

OCT/NOV/DEC
2022

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OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF EDGEMERE PARK PRESERVATION, INC.

Letter from the 2022 President Susie White

October 30, 2022

Welcome to fall, and oh what changes we have seen. From summer's dog days to leaf changing autumn. And the most extreme changes have happened on the perimeter of our neighborhood.

We can finally breathe a sigh of relief as we drive down N.W. 30th Street. We no longer must look at the burned, vandalized and very dangerous remains of the church building at Hudson. It is such a blessing over the last several years that no one was hurt by the broken panes of glass or so many other broken bits and pieces of the building's long-suffering past.

And now, of course, the demolition of the First Christian Church, "the egg" as it was known by so many of us who grew up in OKC. Many of us have attended worship services, attended classes, taught Mothers' Day Out, enjoyed Jewel Box and not to forget even saw a few events in the amphitheater. It was truly a unique piece of architecture in Oklahoma City's past that held many memories. Built by a charismatic man of faith, he saw the unique building as the Church of Tomorrow Today. The Reverend Alexander and later his son had an amazing church.

There is a lot of second guessing and high emotions regarding how and why the building came down. We are all very concerned as we should be with the many possibilities of what could happen next on this pivotal corner between the three neighborhoods, Crown Heights, Edgemere Heights and Edgemere Park. There has been a committee formed between the three Historic Preservation neighborhoods to try to have open and friendly conversations with the current owners, realtor and the city as to zoning and what could and should not be permitted on the corner and the bigger portion of the property. Time will tell.

While the days are still sunny and warm, I encourage you to get out and meet the neighbors on your block. It really is so much nicer to be able to say hey to the people on your block.vn informal block party, porch crawl or whatever fun idea you have to reach out to those living around you. Reach out to the new folks that move onto your block as well. We LOVE Folks! See you on December 11th.

CHEERS!

— Susie

SAVE THE DATE...our annual Edgemere neighborhood meeting will be on January 22nd at 4pm in the Shakespeare In The Park theatre, located at 2920 Paseo. All candidates running for Ward 2 City Council will be invited. All neighbors are welcome to attend.

Oktoberfest 2022

Sunday, October 2nd was a beautiful day for a gathering in the park. We had a wonderful number of neighbors and friends who came together to share Dennis the Brat Man's now famous homemade brats. It gives me such pleasure to see so many people who love living in Edgemere Park come together to connect with one another. We are so fortunate to live in this successful neighborhood. Thank you to our block trustees who helped put this amazing event together. You can see from the pictures that there were lots of folks enjoying the evening.









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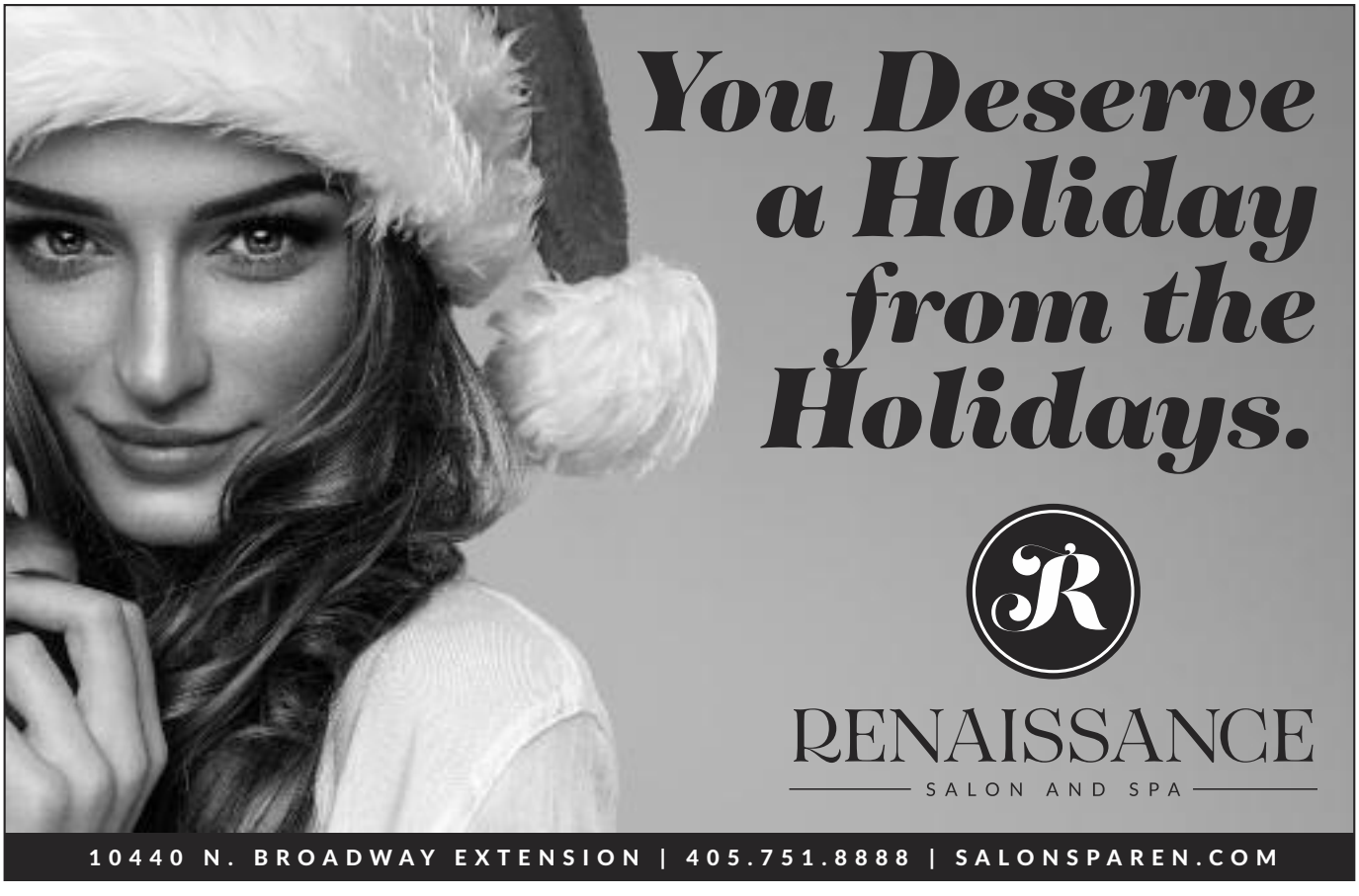
October 2022 Yard of the Month – 230 NW 31st Street

As fall turns into an early winter, we say goodbye to Yard of the Month for 2022. Karen Kurtz's lovely 1929 cottage, located at 230 NW 31st, is the last featured yard this year.

Karen has added a sprinkler system, newly bricked walkway and a soft carpet of sod to her corner lot.

Her front yard is planted with a variety of shrubs and cedars to add variety and texture. She has planted 2 Brevifolia cedars, a Burning Bush, 6 Fire Power nandina, 4 dwarf Daub's Frosted junipers, and a Golden Dwarf juniper. Shasta daisies, an Apricot Drift rose and rosemary bush fill in the flower beds and add a touch of color and cheer.





THE ICONIC EGG

by Liz Bullen



On September 26th, 2022, the "Egg Church", that iconic OKC landmark that loomed north of Edgemere Park, was quickly demolished. And though it had fallen into disrepair and disuse since 2020, there were many like me that felt a deep sadness for the loss of the strange, otherworldly structure that had housed the First Christian Church for so many years. The day after the demolition, I went for a walk around Edgemere Park at dusk, and I paused on the bridge and looked north at the space that the egg church had occupied. I felt pulled to the site of the destruction by curiosity and all the bittersweet feelings that arose.

Darkness had fallen and there was no fencing and no one guarding the site, so I walked up to where the church had stood to take a look around and to pick up a piece of the dome as a memento. There amongst the debris was a lady all alone. She asked me if I could stay with her awhile and of course I did. Turns out, this lady, Ann Lynn, is the granddaughter of the minister, Rev. William Alexander, who hatched the idea for the round church shape on a napkin. Or so the family legend goes. He envisioned an open and inclusive floor plan, and worked with the architects, Connor and Pojenzny, to make the "Egg Church" a reality. This was in the early 1950s, and the congregation a few years later made the move from the church on 10th and Robinson Ave to this spacious new domed marvel. Ann Lynn's grandfather died tragically in a plane crash just 5 years after the building was completed and, in 1972, Ann Lynn was just four years old when her father, Rev. Don H. Alexander, became senior pastor. He served there for 30 years and supported a thriving and active congregation. It turns out that Ann Lynn's father had lived as a boy at 256 Edgemere Ct. from 1943-1952. I imagine that boy exploring the creek and the woods that would later become a church and a calling for him.

And so with our phone flashlights we made our way in the dark through the debris to the wide-open doors of the still-standing educational building and toward the offices and kitchen and classrooms and dining room and chapel, as well as the Jewel Box Theatre. Down the escalator and all around the curved hallways we crept, and Ann Lynn shared her warm memories of the place with me. We went to the huge kitchen with the blue and pink tile and the dumbwaiter, and she told me of a truly dedicated woman chef named Chris Whitney who fed church family and volunteered for many years to prepare food for the Mobile Meals program. Ann Lynn also told me of a wonderful lady named Vera Stovell that devoted her long life to the mission of this church. She worked as a secretary for both Ann Lynn's father and grandfather and on a modest secretary's salary accumulated an estate worth over $100,000 that she left to her church. There were many parishioners, too, who were always ready to help, including in 1995. This church was a center for rescue efforts after the Murrah Building bombing. First responders could rest there and eat, and families gathered for support. Also, Oprah Winfrey and other celebrities came there to offer assistance and relief after the tragic attack. The egg church was destined to be a sanctuary as well as a bold architectural statement.

What a wonderful place to be a child, I thought, as she described the actors rehearsing, the exotic costumes, the sets being constructed, and the singing and the music playing throughout the place. There was a children's library and playroom and kind and caring people all around. Back outside, my new friend and I stood on what had been the top of the dome church with the three holes that had been skylights laid out below us. Here I recorded Ann Lynn's message to her family: "Such a sad day yesterday and today, but we are going to move on and be thankful for the memories". I felt deeply moved by her words. I knew that this cosmic egg church had served a Divine purpose in the lives of many, and now it had exploded into a new ethereal realm, and that its mission had been a beautiful success.

Beverly Laughead, husband Dave and their daughter have been decorating the bridge since 1992!







Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park

DECEMBER 9-23

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My Friend, Judy



The neighborhood lost a long time fixture of the community last month. It was unexpected and such a huge loss. Judy Rolen lived on 36th street with her husband Ronnie and current dog, Cowboy.

This is not an obituary because I don't know exact details of Judy's life, I can only share how I knew her and what I knew of her through my interactions which I wish were a lot more. I thought there was plenty of time to chat and get together in the future but sadly, no.

I first met Judy through neighborhood meetings. Judy was so open and friendly and urged me to stop by anytime. I was always busy with work and so I didn't very much but the times I did she welcomed me into her beautifully and warmly decorated tudor cottage. The living room is painted a soft pink with many vintage objects scattered about. All thoughtfully placed. Every room is decorated just so. The back enclosed sunroom decorated like a Hawaiian tiki bar. Fun like Judy.

Judy loved to garden and at some point her and Ronnie purchased the lot next to them in which they created a lovely cottage garden complete with gazebo. Judy had a knack for repurposing things and this garden is not only full of an assortment of flowers and plants but also found objects creating lovely points of decorative interest. Vintage orange lawn chairs standing by for any visitor to sit, visit and view the pond and garden as her favorite dragonflies buzz by.

Judy was an interior designer who loved her friends and family which included nieces and nephews she often told me about and her beloved Ronnie and the dogs.

Judy was funny, bright, energetic, thoughtful, creative, pretty and determined.

Judy, you were one of a kind so strong and brave. It never occurred to me you'd be gone soon.

My heart goes out to Ronnie and Cowboy and all her dear family and friends. Judy I will always think of you and your sweet home and garden. Always.

— Nita Stacy

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The Extraordinary Value Of Leaves

by Paul James "the Gardener Guy".

Need to burn a few calories? Me too. I stuffed myself with way too much stuffing, among other things. But rather than head to the gym, I'm heading out to the garden to burn some calories. After all, it's cleanup time. Time to prep beds for the winter. Time to put a blanket on my garden. Time to tidy up. Time to make the most of leaves!

Carrie and I have a motto: No leaf leaves the property. That's because over the years we've learned that nothing has the ability to transform so-so soil into super soil better and faster than leaves. Seriously. Nothing. But it's best if you shred them first so they'll decompose faster. Here's how we do just that.

MULCHING MOWER

In the lawn, we simply mow the leaves with a mulching mower, and it does a great job of shredding the leaves into tiny particles that break down quickly, releasing nutrients and adding valuable organic matter to the soil. We do this over the course of three weeks or so rather than waiting until all the leaves have dropped to prevent the mower from bogging down.

BLOWER/SHREDDER

We use a blower that converts to a shredder with a leaf bag attached. It's great for getting leaves out of garden beds and corners, and for sucking them right off evergreens, barberries, and other plants that have a tendency to catch leaves. The leaves get chopped up into fine particles, ready for use in the garden. For details, go to https://www.stihlusa.com/products/blowers-and-shredder-vacs/shredder-vacs/.

SHREDDER

Our dedicated leaf shredder is a workhorse. It's basically an electric motor that uses a weed trimmer line to get the job done, reducing 11 bags of leaves into just one. You fill the hopper with dry leaves, and once shredded, they drop into an attached bag or onto a tarp. See it at https://www.worx.com/electric-leaf-mulcher-wg430.html.

STRING TRIMMER AND TRASH CAN

This is a fun and very effective way to shred leaves. Just fill a trash can with leaves (the drier the better), and stick your string trimmer into the can as though it were an immersion blender to make a soup or sauce. (By the way, when shredding leaves, protect yourself from dust by wearing a mask – shouldn't be hard to find! – and protect your eyes with goggles. Ear protection is a good idea too.)

USES

So what do we do with all our shredded leaves? Roughly half of them go into our raised beds in the vegetable garden. We add about a three-inch layer to each bed and let them rot over the winter. By the following spring, the leaves have decomposed into what's called leaf mold, which is the best soil amendment money can't buy. We sprinkle each bed with about two pounds of blood meal (which is pure nitrogen) to speed up the decomposition process.

The rest of the shredded leaves go into the compost pile, and they too decompose by spring. The finished compost gets added to the raised beds, as well as ornamental beds and containers.

You can use shredded leaves as mulch in ornamental gardens, but on windy days they may blow away. To keep them in place, cover them with bark mulch and they'll decompose fairly quickly beneath the bark. So rather than bagging your leaves and tossing them into the trash, think of them as treasure. You'll be amazed at the difference they make in the health of your soil…and your plants.

Happy gardening, ya'll.

P.S. We do bag the thick, leathery leaves that fall from our neighbor's huge magnolia tree, because they don't decompose all that well.

P.P.S. It's a good idea to leave a few leaves here and there. Insects that don't migrate to warmer climates use leaf litter – as well as logs, rocks, and other debris – to stay protected during the winter months, whether as eggs, larvae, nymphs, pupae, or even adults.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Dec 11, 5-7 pm, Edgemere Park Holiday Party at the Geise's home, 3110 N Harvey Parkway.

Sunday, January 22, 4pm, the Annual Edgemere Neighborhood Meeting at the Shakespeare In The Park theatre, 2920 Paseo.

