

# BRIDGES

Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood  
October 2015

This project is funded in part by the Initiative Foundation, a regional foundation.

[www.HesterPark.org](http://www.HesterPark.org)



## Upcoming Events

Ghost Tour at Hester Park  
Saturday, October 24, 4:30 and 6:30 PM

Gorecki Guest House Tours  
Tuesday, October 27, 2:30-6:30 PM

Comprehensive Plan Open House at City Hall  
Thursday, October 29, 6:00-8:00 PM

Election at Madison School (change of location)  
Tuesday, November 3, 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Monthly Steering Committee Meeting at Cathedral  
Thursday, November 5, 6:30 PM

Festival of Lights at the Saint Cloud Hospital  
Thursday, December 3, 6:00-8:00 PM

APO Presentation on Bicycle Level of Service  
T.B.D. Please sign up for email notices.

## Receive Email Notices

Desire to receive email notices about neighborhood events? Sign-up online. [www.HesterPark.org](http://www.HesterPark.org)

Have Facebook? Hester Park is also there.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ghost Tour

Did you know that Saint Cloud was THE place to be . . . in 1860? Did you know that there have been murders, drownings, hauntings, and mischief in the Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood?

After the 2014 ghost tour, all participants declared it a rousing good time.

This year's all new stories and history will bring something new. Featured neighbor Dan Becker will highlight Hester Gilman, for whom Hester Park is named. Costumed characters from the neighborhood's history, stories of tragedies and hauntings, and treats will delight attendees.

Occurring one day only, October 24, tickets are available for tours at either 4:30 PM or 6:30 PM.

This spooky, historic tour starts at the southwestern corner of Hester Park, traverses the park and a few blocks around, then ends back in Hester Park. The entire route is accessible and open to folks of all ages. It is not too scary for older children.

Tickets are available for \$10 by calling Seal Dwyer at 320-296-2530 or at the gate. A limited quantity of tickets are available. All proceeds benefit the Northside-Heser Park Neighborhood.

## Ron's Auto Repair is Closed

Neighborhood business owner Ronald L. Newman unexpectedly passed away in August.

In 1984, Ron Newman bought the land at 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North. Tucked into the neighborhood, Ron had a shop built. The local entrepreneur relocated his business from a rented garage in the Saint John Cantius neighborhood to its shiny new location along the railroad tracks.

During the 31 years of operation, Ron's new shop took on a reputation for not only solving automotive issues, but also its orderliness. Ron was meticulous about care of his vast tools.

Perhaps automobiles are genetic in the Newman family. His brother Daryl operates an auto body shop in Sauk Rapids. A saying in the family goes, "Ron made them run, Daryl makes them shine."

Ron unexpectedly died August 14 in his downtown apartment, which was only two-tenths of a mile from his shop.

As of October, Ron's Auto Repair remains closed. Only time knows if another entrepreneur will reopen the shop, or if the land will soon see a new use.

Coincidentally, Ron's is a stone's throw from a long-shuttered business at 304 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This former Phillips 66 service station lost its visibility when the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue underpass was installed below the railroad in 1961. Eventually, it closed in the mid-1990's. Though owned by fuel supplier Schwagel Distributing, the extent of its activity is rented parking for Stearns County.

The shuttered service station stands northwest of Ron's Auto Repair. Stearns County currently rents the building.

## Holiday Lighting Contest

For the past several years, the neighborhood steering committee has judged residents' holiday light displays. This year, the ten best displays will be awarded accolades and \$25. The absolute best display will receive a prize from local businesses.

Put up those lights, those glowing figures, the crèches, and the reindeer. Let's make the darkest time of year bright in this neighborhood.

New in 2015, the neighborhood steering committee might complement the hospital's display with lights in Hester Park.

Ron's Auto closed unexpected in mid-August.



## Independence Day Fundraiser

Another summer on the north side of St Cloud is over. One hallmark event that occurs every year at Hester Park is on the 4th of July. The military band played and fireworks went off without a hitch. It is not much for longevity but the impact is powerful.

The Northside-Hester Park neighborhood has used this as a fundraiser for the past six years. A special thank you for all those who volunteered including Susie Lies, Steve Lanz, Joan and Micheal Rydberg, Janet Reigstad and family, JJ Helm and family, John Augustin, Sonya Berg and anyone else omitted.

This fundraiser helps meet the requirements of the SCNC for matching funds. This year, a booth sold water, glow sticks and patriotic memorabilia.

Direct fundraising also occurred for the benefit of the Saint Cloud Fireworks Committee, which is trying to establish a permanent fund for this event so that money is not a worry year after year.

## Gorecki Guest House Expansion

The new addition to the hospital's Gorecki Guest House increased guest rooms from 12 to 28. The facility will be open for tours and refreshments on October 27 from 2:30 to 6:30 PM.

Accommodating patients and family members, the guest house offers a comfortable, homelike atmosphere that allows families the opportunity to stay close to their loved ones.

This expansion enables it to serve more families and to accommodate families in urgent situations. Extended registration hours will be available to families that arrive later in the evening.

Since June 2009, more than 12,000 guests have stayed.



## Comprehensive Plan Unveiling

A draft of the city's comprehensive plan is to be unveiled in late October 2015. This new document replaces the 2003 comprehensive plan.

Of significance to the Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood is the zoning discussion for areas south of Veterans Drive. Residents of this area initiated a zoning survey in 2013, of which many resulting opinions disagreed with existing zoning. Action on this topic was deferred to this new comprehensive plan.

To recap, several blocks of existing single-family homes are currently zoned for apartment buildings and other multi-family dwellings. This enables existing homes to be easily converted to multiple units of rental housing or torn down and replaced by apartments.

A public open house will be held on Thursday, October 29 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the council chambers of City Hall, 400 2<sup>nd</sup> Street South.

Community Development Director Matt Glaesman says, "I haven't seen the draft comprehensive plan yet, but understand that it will take a position on high density residential redevelopment surrounding the downtown."

As details of the plan become available, they will be published online at [www.StCloudPlan.com](http://www.StCloudPlan.com).

The guest house was expanded to the north.

## Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood

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## Goodbye Empire Park Electric Substation



On October 19, Xcel Engery crews were disassembling the obsolete substation at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street North.

## Areas's 4<sup>th</sup> Alley Cat Race

Did you recently see bicyclists donning colorful balloons? A small, annual bicycle race in Saint Cloud meandered through the Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood on the seventeenth of October.

The “Alley Cat” race started at the granite trio in downtown Saint Cloud. Competitors raced to the finish at a local restaurant. No formal route was

declared. Instead, participants charted their own courses to various checkpoints. Of the eleven checkpoints, four were in this neighborhood.

Each checkpoint required a brief stop for either research or a challenge. For example, at the dead end of Veterans Drive, cyclists identified the year of manufacture of the fire hydrant. At another checkpoint, cyclists inflated balloons that needed to remain intact until the final destination.