




The Official Newsletter of The City of Audubon Park

Tony Williams, Mayor
Janette Mercer, City Clerk
City Hall: 3340 Robin Road
637-5066
www.AudubonParkKY.org
 Audubon Park City Hall



City Council:

Jennifer Kleier
Brittney Gorter
Andrew Klump

Madeline Bozeman
Austin Schwenker
Stephanie George

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FROM THE DESK OF MAYOR WILLIAMS

Tony Williams

Happy Holidays! A new City Council is set to take office at the beginning of 2021. Congratulations to Andrew Klump on his third term, Madeline Bozeman and Austin Schwenker on their second term, and Daniel Stephen, Michael Hartman, and Elyse Shackleton on their first term winning the election and serving the next two years as City Council members.

I also want to recognize the years of service and results of the previous city council members Brittney Gorter (two terms), Stephanie George (one term), and Jennifer Kleier (one term) and the recently re-elected Andrew Klump, Madeline Bozeman, and Austin Schwenker all of whom were instrumental in the passing of fourteen new ordinances and nine municipal orders. These covered a broad range of issues such as garage heights, yard sales, solar panels, and an updated forestry code.

Due to COVID-19 concerns, it was important that we digitized as many forms as we could online to our website, to limit in person visits to City Hall. New online building permitting processes, tree pruning or removal, and miscellaneous code complaint forms have been added to the City website for civic ease of use and instant streamlining of information to appropriate parties.

Entrance columns have been professionally restored, power supplies for electric lamp post lighting and outlets have been installed along with professional landscaping. All roads have now been recently repaired, replaced, or repaved. Old, unsightly garbage cans in the parks have been removed and replaced with new, more attractive replacements. Dog waste stations have been added to the parks to aid pet owners in picking up after their pets.

A long-awaited utility tree trimming project was completed by LG&E to help ease the frequency of power outages. A drain cleanout at the end of Henderson Park and Wren Road was finally performed that removed nearly two full dump trucks of dirt, debris, leaves, and rubbish.

Seventeen board appointments have been filled, including the ranks of the Code Enforcement, Ethics, Forest, and Parks and Recreation Boards. As resident moves and other demands arise, vacancies still continue to come up, so please consider volunteering your time as we now have one opening for the Code Enforcement Board, two openings for Parks & Recreation Board, and three openings for the Ethics Board. Contact Mayor Tony Williams for additional details regarding the board openings.

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The City has begun negotiating, implementing and updating our independent franchise arrangements with telecommunication companies which should add additional resources. Other new increases in revenues have come from interest bearing accounts and contract modifications.

The Forest Board continues to do a terrific job of maintaining and restoring our urban canopy. The emerald ash borer has continued to complicate the Board's work, so they deserve special thanks and support for their steely determination to restore and sustain this defining feature of our neighborhood.

The 'playscapes' initiative continues as the Parks & Rec Board will be working to identify more suitable locations and facilities for the new generation. Tire and infant swings will resume hanging in Wren, Oriole and Cross Bill Parks once COVID-19 restrictions are laxed. Other developments such as resurrecting our three monarch waystations in various parks are expected to charter or soon follow.

No city the size of Audubon Park could survive without the "behind the scenes" dedication of residents that we've come to depend on in City Hall. I'd like to recognize several of them by name, and hopefully introduce them to new residents or those who might be unaware of their contributions:

City Clerk/Treasurer Janette Mercer, who keeps and maintains the records, pays the bills, and dispenses all manners of assistance.

Tony Ahlbrand, part-time bookkeeper doing regular financial reporting, fiscal recordkeeping, and audit and budget process participation.

Police Chief Mike Minniear, whose crew keeps us safe and orderly, enforcing all manners of local, state and Federal law.

Public Works operator Jason Payne, who mows, plows, repairs and maintains our precious City resources and also keeping clear the roads of hazards.

Code Enforcement Officer Otto Mock, who upholds and enforces our code of ordinances.

Mechanic and handyman Ed Seger, who saves the city money in many ways including vehicular maintenance and other valuable building updates to City Hall.

And, last but not least, City attorney Keith Larson.

These individuals also wear many important hats in a city the size of Audubon Park and I am very thankful for each one of them as the city could not properly function without them.

The City's code of ordinances was finally updated to conform to the last twenty-five years of new law. The City's employee handbook and internal procedures have also been updated.

Outreach efforts to promote community networking have been ongoing as the only two official Facebook pages of the City are **Audubon Park City Hall** and **Audubon Park Police Department**. For further information see 'Communications' at the end of the newsletter.

Many building improvements and updates to City Hall continue to be made. All interior and exterior lights have been replaced and converted to LED. The old deck entrance to the Police Department with structural issues has been replaced. Security cameras and extra lighting have also been added for employee safety.

~Neighborhood bragging rights and pride is at stake once again with the holiday decorating contest!~

There are 6 categories this year: 1) Best Nativity Scene 2) Best Traditional Home Decorations 3) Best Entry Way 4) Most Lit Home 5) Best Lawn Ornaments 6) Best Use of Inflatables. Winners will receive a yard sign and a dogwood ornament. Unfortunately, there will not be a Community Christmas celebration at City Hall this year due to COVID-19 so we ask that you celebrate

safely at home and by participating in the decoration contest.

It's been a very busy and productive two years and I look forward to sharing future plans in the Spring Newsletter of 2021 and after I consult with the new city council and all budgetary constraints are considered. Once again, I thank you for your continued confidence and support as we work together to continue to move our great City forward. Enjoy your holidays but most importantly have a safe, healthy and Happy New Year!

FOREST BOARD NEWS

Michael Blum- Chairperson

One of the many wonderful attributes of our neighborhood is its beautiful tree canopy. As the forest board chair, I feel great responsibility in caring for our urban tree canopy and ensuring that we all have a healthy and beautiful ecosystem in which to live. As mentioned in the Fall newsletter, our city forester recently completed a neighborhood wide inventory of the tree species in the right of way areas of the neighborhood. Such an inventory is a great investment in that it provides the forest board with the details necessary to ensure that as we plan for the future tree canopy of our neighborhood, we are doing so in a manner that promotes the overall health and wellbeing of the trees. With much gratitude to our city forester, Ryan Lewis, who completed the survey and Audubon Park resident Aaron Morris who assisted with the data analysis, I am excited to share some of our learnings.

Throughout the neighborhood, nearly 900 trees have been surveyed in right of way areas. These trees add a tremendous amount of beauty to our neighborhood and continue to contribute to our mental and physical health in numerous ways. However, of those 900 trees, approximately 110 of them are a species of ash. As many of you are aware, the emerald ash borer has arrived in our area over the past several years and will unfortunately kill most of these trees. Speaking with residents who grew up in our neighborhood, I often hear remarks about how beautiful our tree canopy currently is, but

how the tree canopy used to be so dense that entire streets were shaded all day during the summer.

The prospect of losing over twelve percent of our urban canopy due to the emerald ash borer is daunting. However, each of us as residents has the power and responsibility to actively rebuild what we will lose. As part of the survey, the city forester included the number of available locations along the street easement in which a tree could be planted. According to his count, there are 237 locations available for tree planting, indicating that over 20 percent of the right of way area is open for planting. Even if you already have a tree in part of the right of way area of your yard, you may have space for another tree.

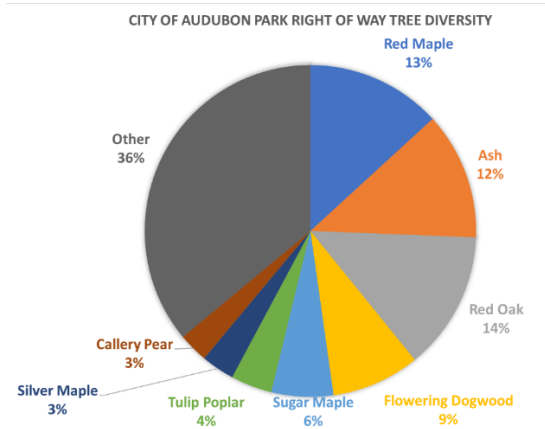
In order to assist our residents in reforesting our neighborhood, the Forest Board is offering free tree seedlings to interested residents. Seedlings are typically planted in late fall or spring, as the weather during these times of the year reduces stress on the trees through the transplanting processes. In addition to purchasing and planting the seedling, the Forest Board will provide a one-time application of mulch, a protective wire mesh fence, and a watering bag during the first summer after the tree has been transplanted. If you are interested in planting a tree or might be interested in planting a tree, please contact Forest Board Chair Michael Blum via phone call, text message, or email at 502-396-4029 or Michael.blum13@gmail.com.

Upon hearing of your interest, a Forest Board representative will meet with you to discuss options for your site. In doing so, we will help you choose the best tree for your wants as well as ensure we have a diverse population of trees in the neighborhood. Such diversity ensures that the next natural disaster to eradicate a species of tree will not leave our neighborhood barren.

It is our responsibility to plant the trees in our neighborhood now that the next generations will enjoy in the future.

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Below is a visual reference breaking down the percentage of trees by species that are currently planted in the neighborhood right of ways.



AUDUBON PARK POLICE

Chief Mike Minniear

The Holiday Season is upon us and we are ready to celebrate. We, at Audubon Park Police Department, are so thankful for the support of our community. In the early stages of the pandemic, we could not have made it without the generosity of our residents. As we move from Thanksgiving to the joy of the Holidays, please use extra caution. Thieves are also gearing up for their busy season. They are hunting for packages delivered on doorsteps, valuable items left in unlocked cars and even presents wrapped and placed under the tree in your homes. Here are a few tips to keep the spirit of the season free from the Grinch.

- While shopping, place your purchases in the trunk where they are out of sight. Carry cash or credit cards in your front pocket instead of carrying a large purse or pocketbook.
- Before going to bed at night, check the doors on your vehicles to make sure that they are locked and that there are no valuables in sight. Also check the doors on garages and your homes.

- Set the alarms on your home when you are away.
- Use our free house watch service if you will be away from home overnight. You can leave an electronic request on the City of Audubon Park Website.
- Always plan ahead and use a cab, ride share service or a designated driver if you choose to drink at Holiday gatherings and celebrations.
- If you need an officer to respond immediately, please call the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office at (502)574-5471 or dial 911.

2020 has had many challenges for our city and our nation. We look forward to serving you in a better 2021.

AUDUBON PARK GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Joanne Bader

Audubon Park Garden Club News

2020 continues to provide ongoing disruptions to normal routines and schedules. The Audubon Park Garden Club is not immune to these impacts – and we have had to put programs on hiatus due to lack of safe meeting spaces and continued concern for our members' health which can be compromised by meeting in large groups. As a result, with the onset of winter and colder weather, the Garden Club has shelved planned programs until the weather improves or there is more certainty about the improving risks for gatherings.

Houseplants that Clean the Air and are Reportedly Nearly Impossible to Kill!

Now that all of us are staying inside our homes more often, due to COVID-19 concerns and winter, I found a recent article in the June, 2020 **Bulletin**, a quarterly publication from the **Garden Club of Kentucky, Inc.**, to be particularly relevant to all of us hunkering down inside. We all know about outdoor air pollution and its effects on our health,

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but we should also be concerned about indoor air quality; on average, humans breathe over 3000 gallons of air each day. What we don't often think about is that chemicals are all around us, in the food we eat and the everyday things in our homes or offices. Therefore, it may be a timely and relevant reminder to think about adding green plants to our environment which can purify the air in our living spaces easily and cost effectively. Following are 11 plants recommended by NASA's Clean Air Studies to purify indoor air, yet are easily grown and maintained by even the most brown-thumbed individual!

1. Golden Pothos or Devil's Ivy (*Epipremnum aureum*). Considered an effective filter of pollutants because of its big leaves which absorb many pollutants. Considered to effectively purify the air of benzene.
2. Spider Plant aka Airplane Plant, or Hen and Chickens (*Chlorophytum comosum*). This is actually a flowering perennial herb. Besides being incredibly easy to grow, with rich foliage and tiny white flowers, this plant neutralizes benzene, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, and xylene which is a solvent used in the leather, rubber and printing industries.
3. Common Ivy or English Ivy (*Hedera helix*). Also easy to grow (and attractive), this plant filters airborne pollutants like benzene, formaldehyde, xylene and toluene.
4. Aloe Vera. More commonly known for providing a gel to help with the side effects of burns, sun burns or cuts, this plant is also known for filtering formaldehyde and benzene which can be byproducts of chemical-based household cleaners or paints. Is considered happiest in sunny kitchen windows or bay windows.
5. Peace Lilies. We all know of these common flowering plants (many as memorial gifts following the loss of loved ones), but they are wonderful at filtering out ammonia, benzene and formaldehyde. Tips to keep them happy and healthy are to place in shady areas with moderate moisture. The beautiful white lily flowers are just a bonus!
6. Snake Plant aka Mother-in-Law's Tongue or St. George's Sword (*Sansevieria trifasciata*). This is a flowering plant that is recommended for placement in a bathroom as it thrives in low light and steamy, humid conditions. It is known for filtering out formaldehyde which can be common in cleaning products, toilet paper personal care products and tissues. While most of us are familiar with these beautiful flowering plants outdoors, they can also be brought indoors where they help remove formaldehyde.
7. Corn Plant (*Dracaena deremensis*). This plant grows indoors easily even without direct sunlight. It can reach a height of 12 feet and is characterized by striped leaves forming clusters atop a thin stem. It is commonly considered a good filter for pollutants associated with oils and varnishes. **WARNING:** it can be toxic to dogs and cats and should be considered for placement accordingly!
8. Song of India or Red-Edged Dracaena (*Dracaena reflexa*). This plant has been described as a tropical plant that typically is oval in shape with an open crown. It is slow growing but is a beautiful houseplant that provides a pop of color. It primarily is known for removing formaldehyde and xylene from the air.

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9. *Bamboo Plant or Reed Palm (Chamaedorea sefritzii)*. This is a small palm that often produces showy flowers or small berries. It thrives in shady indoor spaces. It is one of the top plants for filtering out benzene and trichloroethylene as well as formaldehyde which can be produced by furniture.
 10. *Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema modustum)*. As the name states, this plant is evergreen year round. It is easy to grow and forms several stemmed clumps.
 11. *Elephant Ear Philodendron (Philodendron hastatum)*. This is considered one of the best plants to remove formaldehyde from your living and work spaces.

This article also recommended that indoor plants be watered with filtered water for best growing practices. This doesn't mean you have to buy filtered water to water your plants; instead let water sit for a day or so in a watering can to allow impurities etc. to sink to the bottom of your watering vessel, keeping the water purer for your plant.

Let's Support our Feathered Friends

Hopefully everyone in Audubon Park knows that we are a recognized bird sanctuary, which adds greatly to the number and variety of birds to be found within our boundaries. While natural vegetation provides ample food sources for our birds for most of the year, the arrival of winter can be more problematic. Let's be good stewards of our avian friends by filling bird feeders during the winter to supplement what they can find by foraging. Common seed feeders can provide sunflower seeds, safflower seeds, cracked corn or peanuts (which are also beloved by our friendly neighborhood squirrel population!) But don't forget to think about adding suet cakes which are attractive to many other varied bird species you might not normally see at your feeder – many suet cakes now come with a variety of fruits or seeds embedded in them which are attractive to birds.

But you need to find a "cage" type feeder that can hold the suet cakes. From personal experience, make sure you put extra measures in place to keep the squirrels from "opening" these suet cages!!!

Also important, if you have a bird bath, please try to keep fresh water in it for the birds! If you don't have one, a shallow pan of water would be greatly appreciated!

Pet Owners: Be Respectful of Our Neighbors!

With the onset of colder weather, many pet owners want to get their animals outside "to do their business" in an expeditious manner! Due to the lack of universal sidewalks in Audubon Park, many pet owners walk along street fronts which may contain ornamental plantings in front of our neighbors' houses. ***Please be considerate of these plantings and try not to let your pets stop to urinate on shrubs near the street.*** Pet urine has a high volume of nitrogen which can seriously harm or kill ornamental shrubs. While one dog may not make a difference by itself, once a plant has been "marked" by an animal, others follow suit and the cumulative impact of repeated urination can have a serious negative impact. Let's all be good neighbors and be respectful of our fellow homeowners who have gone to the expense of beautifying their properties with attractive landscaping – indeed, it is the collective efforts of all our Audubon Park's residents that make our community the attractive and welcoming place we have all come to love!

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

In addition to community calendars, event notices, meeting schedules, and official information, the entire City Code of Ordinances is available on the Web site, AudubonParkKY.org, with provisions on parking, permit requirements, nuisance abatement, and all the rest. Please visit often!

- Speed limits and other traffic control measures are strictly enforced, for your safety and security. The City speed limit is 25 mph.

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- There is no parking permitted on the street between 2 AM and 6 AM. There is also no parking permitted on the grass. Please inform your visitors of this important information.
 - Pets must be leashed or otherwise under their owner's absolute physical control when outside. We now have Dog Waste Stations at each of our parks so please use them when dog walking *and picking up after your pets*.
 - Building permits are issued through City Hall and the form can be downloaded from our website under "Building Permit." If you have a project in mind, please call or come by City Hall for more information on obtaining a permit.
 - Yard sale, parades, use of public parks, and other general permits can be applied for online at the "Permit Form" section of our website. Final permits are issued through City Hall. Please call or come by City Hall for more information on obtaining a permit.
 - There is a link at our website under "Links" where you can report any streetlights that are out of order directly to LG&E for repairs under "Streetlight Outage Online Form."
 - Permits are required for any work on city street easement trees including pruning or removal. Permits allow for the city to confirm tree companies are insured and to ensure the work being done will contribute to the overall health of our urban tree canopy. If you are unsure if your tree is in the easement, contact our Code Enforcement Officer Otto Mock at Audubonparkcodeofficer@gmail.com or 502-554-6105.
 - Going on vacation? Leaving town for business? Whatever the reason may be, being away from your home for any length of time can lead to anxiety if you have security concerns. The Audubon Park Police Department House Watch program is designed to provide you with peace of mind by placing your address on a stepped-up patrol list for those living in the City limits of Audubon Park. Officers in your area will be instructed to keep a close eye on your property and to conduct area checks more regularly while you are away. There is a link at our website under "Form/Signups" where you can complete a house watch request.
<https://www.audubonparkky.org/house-watch-request.html>
 - There is a link at our website under "Links" where you can "Report A Problem" to MSD regarding stormwater waste issues.
 - A resident Code Enforcement Complaint Form is located at the website so concerned residents can electronically report garbage, debris, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and property, parking, and overgrowth violations. Our Part-Time Code Enforcement Officer is Otto Mock and he can be reached at Audubonparkcodeofficer@gmail.com or 502-554-6105.
 - Please discourage children and others from climbing trees in the various City parks, out of concern for both safety and potential damage.
 - Information regarding ash trees and the emerald ash borer is available at City Hall, and on the Forest Board's archive Web site, *TreeCommittee-APKY.org*.
 - Waste of all types – garbage, recycling and yard waste – is collected on Tuesdays (with occasional exceptions for holidays which is usually a day or two later). Garbage is picked up from behind your house, while yard waste and recycling items are to be placed at the curb. **Trash can only be set out the day prior to pickup and must be returned by the evening following.** Remember, the green cans should not be visible from the street.
 - Please wear reflective clothing or other reflective gear – or, better still, carry powered lights – if you are out running, biking or walking in reduced light. It can be very difficult to see you if you are wearing dark clothing! Please take personal responsibility
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for your safety so accidents don't occur – you may be harder to see than you think!

- MSD offers rate assistance for senior citizens that are age 65 or older, have a gross annual income of \$35,000 or less and are both Louisville Water and MSD customers. An application can be made for a 30% discount on wastewater charges and the EPA surcharge by calling 502-540-6000.
- Kentucky's Constitution allows property owners who are 65 or older to receive the Homestead Exemption on their primary residence. If you are eligible to receive the Homestead Exemption, the exemption amount is subtracted from your property's assessed value, reducing your property tax liability. The Homestead Exemption for 2019-2020 is \$39,300. Only one exemption (Homestead or Disability) is allowed per household. Once approved for the Homestead Exemption, you are not required to reapply annually. You are eligible for the Homestead Exemption on residential or commercial property as long as you own and occupy the property as your primary residence and meet all other qualifying criteria.
- Audubon Park has a Little Free Library located at the intersection of Wren and Audubon Parkway. The Little Free Library is a book/magazine/DVD/CD exchange for adults and children where you are free to drop off or take materials located in the outdoor book holder. The library steward is Amanda Thompson. If you have questions, concerns, or comments, please feel free to call, text or email her at 502-931-0790 or amt924@hotmail.com.

COMMUNICATIONS

The City of Audubon Park is committed to informing and encouraging civic dialogue, and has a variety of platforms for these purposes:

- This quarterly **newsletter** with updates, reports and discussions of City programs, events, services and facilities. The newsletter is published on the Web site, social media, email subscriber list, and now delivered 4 times a year in print.

- The **Web site**, *AudubonParkKY.org*, which is the City's open archive of municipal reference data – organizational, historical, fiscal, legal, and social. Links are also provided to the other media listed.
- **Two Social media** pages on Facebook are in use to make announcements, schedule activities and events, exchange ideas, and promote dialogue: **Audubon Park City Hall**, the main civic page and **Audubon Park Police Department**, focusing on law enforcement and public safety. Be sure to like both pages in order to receive communication from them, as they are the only official social media pages from the City.
- **Nextdoor** is social networking site that brings back good old-fashioned neighborhood chatter between your neighbors across the street and you. It puts you in touch with folks down the block and even people a few miles down the road. Nextdoor is also like Facebook, where you can scan through your contacts' posts and photos, and you can post your own messages and photos. You might alert those neighbors to prowlers you spotted in the neighborhood. Your neighbors might recommend a good plumber or mechanic. They could also tell you about yard sales or appliances they're giving away. Or you can alert them to a stray dog you found.
- An **email subscriber list** distributing the newsletter and notices of City activities and events. Please sign up on the Web site, under the Resident Information tab, at "Audubon Park News."
- **ReachAlert** is an urgent notification system, with email, text or voicemail options, for emergency and other alert messages. Please subscribe to this system, on the same page, at "ReachAlert."
- The variety of regular public Council and board meetings are listed on the **Web calendar**.
- Or, just dropping by **City Hall**, for information or an informal chat (when COVID-19 is over).

Always be sure to let the mayor or your favorite council member know your thoughts and ideas!

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