

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

WINTER 2021



thomas park
avondale



HELPING MUNCIE ONE CUP AT A TIME

Sunday mornings throughout her childhood, Tiara Hicks would wake up on her grandparents' farm to the smell of freshly brewed coffee. She would gather with her grandparents, Larry and Joyce Patty, around the heart of their home, the kitchen table. At 4, Hicks shared her first cup of coffee with them; so when she opened a coffee shop on Muncie's Southside, Hicks named it Rosebud Coffee House after her grandfather, whose nickname was "Rosebud." He loved yellow roses. Since opening its doors in December 2020, Rosebud Coffee House has become a welcoming gathering place for residents and a vibrant spot for newcomers.

"I get a lot of folks from Ball State who have never been past downtown," Hicks said. "They have never been on this side of town. We're pulling people from Cowan and Selma, and people who are out in the country, and we're bringing them into town. They have a reason to come to the Southside now."



Josh Arthur, pastor at Avondale United Methodist Church, is a frequent Rosebud customer. He said older members of his congregation remember the neighborhood having a grocery store, family tavern, and a bank. He loves the revised energy at the intersection of Hoyt Avenue and Memorial Drive.

"Rosebud gives the feeling of the good life. The feeling of a new start. It offers us hope," Arthur said. "It wouldn't make a lot of sense for me to give friends a gift of a Starbucks card, but I sure can give the gift of a Rosebud card."

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: KORY GIPSON



Kory Gipson — one of three resident leaders in the Thomas Park/Avondale neighborhood — co-owns and runs The Common Market, a community-focused corner store at 900 W. 8th Street. He and business partner, Mike Martin, said they opened the market in May 2020 to serve as a community resource center with a focus on the arts, entrepreneurship and activism.

“We are family and friends who live in the community, raise our kids here and strive to bring resources and a better quality of life to our neighbors,” Gipson said. “We are self funded and believe that by creating a stronger community through building relationships we can build the neighborhood, city, and world we all want to see.”

The market holds educational events, sells essentials, and serves as a meeting space. Some of the market’s offerings, like the music series, Gipson said, are funded by the 8twelve Coalition’s Small Sparks Grants. Neighbors can apply for these \$500 grants to improve the quality of life of the 8twelve service area. One of his favorite events is Motivation Mondays, a night for anyone to gather to talk about ways to make Muncie better.

In two years — during a pandemic, no less — the Common Market has grown into a hotspot for community growth, built “one recycled brick at a time,” Gipson added. “It’s become more than a job and more than a way to try to provide for my family.”

Gipson said he is thrilled to be a resident leader in the Thomas Park/Avondale Neighborhood. Stop by the market any Monday through Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. to talk with him.

SMALL SPARKS PROJECTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

One small spark igniting a blazing fire is an image the 8twelve Coalition wants 8twelve you to consider when you hear about the Small Sparks Grant. Each year, the coalition awards 8twelve residents (of all ages) and community organizations up to \$500 to ignite “small ideas” to make a big impact within the 8twelve area.

Jena Ashby, Convener of the 8twelve Coalition, said the coalition calls for grant applications in the spring and a team of residents reviews the submissions. With support from the Ball Brothers Foundation, the coalition awards about 10 grants each year. Past grants have supported sidewalk art, dance uniforms, a vegetable stand, thriving baby kids, and front porch parties.

In a previous award cycle Christina Dunsmore, Avondale United Methodist Church’s Children’s Pastor, received a Small Sparks Grant to form a kids’ club that met every Thursday for about eight weeks during the summer.



“Each week, there were more and more kids coming to do crafts, play games and make genuine friendships and connections,” said Dunsmore.

Dunsmore secured another Small Sparks grant this summer for an indoor/outdoor set for 9 Square, a game that is similar to volleyball. She is excited to engage kids and families through this fun, easy game.



ROSS CENTER COMMUNITY MARKET



The Ross Community Center is a nonprofit organization working to build community by providing and promoting programs, services, and activities to advance education, health, and wellness in our diverse community. Every Friday, the center hosts a community market from 4-6 p.m.

Ross Center Executive Director Jacquie Hanoman said the market is not a food pantry. It has so much more, she said: "We have free food, medication, clothes, toys, books, a whole series of things in the gym. It's a little supermarket where people have a choice. They can choose what they want."

Hanoman said the markets are about more than gathering essentials. "It's a place to build community and gather as neighbors, which is what the Ross Center is all about — community building."

The Ross Community Center served more than 600 families on a weekly basis during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Now, the center feeds an average 200 families each week.



The community market could not be possible, Hanoman said, without dedicated volunteers. Always in need of helping hands, the Ross Center invites you to volunteer for these markets by calling 765-747-4741. Learn more about the market and other activities and support through the Ross Center at rosscentermuncie.org.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS

In October, the Thomas Park/Avondale Neighborhood Gathering held elections for the first time in 5 years. The newly elected group is working to become an official 501c3 nonprofit and function as a formal neighborhood council.

Secretary Brian Carless spoke after the election: “Thank you to everyone who has been a part of these meetings and who continue to show up every month with the desire to make our neighborhood a better place to be.”

MEET YOUR NEW THOMAS-PARK AVONDALE REPRESENTATIVES:



**President:
James Heimlich**



**Secretary:
Brian Carless**



**Treasurer:
Jeffrey Brubaker**

For questions, comments or concerns about the neighborhood, contact Brian Carless at 765-714-2963. Keep up with the latest neighborhood news on Facebook, by searching for the “Thomas Park Avondale Neighborhood Gathering” or “8twelve Coalition” pages.



NEIGHBORHOOD TRUNK OR TREAT


Upwards of 800 neighbors gathered along 10th Street for the Thomas Park/Avondale Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 31. Volunteers transformed their trunks into farms, Nintendo games, bat caves, fairy lands and more as kids of all ages gathered handfuls of candy.

Attendees enjoyed family-friendly games and face painting before eating hot dogs and roasting s'mores at the fire pit outside the Avondale Community Church. Thank you to our donors, volunteers, and resident leaders for making this event a huge success!



Thomas Park/Avondale Neighborhood Gathering  gtwelvecollection@gmail.com 



 **thomas park**
avondale
1923 S. Hoyt Avenue
Muncie, IN 47302

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MUNCIE, IN
PERMIT NO. 7