Fridays. Appointments may be made during Clinic hours by calling (734) 994-6085, or by calling Turner Clinic at (734) 764-6831.

DexMil

NEWSLETTER

The Linwood/Wildwood Triangle

Sally Mitani

Last newsletter we asked who maintains the Linwood/Wildwood triangle. Thanks to a tip from Drew Lathin, we found out that Pat Ryan and a loose collection of neighborhood well-wishers maintain it, and also found out a good deal more about its history.

Pat Ryan moved into the neighborhood in the mid-1970s. At that time, the Linwood/Wildwood intersection was a traffic hazard—a big open space with a small dirt patch in the middle that people didn't know how to navigate. After a traffic incident in the late 70s when a car jumped the curb and ended up on someone's lawn, she and some concerned neighbors worked with the city engineer to create the current roundabout. Pat and her neighbor Ralph Williams (a well-known U-M English professor who no longer lives there) were serious gardeners. They had landscaped their own yards and were working with other people in the neighborhood, and they took up a collection of plants from local gardens to landscape the triangle. "We planted a variety of things. Bulb plants in spring, ground cover, early summer bulbs, forsythia, day lilies (from Ralph Williams' mother's garden in Ontario), phlox, real lilies."

Originally the city kept the island mowed but by the early 90s, Pat says that the city was outsourcing mowing to companies using larger mowers, and so many plants were being damaged that Pat and friends took over landscaping entirely, though the city still supplies woodchips and compost on request.

She says that climate change is beginning to take its toll. There is no water source on the island and because it is on a slope, the area drains rapidly. "When it was established, we had a shorter growing season, had more natural moisture. The plants we planted were semi-drought tolerant," but not enough for the slightly longer growing season we have now. The phlox "turned to crisp cornstalks before blooming" last year. They've been thinking of transitioning to more drought-tolerant perennials like sedum and sage.

Pat also maintains some other neighborhood gardens, and is concerned about the city's fiscal crisis which is surely going to result in even more cuts to city park maintenance. She's involved with the city program NAP (Natural Area Preservation) which uses volunteer labor to restore and maintain natural areas. She urges people to join in the bi-annual NAP volunteer efforts that take place in many of the city parks and wild areas.

Miscellaneous Reports & Suggestions

Michael Andes writes: Might it work to have, simultaneously, two or three giant, cooperative garage sales rather than 25 households doing them over the course of the summer? We could have some sort of bash, with a potluck and live music, etc., afterward.

Sally Mitani writes: Just to reiterate what I sent out in an email. If you want the base of your driveway or your corner-cut ice buildup chopped out, contact me, and I'll try to coordinate and negotiate with David Menefee (who coincidentally grew up on Arbana and has a fondness for the neighborhood). sally@mitanishoeworks.com.



Help with Home Repairs

Rebuilding Together Washtenaw is a non-profit whose main mission is an annual one-day event held on the last Saturday in April. On that day skilled tradespeople and volunteers spend the day in homes:

- Installing new furnaces, water heaters & cabinets
- Building handicap ramps
- Repairing plumbing
- Upgrading and repairing electrical services
- Painting, plastering, and trash removal

Your home might be eligible for this if you live within the Ann Arbor, Dexter, Manchester, or Ypsilanti school districts; you are low-income, elderly or someone with a disability; and you are the owner of the property.

If you would like to apply, or if you know of a home that you think could be eligible, or if you'd like to volunteer, see their Web site: www.rebuildingtogetherwashtenaw.org or get in touch with Cathy Antonakos.

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February 2009

The DexMil Community Subgroups

Al Feldt and Sally Mitani

For those of you who are new to the co-op, you may notice Al Feldt occasionally mentions “subgroups.” What he means is that from time to time a group of households finds a common interest, and combines resources, expertise or social skills. There’s really no official record of subgroup activity, but if any of these things below interest you, someone (most likely Al) can direct you to where the action is. The co-op encourages such subgroups, so please feel free to start one and let us know about it (usually what happens is there are a few general email posts and then it goes “offline” to those who are interested in it). Here is very brief record of some of the subgroups that have either formed or been discussed.

Hav-a-Hart Live Trap Pool. Ten households contributed towards the \$60 price of a large live trap to catch ground hogs and remove them to more rural locations. Pool members may use it at no cost but it may be loaned to others in exchange for DexMils.

Sewer and Sidewalk Repairs. This is really two different threads. Some of us were concerned about the dreaded Orangeburg sewer pipe and banded together to get our sewer lines tested. Another group got together on sidewalk repair. At any rate, substantial cost savings were attained this way. Bottom line, if you are going to have something expensive done to your house that you think others in the neighborhood might need too, do give a shout before you go it alone; there’s already substantial banked group knowledge on the Orangeburg and sidewalk issues in particular.

Home Schooling. Five or six of the households joining the DexMil mentioned an interest in either giving or receiving training and courses in languages, mathematics, writing, philosophy, and so on. Creating a subgroup interested in providing a few special courses for either children or adult Community members appears to be another good possibility for a specialized subgroup.

Scrabble Group. Several households have found a shared interest in Scrabble and meet regularly to play. Bridge and Poker groups have also been mentioned but nothing has developed so far.

Calling Circle. If a few members are concerned about becoming ill or having a household accident

without being able to call for help, a Calling Circle can be easily established and operated. Four or five households combine to provide a daily check on the well being of each member. At an agreed hour, the first member calls the second, the second then calls the third and so on until the last member calls the first member, confirming that each person in the circle is able to answer the phone and is in good health. If the chain is broken or someone reports themselves ill, everyone knows within the hour and they can check on the person having trouble. An active calling circle has not yet been created in DEXML but they have been very effective in other communities.

Joint Ownership of Limited Use Equipment. A few members have discussed purchasing and sharing use of snow blowers, pick up trucks, etc. This would require special provisions for registration and insurance of the more costly equipment, possibly by forming a non-profit corporation for the purpose. If demand were high enough, Dexmil itself might undertake such a purchase.

Ride Sharing. The SHARECARE COOP in Leelanau county has lined up a group of volunteer drivers willing to dedicate one day a month to providing rides for others in the community needing rides that day. We have not heard how successful it is but this is a fairly rural area and it probably helps a great deal and saves a lot of gas. Over a third of our member households have offered driving to appointments and shopping as a service but I am unaware of any ride sharing that has occurred so far. It might be well worthwhile for ten or more to join together to establish ride sharing days. I have a description of the SHARECARE ridesharing operation if anyone wishes to pursue this.

Please & Thank You

Liina Paasuke

You probably have seen me scooting (in my wheelchair scooter) around the neighborhood walking my dog Charlie. He loves his walks and it’s about my only outdoor activity in the winter. Needless to say, the walk tends to turn into a challenge with the weather we have been having!! Unshoveled curb cuts, driveways, and partially shoveled walks (i.e. one-shovel-wide) abound and turn into major obstacles—especially after the plow comes by. When I can’t make it through the curb cut, I look for a driveway. When I can’t find a driveway, I have to back up in the scooter until I can exit to where I originally was able to access the sidewalk. Sometimes, I think I can make it, I attempt to plow through it and get stuck! Sometimes, I can rock myself out, sometimes the fuse on the scooter goes and I have to wait for it to reset—Brrr!, and sometimes a kind soul comes along or stops their car and gives me a push out. Many thanks to you!! Kudos also to those neighbors who take pride in maintaining their property and shoveling like they are supposed to! I am requesting the other neighbors to please pay attention to this issue and clean your walks and curb cuts—walkers, parents with baby carriages, and us scooterers will really appreciate it!!

The DexMil News is the bi-annual newsletter of the
Dexter-Miller Community.

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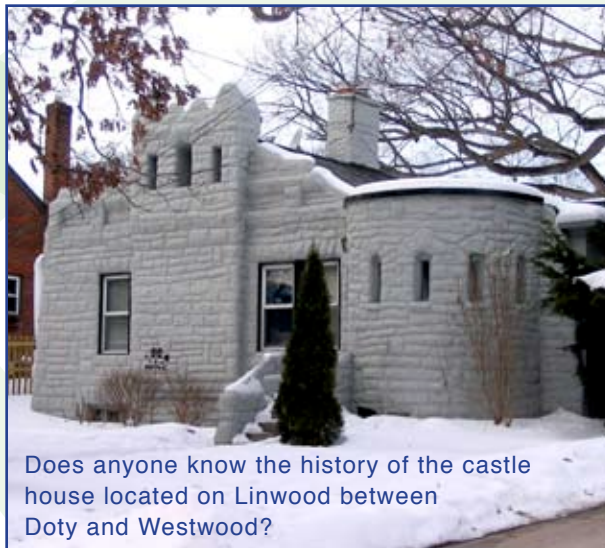
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To find out more about the Dexter-Miller Community, see:
www.dexmil.com

To submit items for newsletter please email Sally Mitani:
sally@mitanishoeworks.com, or lets face it, Al Feldt, who
does everything.

DexMil

NEWSLETTER



Does anyone know the history of the castle
house located on Linwood between
Doty and Westwood?

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CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

Digital converter box installed on your analog TV. A new unit, DTX9900, already purchased using the \$40 coupon from the government. Cost to you is \$20 (our cost) plus actual time for installation in DexMils (est. 3, or 45 minutes). Note: if you are using cable, you do not need this box installed. Only for TVs using antennas. Charlie and Vivienne Armentrout, 668-8579.

Typewriter. Smith-Corona XD 5250 Electronic Memory/ Spellcheck with owner's manual. Originally \$169, now \$35. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Recumbent bike and elliptical crosstrainer. Sear's Pro-Form Rebel. Like new, rarely used. Originally \$499, ow \$125. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Child's antique rolltop desk. Originally \$175, now \$125. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Coffee table, antique. Golden maple, 42" x 32" x 21". \$125. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Fax/plain paper copier. Panasonic Laser KX-FL-511. \$35. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Printer. Canon BJC 4200 Color Jet. \$25. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Clock radio, York Electric. \$10. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

Clock Radio, Hitachi Electric. \$10. Contact Kathy, kjones1601@provide.net or 995-5232.

2006 Kia Spectra EX, 4-door, 4-cylinder, 2.0 liter engine. Automatic transmission, front wheel drive, 27,675 miles. Gets 30 mpg highway. Silver color, no accidents, has had regular oil changes, reliable, runs great, great commuter car. Still under manufacturer's warranty (5 yr/50,000 mi, which began 4/1/06). Asking \$8,500. Contact Jmarcoux@umich.edu.

FREE

Almost new 999 piece jigsaw puzzle. Should be 1000 but apparently sold with one missing piece. It is of a Japanese garden with bridge and maples. Quite difficult and suitable for a winter's long several weeks. Only assembled once. Vivienne Armentrout, 668-8579, vnarmentrout@sbcglobal.net.

Free bits of leather for craft projects, etc. Come rummage through my scrap pile in my workshop. Contact Sally@mitanishoeworks.com.