



# MORNINGSIDER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MORNINGSIDE



Sharon Gray stands amongst the lilac bushes in Emerald Garden. Image courtesy of Nicolas Hall

## Making Emerald Garden Greener

Gary Gray | Contributing Writer

Detroit — If you build it, they will come. On those hot summer days, this was my mantra while tilling the soil at Emerald Garden MorningSide at Haverhill and Cornwall, digging up hundreds of rocks and other strange debris. Sometimes I felt and looked like Noah, Don Quixote, or the Old man and the Sea.

A lonely soul on a quest that only made sense to him. At other times I felt like Auguste Rodin, sculpting a masterpiece from a solid granite rock. I sometimes wondered what people thought of the site of an old gray-haired man toiling all along in the hot sun. Then slowly, they came.

First came my family and friends, probably out of obligation and concern for my physical and mental health...

Story continued on page 4...

## OTHER STORIES INCLUDED:

- E. Warren Studio - 2
- Future Leaders - 3
- Curb Appeal - 5
- Overwhelmed by Medicare - 6
- B.D. Hosts Thanksgiving - 7
- Holiday Lights Contest Returns - 8
- Give A Smile, Get A Smile - 9
- E. Warren Makeover - 10
- W.S.U. Mobile Health Returns - 11
- Resources & Upcoming Events - 12
- Regrid Property Data - 13
- Your Voice is WANTED - 15
- Morningside's Finest - 17





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**Studio on E. Warren is Up and Running - Come Take a Look!**

**Susan Rutherford** | Contributing Writer



Behind the scenes at the Studio's first project - Real Estate Rap - a podcast hosted by Brian Owen and Ellen Mahoney, featuring rap artist Tray Little - endeavors to mentor aspiring Detroit real estate investors like Tray.

Back in April we reported on the opening of MorningSide's East Warren Community Studio (The Studio) and their mission to foster creativity and prosperity within Detroit's Eastside neighborhoods. Since then, we've been refining and building out our video and podcast capabilities and yes, we've had our first client!

Interested in learning more about what we offer? Visit our booth at East Warren Development Corporation's Holiday Market at the Cadieux Stage (4925 Cadieux) on Saturday, December 17 from 11am-3pm.

And If you'd like to check out our very cool multi-media production space and learn more about what we do, hop over to our Open House the same day from 1-5 pm (15631 E Warren).

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*Susan Rutherford, East English Village Resident*

## FUTURE LEADERS

**Adrian L. Green | The Morningsider**

One of the brightest lights emerging from East English Village Preparatory Academy is 10th Grade Sophomore Joseph Tate. Joseph is an honor student at EEVPA with a grade point average of 3.3.

In the spring of 2022, Joseph led the baseball team to the Detroit Public Schools League Division 2 Championship Game at Comerica Park. This fall, Joseph was prolific as the starting quarterback for the football team. For his efforts and contributions, Joseph earned All-City Honors in both baseball and football. He plans to continue displaying his athletic prowess during the upcoming Boys Basketball and Track & Field seasons.

Beyond his academic and athletic exploits, Joseph is a natural leader of his peers throughout the school on a daily basis. He attends school regularly and on time, he leads by example, and even assists with the peaceful resolution of disputes among his peers.

Joseph's positive and fun-loving attitude is contagious and he is a key figure in the change in the overall climate and culture at East English Village Preparatory Academy. We celebrate him for being one of our best and brightest.



East English Village Preparatory Academy sophomore student, Joseph Tate. Image courtesy of Adrian L. Green

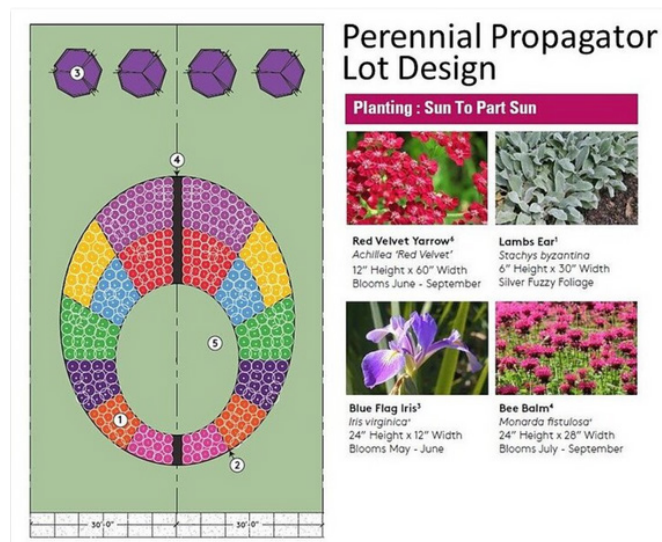
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*Adrian L. Green is the Treasurer of MorningSide Community Organization and a Dean of Culture at East English Village Preparatory Academy.*

## Continued... Making Emerald Garden Greener

Then came a few curious people who wanted a close look at what I was up to...

Then came Detroit Future City with a grant and technical support to install their Perennial Propagator native plant garden and a water catchment system...



**Perennial Propagator Design.** Image courtesy of Detroit Future City

Then came Cheryl English, Advanced Master Gardener, who advised me on which plants to select...

Then came more volunteers to help plant over 200 native plants in the garden...

Then came The Greening of Detroit and Impact Detroit with a few more trees...

Then came more volunteers to clean up the adjacent lots...

Then the City of Detroit "showed up and showed out" by planting 12 trees and replacing numerous sidewalk slabs that had been damaged for years...

Then came Keep Growing Detroit to assist in applying for a USDA grant to defray the cost of Hoop House, and to lead the effort to install it...

Then came you. A generous donor who understands and appreciates community, beauty, and the power of one.

Thank you all for your kindness and support.



**Aerial footage of Emerald Garden.** Image courtesy of Jim West



**Sharon and Gary Gray at Emerald Garden.** Image courtesy of Nicolas Hall

To Help Emerald Garden build a Greenhouse, click [here](#).

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*Gary Gray, Chief of Staff for city of Detroit  
Councilmember Latisha Johnson and Founder  
and CEO of Emerald Isles CDC*

# "Curb Appeal"

**Jeffrey D. Lewis II** | The Morningsider

When it comes to implementing creative designs for lawn displays, there is one familiar MorningSide resident that is the true, undisputed champ.

Beaconsfield resident, Nicole Bryant (MCO's 2021 Holiday Lights contest winner) went above and beyond this past Halloween as her front lawn showcased some amazingly scary, and fun elements to celebrate the hunted holiday.

Surprisingly, Nicole gets an early jump on preparing her lawn displays. "I actually started planning for Halloween back during the springtime," says Bryant.

"I always try to think ahead, and more than anything I want to do something different that my neighbors are not accustomed to seeing. It's especially important for our kids growing up here that they get to see something like this in their own neighborhood," says Bryant.

The witches and ghouls theme was on display from September 25 through Halloween night. "It was funny, people would drive by and literally stop right in the middle of the street for minutes at a time staring at our yard," says Bryant. "People passing by would ask if they could take pictures and I told them of course, take as many as you like."



5818 Beaconsfield during the day. Image courtesy of Susan Newell

Most would believe a setup of this magnitude would take quite some time to install. "A day and a half was all it took," says Bryant. More shockingly, Nicole dismantled everything in one day. "Once the trick or treaters were done for the night, I started breaking everything down."



The Halloween spirit was in full effect at 5818 Beaconsfield street. Image courtesy of Nicole Bryant

When asked what type of advice she would give to someone who wants to showcase a display of this nature, or just how to have a beautiful lawn that stands out, the answer was a simple one. "Start wherever you can to make your yard and home beautiful," says Bryant. "You don't necessarily have to buy the most expensive items, just take pride in what you do and the rest will take care of itself."

We truly can't wait to see what's on the horizon for Christmas!

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*Jeffrey D. Lewis II, Editor in Chief of The Morningsider, 2nd VP of MCO, Owner of Morningside Cafe*

## Overwhelmed by Medicare Plans? Our MorningSide Expert Can Help

**Sharon Gray** | Contributing Writer

If you are anything like me, you are tired of seeing JJ and Joe Namath's TV commercials about Medicare. **What in the heck do they know about Medicare?** Get used to seeing them because we are in the Annual Election Period (AEP), which begins on October 15 and ends on December 7 every year. During this time, anyone who has Original Medicare (Parts A and B) can elect to:

1. Enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan.
2. Switch from one Medicare Advantage plan to another.
3. Leave a Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare.
4. Enroll in a Prescription Drug Plan (Part D).

After the AEP, there is an Open Enrollment Period (OEP) for those enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan. During OEP (January 1 through March 31), a person with a Medicare Advantage plan can change to a different Medicare Advantage plan or return to Original Medicare. Confusing? Please hang in here with me.

When you turn 65, you are eligible for Original Medicare. Medicare Part A pays your hospital bills minus deductibles and copayments, and Part B pays about 80% of your medical bills.

If you have paid into Medicare for ten (10) years, your Part A will be premium free. We all must pay the Part B premium, which is \$164.90 for 2023. If you receive Social Security benefits, the government will automatically mail your red, white, and blue Medicare card to you three (3) months before you turn 65. Otherwise, you must apply for Medicare ([SSA.gov](https://www.ssa.gov) or 1-800-772-1213).

Original Medicare does not cover prescription drugs. You will have to buy a Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) Part D if you have Original Medicare and want your medications covered. The average cost of a PDP is about \$33 per month.

You can also enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C), many of which include hospital, medical, and prescription drug coverage. Most healthcare insurance carriers offer a zero-premium Medicare Advantage plan with richer benefits than Original Medicare and a PDP. You heard me right—more benefits for less money.

When you first become eligible for Original Medicare, you have a seven (7) month Initial Election Period (IEP), which is three (3) months before your 65th birthday, your birthday month, and three (3) months after your birthday month.

During this period, you can enroll in a Prescription Drug Plan (Part D), enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C), or enroll in a Supplemental Plan (Medigap). Medigap plans (which have an alphabet of their own) can provide excellent coverage but can be expensive. Please note that you must have Original Medicare to qualify for a Medicare Advantage or Medigap Plan.



**Licensed Insurance Agent, Sharon Gray.**  
Image courtesy of Sharon Gray

Time and space will not allow me to cover all you need to know about Medicare insurance. So here is a summary of your options:

Story continues on page 9...

## Brilliant Detroit Hosts Free Thanksgiving Dinner, Tech Hub hours and more!

**Roberto Paredes** | Contributing Writer

It's November, and that means Thanksgiving is coming! To celebrate the holiday season, we are having a Thanksgiving Dinner for the community on Thursday, November 17, from 4-6 p.m. at the Brilliant Detroit MorningSide house at 5050 Balfour. Please register at <https://bit.ly/MSThanksgivingDinner> so we can prepare enough food.

Have you or your family needed to use a computer or needed to use wifi? We have a solution for you! Come to our Tech Hub during the week. Tuesday and Thursday we have hours where you can come in, without an appointment, and use one of our laptops or use our free wifi. Come by the Tech Hub on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 1-5pm.

We know the holiday season is crazy busy, but we at Brilliant want to invest into you and your families and help you make memorable moments with your family and our Morningside community! We have more coming in the coming weeks such as after school Story Time, Family Nights, Community dinners and more! To stay in the loop with everything that is coming up or if you want more information, feel free to fill out our Interest form so we can send you emails and texts (we promise not to spam you) click this link to go to our interest form: <https://bit.ly/InterestMorningside>



A family gathers for the carving of an Turkey. Image courtesy of WWJ 950

If you have questions or just want to connect, you can contact us at (313) 528-7217 or [morningside@brilliantdetroit.org](mailto:morningside@brilliantdetroit.org). Hope to see you and your family this holiday season!

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*Roberto Paredes is the Community Engagement Coordinator at Brilliant Detroit MorningSide*

## Perfect Event for a Perfect Day

### The Morningsider

Dozens of MorningSiders took advantage of crisp October weather a few weeks ago for Motor City Grounds Crew's second annual Fall Festival at the MorningSide Community Campus on Barham. Kids toasted marshmallows, decorated pumpkins, chased each other on the MCGC hill, ate "worms in dirt" pudding provided by Featherstone Garden, and reveled in the warm sunshine.



A child paints a pumpkin. Image courtesy of Jim West



Table full of pumpkins waiting to be decorated. Image courtesy of Jim West

## MCO's Holiday Lights Contest Returns

### Jeffrey D. Lewis II | The Morningsider

It's almost that time again Morningsiders! Our 2nd annual Holiday Lights contest will return this holiday season. Last year's contest saw many homes showcase festive decorations and colorful lights throughout our community.

The details of the contest will largely remain the same as last year's contest. Nominations will be taken for any decorated home in MorningSide. Feel free to nominate a neighbor, or better yet, if you feel you have the best decorated home, nominate yourself.

Three winners will be selected. Prizes will be announced at a later date.

A new detail added to the contest will be the inclusion of businesses to participate in the contest. For our MorningSide-based businesses, this is your opportunity to showcase your creativity as well.

It's still early, but the sooner you start planning, the better. Last year's contest saw 30 nominations and we expect to double that amount this year.



2021's 3rd place winner, 5960 Audubon. Image courtesy of The Morningsider

Bring your "A" game everyone!

—

*Jeffrey D. Lewis II, Editor in Chief of The Morningsider, 2nd VP of MCO, Owner of Morningside Cafe*



## Continued... Overwhelmed by Medicare Plans? Our MorningSide Expert Can Help

1. Original Medicare only (Part A and B) - You pay for your medications, 20% of your medical bills, copayments, and deductibles, and there is no cap on the out-of-pocket cost.
2. Original Medicare with a PDP: You pay about \$33 a month premium for the PDP, 20% of your medical bills, copayments, and deductibles, and there is no cap on the out-of-pocket cost.
3. Original Medicare with a PDP and Medigap: Depending on the PDP and Medigap plan, you may have little out-of-pocket cost, but you will pay monthly premiums for the PDP and the Medigap.
4. Medicare Advantage Plan without Prescription Drugs (MA) - You pay for your medications, copayments, and deductibles, and there is a cap on the out-of-pocket cost. You also get additional benefits like dental, vision, hearing, and gym memberships. Most insurance carriers offer zero premium MA plans.
5. Medicare Advantage Plan with Prescription Drugs (MAPD) - You pay copayments and deductibles, and there is a cap on the out-of-pocket cost. You also get additional benefits like dental, vision, hearing, and gym memberships. Most insurance carriers offer zero premium MAPD plans.

As you can see, there is a lot to understand and very important decisions to make about your Medicare health insurance. Your decision process will also be affected by the number of products the local and national carriers offer. It can be confusing and hard to understand. That's where I come in.

Medicare Agents/Brokers like me are licensed, certified, and knowledgeable about the Medicare process and can help you navigate this healthcare insurance maze. I would be honored and pleased to offer my assistance in helping you make these critical decisions and answer your questions. My services are free to you. You can contact me via email:

[sharongray59@gmail.com](mailto:sharongray59@gmail.com), or phone at (313) 929-3980.

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*Sharon Gray is Secretary of MorningSide Community Organization and a Licensed Insurance Agent*

## Give A Smile, Get A Smile

Elena Fracassa | The Morningsider

We've had an unusually warm and colorful Fall this year, but with the days getting shorter and Winter right around the corner, it can be easy to get the blues. On days when you're feeling low, the simplest things can help to bring a smile to your face. Sometimes for me, it's taking a time out to scroll through YouTube for videos of puppies, kittens, and my personal favorite, laughing babies.

Magnus and his cat Rakarkatten (how's that for a cat name?!) have a special relationship and enjoy racing each other out in the yard in all kinds of weather. The phat and furry Rakarkatten runs like a cheetah and has never lost a race! Check out this fun [video](#) about their life on the track and how Magnus has learned from his very special cat to appreciate the great outdoors in every season.



**Rakarkatten the cat. Image courtesy of The Dodo**

## E. Warren Makeover Moves South

### The Morningsider

As the end of construction season draws near, workers are busy on the south side of E. Warren. Crews are even working weekends to get as much of the streetscape completed as they can before cold weather forces a long pause. According to James Hannig, Deputy Director of Complete Streets at DPW, the weather will determine when work ends this season. If we are fortunate enough to have this rather balmy weather continue, they may be able to work into December. Mother Nature, as always, will have the last word.

The top layer of asphalt has been removed from the south side lane, and they're working on curbs and sidewalks now, along with electrical work for the streetlights. The entire street will be repaved and temporary pavement markings will be installed before the first snowfall. The south side of what will become the Courville Plaza is awaiting its turn, while work on the north side of the plaza continues.

As for the old planters sitting in the vacant lot at E. Warren and Audubon, ideas and suggestions are still being considered. Stay tuned!

Click [here](#) to access the full EWDC Streetscape Newsletter with links.



Construction shifts to the south side of East Warren. Image courtesy of Susan Newell



### **Tim Killeen**

**Wayne County Commissioner – District 1**

313.224.0920 (phone) 313.967.1238 (fax)

[tkilleen@waynecounty.com](mailto:tkilleen@waynecounty.com)

[www.waynecounty.com/commission/district1.htm](http://www.waynecounty.com/commission/district1.htm)

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## Wayne State Mobile Health Unit Returns to Jefferson Branch

Megan Summers | Contributing Writer

The WSU Mobile Health Unit returns on Tuesday, November 15, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in front of the Jefferson Branch Library, 12350 E. Outer Drive. It's a great opportunity to get all kinds of free health services including:

- Blood pressure screening
- General health screening: diabetes, cholesterol, kidney function screening
- COVID-19 vaccinations (5+ years old) (manufacturer and boosters subject to availability)
- COVID-19 PCR testing (3+ years old) for symptomatic individuals *\*we do not offer routine screenings*
- Influenza vaccinations *\*we are billing insurance for flu shots*
- No appointment needed
- ID not required *\*we do collect if one is available*
- Insurance not required *\*we do collect if available, but you will not receive a co-pay for this event*
- Parental/Guardian authorization is required for any individuals under the age of 18 for all services outside of the HIV Screening (13 yr and up)

Other services that may be available:

- HIV testing (13+ years old, results within 20 minutes)
- Linkage to care and community resources



A patient receives a blood pressure screening. Image courtesy of Wayne Health

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*Megan Summers is a Librarian II at the Jefferson Branch Library.*

## Shotspotter Coming to MorningSide

The Morningsider

After several delays in voting, City Council has approved an extended contract with ShotSpotter, Inc., the company that makes a controversial technology designed to detect gunshots and pinpoint their location. The original contract covered just 6 of the city's 139 square miles. Now it will cover 28 square miles, including MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone. The new contract runs through the end of 2024. It isn't yet clear when the system will be operational in our community.

Detroiters have been deeply divided over this surveillance technology. Supporters hail it as an effective crime-fighting tool, while opponents say that it is an intrusive expansion of a surveillance society. They also call it a waste of money, citing other cities where contracts were ended because they damaged police-community relations and weren't effective enough to warrant the funds.


In a compromise with some critics of ShotSpotter, the expanded \$7 million contract will no longer be funded from ARPA, the American Rescue Plan Act, but will be paid for using other city tax dollars.

Evaluating the effectiveness of ShotSpotter is difficult, given that the company owns the data generated and can determine when to share it and whom to share it with. We will have to rely on our police department and City Council to demand transparency and accountability.

For more details about the ShotSpotter controversy, check out the Bridge Detroit article [here](#).

## Resources & Upcoming Events

Presented by The Morningsider



**Latisha Johnson** | **4**  
DETROIT CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 4


Join Council Member Latisha Johnson for  
**District 4 Virtual Monthly Meeting**

**Monday, November 14th**  
5:30 PM to 7 PM  
Register  
<https://bit.ly/3VVJTFO>

Featuring a Presentation from Detroit Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHSEM) regarding emergency shelters & Alert 365

\*Registration required to receive Zoom log-in credentials

**CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION!**  
313-224-4841  
313-224-0369  
councilmemberjohnson@detroitmi.gov






**PLAN YOUR REC** 

Take part in shaping your community's rec center!

**CHANDLER PARK FIELD HOUSE CONCEPT DESIGN MEETING**

**NOV. 15th at 6 PM**  
at SAMARITAN CENTER (5555 Conner St)  
[detroitmi.gov/ParksAndGreenways](http://detroitmi.gov/ParksAndGreenways)




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## Regrid Data Reveals Who Owns Property Here and Much More

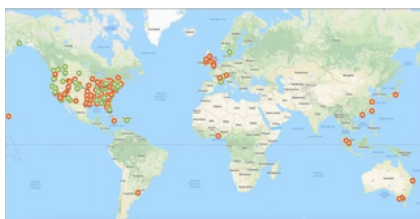
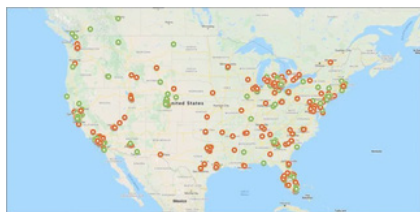
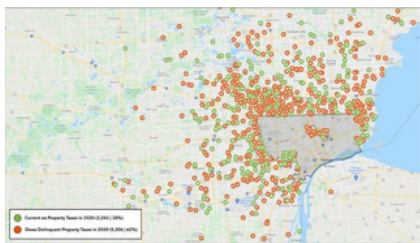
**Sharon Luckerman** | Contributing Writer

Have you heard the rumors that people from foreign countries are buying up foreclosed homes in MorningSide? Have you wondered if the taxable value of your home is accurate or fair?

Alex Allsup, 37, of Detroit, collects data about Detroit tax foreclosures and property ownership and delinquencies. He can tell you who owns what and much more. It's his job as Vice President of Research and Technology at Regrid, formerly Loveland Technologies.

His data, for example, shows that a vast majority of once foreclosed properties in MorningSide from 2014-2016 are owned by people – not in China – but just across Eight Mile, suburban Detroiters! A very few Europeans and fewer Africans own our homes but a majority of our landlords are in metro Detroit. Here's his data mapped out on this chart:

Below is a property map that shows where property tax bills were mailed for about 4,000 owner-occupied homes purchased at auction in 2014-2016. The maps show tax bill mailing locations regionally, nationally and internationally to give a sense of where this ownership sits.



**Regional, National, and International property maps shows the number of tax bills mailed between 2014-2016 to owner-occupied homes. Image courtesy of Regrid**

Alex came to Detroit 12 years ago and became the first employee of Loveland Technologies, an innovative software company that did interactive city mapping and crowd sourcing. There he developed their software and data collection tools to help communities and the city understand what was happening to Detroit properties and property taxes.

Both past and present presidents of MorningSide Community Organization, Jackie Grant and Eric Dueweke, worked with Alex and have known him for over 10 years each. "It's amazing what Alex can do," Jackie said. "He can take data that people don't understand and create a snapshot that your average Detroiters can understand and use. We created programs necessary to make changes – but first we needed to know what needs to change." And they learned that with the valuable data they collected and organized.

When Alex was asked what surprised him while collecting data about Detroit properties, he replied about two issues:

1. "I was amazed how clearly tax foreclosed houses and city property tax were the largest forces shaping property ownership in the city and yet no one in the government seemed to know about it or cared.
2. "I realized that the true cost of the tax foreclosures was that foreclosed homes were a lost asset. The wealth represented by that home for the homeowner (once our neighbors) was now gone. And if the home went to a landlord in the auction, and was no longer an owner-occupied home, the new tenants were at the whim of a rental market that was unregulated by the city."

Story continued on page 14...

## Continued... Regrid Data Reveals Who Owns Property Here and Much More

When asked what are new ways data can help MorningSiders, Alex said that Community-based outreach, i.e. people going door to door, can give us a starting point of what tenants are dealing with: How is your landlord? What does your home need? What problems are you facing?

Alex's newest tool just released this October, 2022 is the Detroit Assessment Gauge that every homeowner can download from Regrid's website. It can be used to fight your tax assessment if you feel the city's value of your home is incorrect. It compares your assessment to comparable homes in your neighborhood. The next time you can appeal is January, 2023. Download the assessment tool here: <https://regrid.com/reports/detroit-assessment-gauge>

Alex's work is no longer limited to Detroit. Regrid has gone national collecting parcel data around the country. Surprisingly, Alex says, "there is no central repository of parcel data for every property in the country." His company along with others is standardizing data so other cities can learn what Detroit is learning.

Decades ago former Mayor Coleman Young gave a prescient warning, "Detroit today is your town tomorrow."

"It's important to learn what happened to our communities that lost homeowners to unnecessary foreclosures and tax issues, and not repeat those mistakes," Alex said. And solid data is shedding light on that investigation.

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*Sharon Luckerman, MorningSide resident*

## Independent Bookstore Launches Holiday Pop-Up at the Alger

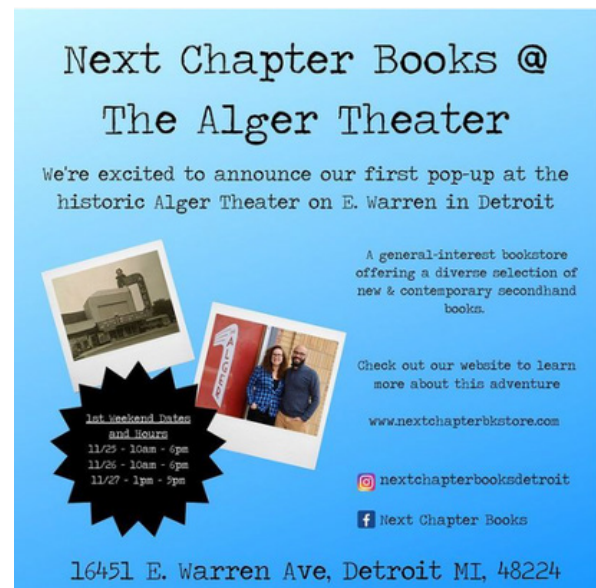
### Next Chapter Books

Next Chapter Books, a new mini-bookstore offering nearly 2,000 new and contemporary secondhand books, will be open in the retail space next to the Alger Theater on weekends this holiday season, from Friday, November 25 through December 18.

"We're excited to launch this dream of ours at a magical time of year," says co-owner Sarah Williams. "We hope folks will stop in for Christmas gifts and leave with a few treasures for themselves." Next Chapter Books is committed to highlighting books by local authors and authors of color at affordable prices.

Stop in and browse through their collection of contemporary fiction, science fiction, fantasy, young adult fiction, children's books, biographies, cookbooks, and much more.

Hours are: Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, check out their website [here](https://www.nextchapterbooksdetroit.com) or call (313) 320-6371.



Next Chapter Books pop-up flyer. Image courtesy of Next Chapter Books

## WANTED: *Your Voice in the Newsletter*

### Think You Can't Write? Think Again

Susan Newell | The Morningsider

When I was in high school, I hated the in-class writing assignments our English teacher gave us. I'd sit at my desk, trying desperately to think of an opening sentence, censoring myself, feeling stupid. At the end of the class, I'd do the walk of shame up to the teacher's desk, show her the one or two sentences I'd managed to put on paper, and ask for an extension. She would shake her head, say "Not again, Susan," and reluctantly give me until the end of the school day to turn in my essay.

Writing eventually became easier over the years as I kept doing it, getting more life experience and with it, more self-confidence. Since working on The Morningsider, I've found that many residents - high school graduates, college graduates, it doesn't matter - hate putting words on paper. Dread of writing seems almost as common as fear of public speaking. But being able to express yourself in writing is a skill that can open up doors in all areas of life - professional as well as personal.

We believe a community newsletter should be for, about, and by the community. We want The Morningsider to amplify the diverse perspectives and voices of our neighborhood, so we want to make it as easy as possible for you to contribute. If you can speak, you can write. A first draft is just talking on paper; making it pretty comes later.

Are you a long-time Detroitter with childhood memories of the east side? Are you a newcomer getting to know the neighborhood? Do you have an opinion about something happening in our community or city? We want to hear from you!

Story continues on page 16...

### Ready to Write? Now What?

Leah Samuel | Contributing Writer

Hey, MorningSiders! What's new?

That's the first question to ask yourself when writing for your neighborhood newsletter. And yes, you can write for it. Anyone who can read and watch the news, can write the news about their community.

Here are a few rules for doing it well.

#### 1. Simple is best

You don't need to know a lot of big words to write for your community newsletter. In fact, shorter words are better at helping people understand what you're writing. Short sentences work better. Longer sentences, with lots of commas in them, can become really confusing for the reader, who doesn't want to try to figure out what that long sentence is saying. Make it clear with a shorter sentence.



Image courtesy of Maskot/Getty Images

#### 2. Name it; don't claim it.

It's cool to find some useful information readers need. But tell them where you got the information, so they know it's legit and not something you're just making up or trying to steal.

Story continues on page 16...

## Continued... Think You Can't Write? Think Again

If you've got something to say but worry about saying it well, we can work together. I'll take notes using your own words as much as possible, then turn it into a rough draft that you can adapt to make it your own. The companion article from a seasoned journalist and native Detroiter has some helpful hints to make writing a little easier.

If you're still not convinced to take the plunge, no problem. We always appreciate ideas for stories and new issues that need to be covered. If you're ready to talk, we're ready to listen! Contact me at [sdnewell50@gmail.com](mailto:sdnewell50@gmail.com) or our editor, Jeffrey D Lewis II, at [jefflewis2@ymail.com](mailto:jefflewis2@ymail.com). (Yes, that's ymail, not gmail).

By the way, what you've just read went through more changes than I can count. I finally said what I always do: "Good enough is good enough!"

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*Susan Newell, retired nurse and resident of MorningSide since 1984. Serves as the Associate Editor of The Morningsider*

## Continued... Ready to Write? Now What?

That means that if you're copying something from someone or somewhere else, say where you got it. Otherwise it looks like you're claiming it as your own. If you're repeating what someone else said in your article, make sure the audience knows you're doing that: Put quotation marks around words spoken by anybody who isn't you, or it will look like you said it.

Ask for permission to use something that somebody else took a picture of or drew, and then let readers know who gave you the permission.

### 3. Find the right beginning.

There is a wrong beginning to a story; It's the one that someone reading or hearing the story doesn't care about.

Here's what I mean: Imagine that a house exploded on your childhood street. You hear about it on the way to work.

No details yet, but you wonder if the burning house is the one you used to live in. Then you get a call from your family's former neighbor, a science teacher living across from you back in the day. She's retired now and always home, so you're thinking you can finally find out what happened.

One the phone, your neighbor finally catches her breath. She pulls herself together, and starts explaining...the math, physics and chemistry involved in a natural gas explosion. Then she gossips about the family living in the house that exploded. She describes the family before them, and before them, until she gets to the family she knew really well — your next-door neighbors from back in the day.

All you wanted to know from her was whose house blew up. That other stuff should have come after, so you wouldn't have to go through all that background information to get to the information you wanted. But out of respect, you listened to her whole story, anyway.

Readers don't have to do that. They might stop reading the story halfway through. Or, if they don't see the newest information at the top, they could assume nothing new is happening and skip your article.

### 4. Do what reporters do.

When your favorite TV news people start off their newscasts, the first thing they say is something like, "New at 11," or "Breaking news tonight," or "New this morning." It's to let you know that what they're about to say is new and recent information.

They start with what's going on now, or what has been going on most recently. Then they get into how or why it started going on and any other information they've found.

Write your articles the same way.

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*Detroit-born and -bred, Leah Samuel is a semi-retired journalist and inexplicable songwriter living just outside Boston.*



# MorningSide's Finest

## Nicole Bryant

In the two years Nicole Bryant has called MorningSide home, she has gone above and beyond to inspire her fellow neighbors and boost the morale of her community.

In an area of MorningSide that is often left out the conversation of neighborhood improvement, rising home values, streetscape project, etc., Nicole realized she has a responsibility to do her part of improving her community.

Nicole's home is highlighted as our Curb Appeal feature for the month of November by her outstanding lawn display during the Halloween season.

It wasn't just solely Halloween either. One holiday after another, Nicole dedicates countless hours of building a showcase that makes Beaconsfield street shine brighter than it has been in decades.

During these last two years, Nicole has rented her home on Beaconsfield, and soon she will be relocating, but don't worry, she isn't going too far.

Nicole is in the process of closing on the purchase of her new home and will become a 1st-time homeowner on Buckingham. She is set to move in by the end of the week.

When asked why she chose MorningSide originally, Nicole mentioned that her Beaconsfield home reminded her of the childhood home she was raised in over in the neighboring Chandler Park community. Nicole decided to remain here as a homeowner because of the strong community presence, as well as the family-like atmosphere that MorningSide has.

Although her soon to be former neighbors on Beaconsfield will miss the lawn displays during the holidays, her new neighbors on Buckingham is definitely in for a treat and so is the rest of MorningSide.



Nicole Bryant. Image courtesy of Nicole Bryant

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\$275 Quarter Page

## Monthly Run

\$150 Full Page  
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\$60 Quarter Page



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