



## insideNewberry

To honor the past...inform the present...envision the future, *insideNewberry* is published quarterly by Newberry Community Partnership (NCP) as a service to the neighborhood to promote community pride and facilitate communication between residents, schools, civic organizations and businesses. NCP is a non-profit community-based organization established in 2006. Please support our sponsors who made this issue possible!

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### insideNewberry

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## Many West 4th Street Trees Replanted, a Victory for Local Advocates

At long last, some of the trees removed from West 4th Street have been replaced through the efforts of Mayor Slaughter, city arborist Chad Eckert, and the advocacy of the Newberry Community Partnership (NCP). This partial restoration of the 51 trees removed in 2018 by PennDOT for the 4th Street project is a cause to celebrate local advocacy and small victories for the Newberry community.

When Margaret Tupper drives home into Newberry, she and her husband come in on the old US220 and West 4th street, which used to look like a tree-lined, classically American, residential street.

The removal of those 51 trees, though, made it more bare and open, like an in-town highway. Studies confirm that tree-lined residential streets slow traffic down and make motorists more aware of residential pedestrians, and the new stripped-down street profile is one that worried Tupper and many others in Newberry.

In early November, though, crews with the Public Works Department of the city, with Eckert's know-how, planted 33 trees in the tree lawns on the north side of the street and 6 trees on the south side. That total is still 12 shy of the original number of street trees that graced West 4th from Roosevelt Junior High to Arch Street, but NCP members who had fought for some replacements – any replacements – were overjoyed. It will take many years before the new young trees can grow to fill the “shoes,” so to speak, of the trees



*Although it doesn't look like much now, eventually this sapling will grow into either a Zelkova or Hackberry tree.*

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Many West 4th Street Trees Replanted, a Victory for Local Advocates

(Continued from page 1)

they are replacing, but even small beginnings are beginnings.

Eckert reports that the new trees are a mix of Zelkova (Village Green variety) and Hackberry, and workers planted the types in an alternating pattern from Diamond Street to Oliver Avenue, though PennDOT removed a couple of the new trees to provide for line of sight at an intersection. The types were chosen specifically for the tree lawn, as different kinds of trees have different size footprints and root systems. When the wrong type of tree is planted too close to a sidewalk, it can make the sidewalk a small hill or break the sidewalk up entirely.

Alannah Gabriel, an NCP member, was one of those 4th Street residents who got a new tree in her “tree lawn,” which is the space between the street and the sidewalk. She got to watch the process, and she was even more happy with getting a tree back because she had also lost one of her residential front trees this last year. “My father had planted it, and he loved that tree, but it was dying,” she said.

Beside slowing traffic and improving the look of a neighborhood, street trees help clean the air, control water runoff, reduce noise from the street, and increase shade in the summers. As a Tree City USA, Williamsport also tries to maintain its urban tree density and take care of the trees already planted throughout the city.

These trees were planted with funds available through the American Rescue Plan, a decision made by Mayor Slaughter and the City Council, all of whom have supported the restoration of the trees through the different engagements with PennDOT. Slaughter said, “Street trees bring many positive impacts to a neighborhood and the community as a whole. I was pleased to be able to assist with the replacement of these trees in the Newberry section of the city.”

The 4th Street trees were initially removed by PennDOT to make the restoration of the street – which is a state highway under PennDOT

jurisdiction – more convenient and cost-efficient. As previously reported in *insideNewberry*, new utility connections and telecommunications hardware were going to go under some of the tree lawns and PennDOT had initially planned to broaden the sidewalks from 3 feet to 5 feet wide in keeping with ADA requirements, so they felt the trees needed to go. After the 2018-2019 stage of the project, the sidewalks ended up remaining small enough that the tree lawns could be used again for trees. However, PennDOT did not respond to repeated requests from community members or city officials to replace the trees. City Hall, deciding that it couldn’t fight the state, took matters in its own hands with some of the funds recently made available.

The engagement with PennDOT over the past few years may also provide the city with fair warning for the next stage of the state roadway project that will impact the lovely alley of trees along central 4th Street’s Millionaire’s Row.

Trees in the tree lawns are the joint responsibility of the city and property residents. They are technically owned by the city, but residents are responsible for their watering, leaf cleanup, and general maintenance. These new street trees may be watered and maintained for the first several crucial years by the City’s Department of Public Works, but Eckert still recommends that residents water their street trees when needed. Residents should not trim or remove the trees, however.

When it comes time to rake leaves, it is a seasonal tradition to grumble about the trees, just as it is a seasonal tradition to marvel at their gold, red, brown, and yellow explosions of color earlier in the fall. The trees do a lot for the health of the community and the value of the land all year round, though, and future generations of Williamsport residents driving in on West 4th will be glad for the restful sight of Newberry, clad again in lines of growing trees. ~ *Margaret Tupper and Joshua Hill*





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# Preziosi Park's History: Fire and Ice

Today, Preziosi Park is a central gathering place for many of the youth of Newberry, but many Newberry residents remember when it was a different kind of youth gathering - an elementary school. Jackson Elementary originally stood where the park is now, and the elementary school playground and ball fields remained as the core of what was then Newberry Park.

What happened to the school? Like many of the Newberry buildings of old, it fell victim to fire.

Alan Feist, owner of AAA Motors on 3rd Street, says he was not in school yet, but he remembers the impact of the February 1950 event. "They had to find someplace for all the Jackson kids to go," he said, noting that his friend Marsha Bergman (née Walters) was in 1st grade at Jackson at the time. "Her classroom had a goldfish bowl, and she was real concerned about its safety. Her father told her the firemen would get the fish out."



According to newspaper accounts at the time, the fire was so devastating due to 25 mph winds that fed the flames and pushed the fire through the building. Fire companies from several surrounding areas worked to control the blaze, which took eight hours.

Phil Preziosi, a former mayor of Williamsport, remembers seeing the fire from the window of

his house and thinking at first that it was his neighbor's house on fire, where his friend Anthony Rizzo lived. Like many in the neighborhood, he came out and watched some of the firefight, and he was out there when the school bell crashed down. "I used to have my turn ringing that bell for the school. It would pull you up off your feet on the upswing. We would sometimes sneak over and ring it, but if you got caught, it would be a paddling!"



*(Continued on page 5)*



# Preziosi Park's History: Fire and Ice (Continued from page 4)

Preziosi speculated that years of oiling the wood floors contributed to the intractability of the blaze. Grant Hepler, the janitor at the time, "took good care of the school," Feist says, and no one knows what started the fire.

Feist reports that the almost 300 Jackson students were transferred to Lincoln Elementary. Preziosi was in the graduating class at Jackson at the time, and he was one of those students rotated into Lincoln Elementary, where STEP is now located, a half day at a time because the school didn't have enough room for all of them at once. The rotating classes lasted for two years while construction on the new Roosevelt Junior High was finished, allowing the old Roosevelt Junior High on Wayne street to become the new Jackson Elementary.

Through Feist's childhood, the former site of the school now became a center of Newberry life.



"They had a curb all around where the school had been," Feist remembered, "and in winter, some people from the Williamsport Playground Association would run a hose into that center area to create an ice skating rink." After the ice had been criss-crossed too much by too many ice skates, Feist and others would get 5-6

flat metal shovels and skim across the rink in a line. Their periodic maintenance using this human-powered Zamboni kept the ice in shape while the cold lasted. "It's crazy what kids will come up with," Feist laughed.

The Playground Association also had a fire going in a burn barrel nearby when skating in the chilly conditions got a little too nippy.

Preziosi was part of a neighborhood group years ago that organized many



*(Continued on page 6)*

# Preziosi Park's History: Fire and Ice (Continued from page 3)

other community events in the park, including Polka parties, tennis, and other types of recreation. He says the park used to feature a pavilion and a spray park as well, which were neighborhood gathering spots. The Lions Club, of which Preziosi is a member, used to run fairs at the park on a regular basis as well.

Besides those recreational events and cavorting on the regular playground equipment at the newly transitioned park, kids played baseball and softball. The backstop, Feist reports, was originally on the corner of the park facing originally on the southeast corner of the park's field, nearer Sanders's mortuary. "If you hit a foul ball wrong, you might bean the Dinchers's house," Feist noted. Later Newberry youth, like Carrie Mayer, had softball practice at the park, sometimes run by the funeral director at Sanders Mortuary, Leroy Sanders, who came out to coach a few times straight from a service and still in his suit.

Through fire, ice, and several generations of youth, the current Preziosi Park has been adapted by the community, and the kids themselves, to meet the needs of the time. Preziosi, the park's namesake, would like to see the park further

enhanced for the current era. He says a "lot of transitions have taken place there and we can continue that; recreation is a big part of the city, a vital part for the people and for attracting industry, and this park is not just for Newberry but for all of Williamsport. In our neighborhood, though, it is currently utilized by all walks of life because Newberry is a very integrated, very diverse part of the city."

Neighborhood parks are one of the spaces known as "commons," spaces shared by everyone and taken care of by everyone. Preziosi Park's story has had many interesting chapters, and we look forward to seeing what is in store for its future.



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# *insideNewberry* Celebrates Woodley's Editorship and Community Service

After eight years at the helm of *insideNewberry*, Bob Woodley is handing the editorship over to Joshua Hill, though he still plans to be an active contributor and member of the Newberry Community Partnership (NCP).

An advertising manager for Backyard Broadcasting, Woodley brought years of professional experience in journalism and practical copy editing to *insideNewberry*, making sure that the publication arm of NCP kept its content focused and newsworthy. "My number one rule for content in *insideNewberry*," said Woodley, "is that it be Newberry-centric."

Woodley took over editorship in 2014 from Alannah Gabriel, who years earlier – with permission – repurposed a newsletter put out by a local community member as a labor of love. The original newsletter collected and disseminated stories about the past of Newberry; Gabriel broadened the scope of the publication as part of the fledgling NCP to address Newberry's present and future issues as well.

Woodley added his own energy to investigating and reporting on current issues. Woodley's leadership in writing up the Newberry struggle with PennDOT over 4th Street's trees is one such example (see April/June 2019 *insideNewberry* at [insideneewberry.org](http://insideneewberry.org)).

The role of editor at a community publication involves building relationships with community stakeholders who might contribute articles, putting out calls for articles, deciding which ones to publish in which issues, and editing articles for space and publication style. Woodley added to those duties his own reporting, listening for the Newberry issues of the day and getting information from the community members affected.

Besides the focus on Newberry, Woodley says that his other key criteria are that stories be "informative and/or entertaining, and I like to focus on good news as much as possible."

Stepping down from the editor's desk doesn't

mean Woodley is pulling back from publication, though – quite the opposite! In February of 2022, Woodley started a new venture, a podcast called The Listening Tube, to reflect on current events, especially from a historical perspective (see <https://thelisteningtube.buzzsprout.com/>). He said that it surprised him how much time he

ended up spending on researching and writing for the podcast, wanting to make sure the end product hit his standards of quality. Juggling the new podcast, a full-time job, membership on the board of directors at the Newberry Independent Club, and editorship of *insideNewberry*, he knew that something needed to give.

"When Joshua came in to the NCP as a professor of English and Communication, I could see the possibility for the next editor of *insideNewberry*," Woodley said. "I could never have dreamed that Newberry would be lucky enough to have someone with a Doctorate in English be willing to be Editor of *insideNewberry*. I have a lot of confidence in passing the torch of this role to Joshua." Bob is committed to helping with the transition so that this community publication can continue to serve the Newberry area residents and businesses well into the future.

If you have story content ideas, you can email them to [insideneewberry@yahoo.com](mailto:insideneewberry@yahoo.com). To see past issues from Woodley's tenure, go to [insideneewberry.org](http://insideneewberry.org), click on an issue title, then click on the hyperlink for a PDF version of that issue.





# Write For *insideNewberry*

*insideNewberry* invites Newberry community members, past and present, to contribute story ideas or articles so that *insideNewberry* can represent more Newberry voices in each of its quarterly editions. Read on for more details on the types of stories that fit within this publication's parameters and for what steps you might take to contribute.

The main types of stories that *insideNewberry* features are local human interest stories, local community issues, public service information stories, new business spotlights, local school awards and events, and profiles from local residents about Newberry past. Photographs from the long history of Newberry are also welcomed.

**HUMAN INTEREST** stories can be ones that celebrate some of the people and happenings in your corner of Newberry, neighbors who you think are some of the most interesting people in the community, for example, or traditions on your street that bring many of the residents together.

**LOCAL COMMUNITY ISSUES** are local problems or possible neighborhood improvements that you can explain in a helpful way, telling your readers of the context of the problem and any information relevant to the problem. The recent series of articles about the removal and restoration of trees along West 4th Street is an example of this kind of article.

**PUBLIC SERVICE INFORMATION** articles tell others in the community about topics of health, safety, or other generally helpful information to improve the quality of life for many of your readers. Articles about fall fire safety, for example, or how to prepare a flower bed for the winter, would fit in this category.

**ARTICLES ON BUSINESSES AND SCHOOLS** highlight some of the fun and positive new things happening in the community, giving new businesses an introduction to the community and celebrating outstanding local schools, teachers, and educational events.

**PROFILES OF NEWBERRY PAST** are stories that feature people, places, and events from earlier generations of Newberry that emphasize the good things about our community and foster a sense of

community identity. Our neighbors who have lived here all their lives and have raised children (and maybe grandchildren) here would have the greatest stock of stories to draw from, and if they have pictures to go with those stories, so much the better.

*insideNewberry* does not publish editorials on state or national issues, and its engagement with politics is limited to local issues (replacing 4th Street trees, for example) and equal opportunity ads in our election special issues.

How can you contribute your voice to your community publication? There are two main avenues you can take. First, you can email [insidenewberry@yahoo.com](mailto:insidenewberry@yahoo.com) at any time with articles, pictures, or ideas for articles. If you are not sure whether your idea is a fit for *insideNewberry*, email your basic idea, and an editor can reply and have a conversation with you about that idea. If you are not confident in your writing skills (a common anxiety), email your article draft along with a request for editorial help. An editor will contact you, ask a few questions, and help get your story into shape.

A second avenue for those interested in brainstorming ideas with other *insideNewberry* writers is to attend one of the writers' sessions that are held every 1-2 months at Diamond Square Market. There, we meet one another face to face, make lists of possible story ideas, and volunteer to be assigned to different ones of those stories. Follow Newberry Community Partnership on FaceBook for meeting announcements or email to be put on the writer contact list.

If you have been reading *insideNewberry* and have wondered who writes the articles and how it comes together, the answer is that your neighbors are the ones responsible. Your neighboring businesses sponsor the publication and your neighbors volunteer time to put it together. We would like to invite more of our neighbors to bring in their own areas of expertise, historical knowledge, and talents – including yours – because we believe that will build up the Newberry community as a whole.

# Iglesia Nueva: A New Spanish-Speaking Church Starts in Newberry

The diversity of churches available in Newberry has recently expanded to include a Spanish-speaking church plant of Iglesia Elim of Frederick, Maryland. *Ahora hay una iglesia nueva, plantado por la Iglesia Elim de Frederick, Maryland, para la gente de habla hispana que quiere enseñar de y adorar a Dios.*

Julio and Francisca Peña moved to Williamsport from Frederick, but had a hard time finding a Spanish-speaking church close to home. Like with many others, the pandemic lockdown caused them to re-evaluate their spiritual direction and then to take action. Contacting their mentors in Maryland, the Peñas were encouraged to start meetings in their home in Newberry, which they began in August 2021. Enoc Argueta, a pastor-in-training under Elim Pastor Mario Rivera, and his wife began commuting to Williamsport soon afterward to help lead the home service.

When asked about their goals for this church plant, Julio Peña said, “We want to enter a better life with Christ, in His life, but also be a blessing in our lives to one another/*queremos llevar a una vida mejor en Cristo, su vida, pero ser también un bendición para nuestras vidas, uno por otro.*”

As word got around, the home service grew to the point that, at times, there were as many people standing as sitting. The in-person services consisted of scripture readings, a capella songs, prayers, and an exhortation brought by Argueta. Those services were supplemented by online meetings and prayer services during the week, as well as online connections to the church in Maryland.

In late summer 2022, the leaders of the church



*The Iglesia Elim congregation sings during a Sunday afternoon meeting in their new location made available by Newberry Christian Fellowship.*

were introduced to John Sensenig and the stewards of Newberry Christian Fellowship, a Mennonite church that started meeting at 2233 Linn Street only a few years ago, to talk about sharing time in that church building. Meeting on Sunday afternoons at 2:00 p.m., the Elim church plant has been served over its first months by a worship team that has traveled with Argueta from Maryland each weekend.

“We trust that God will be the center of this church, restoring people according to the ways that Christ commanded, empowered to serve as a work of God/*esperamos Dios sea el centro de esta iglesia, restorar a las personas de la manera que Cristo lo mandó, con poder servir por obra de Dios, said Pastor Argueta.*

Many of the congregants are people who have come to America in the last decade looking for the opportunity to build better lives in the freedom of America, including several fleeing what the United States Institute of Peace calls an “unprecedented social and humanitarian collapse” in Venezuela. A regular theme in the church services has been to



# Iglesia Nueva: A New Spanish-Speaking Church Starts in Newberry

(Continued from page 10)

remember gratitude toward God and responsibility to do good in the midst of the blessings of having good employment and freedom.

Merwis Urdanata, one of the congregants, says, "I feel good coming here; it is a necessity/*me siento bien venir; es un necesidad.*"

*Los servicios empiece a las 2 de la tarde los Domingos, 2233 Linn Street. Se vaya a Elim Williamsport PA pagina de FaceBook para mas informacion.*



Pastor Enoc Argueta and the worship team from Iglesia Elim Frederick.

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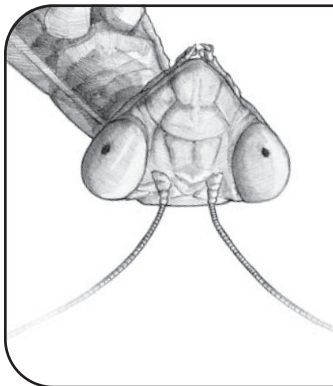
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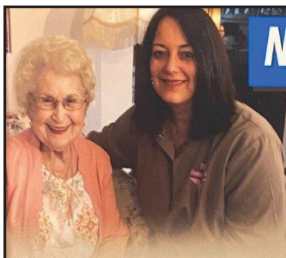
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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## JANUARY 2023

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 1** – New Year's Day  
(Federal Holiday)

**MONDAY, JANUARY 2** – New Year's Day  
(Substitute - State & Federal Holiday - Banks  
Closed)

**MONDAY, JANUARY 16** – Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Day (State & 7 Federal Holiday - Banks Closed)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 22** – Lunar New Year

## FEBRUARY 2023

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6** – Groundhog Day

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12** – Super Bowl LVII

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14** – Valentine's Day

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20** – President's Day  
(Federal & State Holiday - Banks Closed)

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21** – Mardi Gras/Shrove  
Tuesday

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22** – Ash  
Wednesday (Christian)

## MARCH 2023

**FRIDAY, MARCH 3** – Employee Appreciation  
Day

**SUNDAY, MARCH 12** – Daylight Savings Time  
Begins – Set Your Clocks AHEAD One Hour

**FRIDAY, MARCH 17** – St. Patrick's Day

**MONDAY, MARCH 20** – Spring Equinox

## APRIL 2023

**SUNDAY, APRIL 2** – Palm Sunday (Christian)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 6** – Maundy Thursday  
(Christian), First Day of Passover (Jewish)

**FRIDAY, APRIL 7** – Good Friday (Christian)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 8** – Holy Saturday (Christian)

**SUNDAY, APRIL 9** – Easter Sunday (Christian)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 13** – Last Day of Passover  
(Jewish)

**TUESDAY, APRIL 18** – Tax Day

**MONDAY, APRIL 24** – Arbor Day