

April 2009

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We remember

The day that changed Montgomery forever...

Ten years ago, an early morning April 9 tornado raked across the region focusing its fury on the Montgomery area. Four people were killed in the storm that left millions of dollars in damage to scores of homes and businesses.

The victims are worthy of remembrance. The decade that followed is worthy of commemorating. **A special program has been planned for Sunday, April 5, at St. Barnabas Church to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the 1999 Tornado.** The program, which begins at 2 p.m., will not only serve as a memorial, but also celebrate the community spirit which emerged from the tragedy.

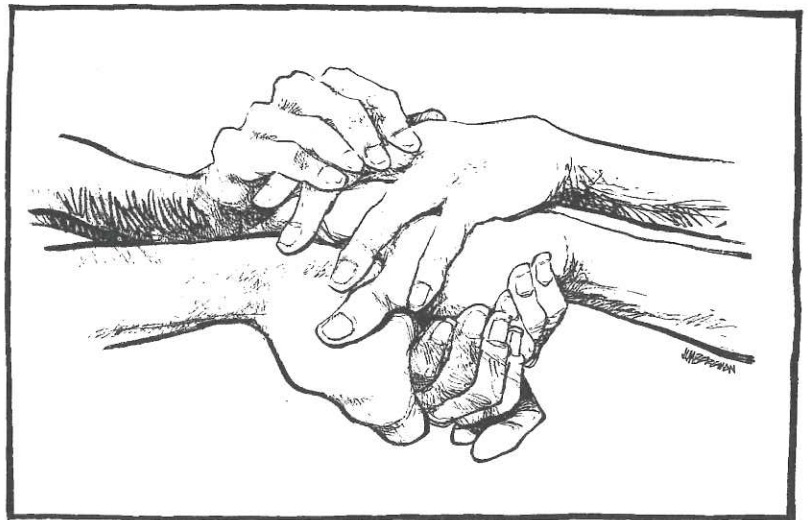
Those who may have witnessed the aftermath, experienced loss, volunteered in some capacity, or just wish to celebrate the bonds that formed by caring neighbors are encouraged to attend.

The program is themed by the Jim Borgman sketch featured in the Cincinnati Enquirer titled "We're All in this Together." The speakers

will present the facts of the day, the resident and volunteer perspectives and recapture the City's perspective and the re-growth which followed. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to share their remembrances or reflect

on the memories of that day.

To determine potential attendance for the service, those planning to attend are encouraged to call 891-2424. Reservations, however, are not required.



WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.....

The original artwork of this sketch was given to the City by local residents and now hangs in City Hall.

Planned memorial to commemorate spirit of Montgomery community

The April 5 program commemorating the 10-year anniversary of the 1999 tornado will serve as the beginning of a three-year drive to establish a permanent memorial. The memorial will be located in the serene confines of the Johnson Nature Preserve, also heavily damaged in the storm.

In addition to enhancements at the entrance of the park, the memorial effort will include a sculptural representation of the Jim Borgman drawing showing hands clasped together and proclaiming, "We're All in this Together."

A variety of gifting options will be

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Moment to Remember

The City will offer a "Moment to Remember" at Sycamore High School on April 9 at 9 a.m. A brief ceremony will reflect on the tornado which struck the community that morning exactly ten years earlier.

A message from City Council

Parks survey prompts upgrades in Johnson Nature Preserve



This month's message by Council Member Lynda Roesch

Over the next three years, Montgomery has plans to improve the Johnson Nature Preserve. These changes are a result of suggestions received during the Parks Study. The kick off for the improvements ties in nicely with the ten year memorial of the 1999 tornado. The April 9, 1999 tornado significantly damaged the Nature Preserve.

After consulting with experts, the City determined to cut the fallen trees to the ground and allow the natural recovery

process to take place. As one expert told us, this is nature's way of cleaning forests. The natural recovery process helped stabilize the slopes and allowed natural regeneration to occur. Within months after the tornado, in order to address potential erosion issues and honeysuckle invasion, the City spread annual rye grass over bare areas and planted 700 native tree species, 600 native shrubs and 200 flats of ground cover.

In remembrance of the tornado, the entrance to the Johnson Nature Preserve will feature a replica of the Jim Borgman "We're All in this Together" sketch editorial that appeared in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. The

"We're All in this Together" sketch has come to symbolize the sense of community that characterizes Montgomery.

In addition, there are plans to create a grassy hill area at the entrance of the Preserve to facilitate educational presentations. There will also be improvements to the walk which will take a visitor from the parking lot to the trail and then into the Preserve. The walk will feature brick respite areas. The bricks are available for purchase by residents, similar to the bricks at City Hall. The walking trail will eventually be reworked to encompass more of the Preserve. The entrance will also

feature benches and a pergola to increase the accessibility and attractiveness of the entrance area.

If you would like to contribute or purchase a brick or bench in memory of a loved one or as a remembrance of the tornado, please contact City Hall. The results of the Park Study combined with the history of the City will create an improved Johnson Nature Preserve for the enjoyment of Montgomery residents.

This feature appears regularly, allowing Montgomery's elected officials to communicate directly with residents.

Get to know your parks

Johnson Nature Preserve: Montgomery's best kept secret

During the park study conducted by the City and the Parks and Recreation Commission in 2007, it was revealed that a large number of residents did not know about some of the parks, especially those further away from their homes. Thanks to Montgomery's sidewalk system, any City park is just a walk away.

Johnson Nature Preserve is one of the least known, but most unique in the Montgomery park system. Encompassing seven acres of natural woodlands, it is located at 10840 Deerfield Road, just east of I-71. Unlike the other parks, the Preserve has very few man-made amenities, with the focus being on enjoying the scenic and natural aspects of the area.

The preserve was originally part of a 25-acre farm owned by the Stewart family, who sold the land to Dr. and Mrs. Frank L. Johnson. Dr. Johnson donated the land to the city in 1974 for "use as a nature preserve to be enjoyed by its citizens." In

1988, the trail system was developed by two local teens working on their Eagle Scout service projects. The current preserve consists of a gravel walking trail that winds through woods and marsh,

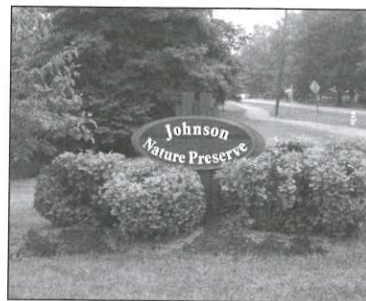
following the natural flow of the creeks. There are also benches stationed along the trail. Many different types of wildflowers and plants bring variety to the landscape, as well as diverse color during the spring and fall.

On April 9, 1999, the tornado that passed through northern Montgomery also caused extensive damage to the Nature Preserve. Most of its mature

trees were destroyed, drastically altering the landscape. At the time, the City decided to allow the Preserve to recover naturally, and avoided bringing in large logging equipment that might further damage the fragile ecosystem. The recovery of the

Preserve has been documented in two photographic tours, one dated from 2001 and the other from 2006, showing the changes that have occurred during this natural reforestation. Both tours can be accessed through the city's website.

In addition to improvements planned as part of the memorial project at the Preserve, expansion of the current trail system has been proposed.



Memorial...

Continued from the front page

available, including a unique opportunity for an individual sponsorship of the monument to be comprised of a brick pillar and bronze plaque as the centerpiece. Other options will range between \$50 and \$1,500. Each can be customized in both location and message.

Monument & Column

\$10,000 (Limit 1)

Landscape Bed & Bench

\$1500.00 (Limit 5)

Natural Bench *along nature path*

\$500.00 (Limit 8)

Memorial Brick Pavers (12"x12")

\$250 (Limit 50)

Personalized Brick Pavers (6"x8")

\$50 (Limit 250)

Gifting opportunity informational materials will be available at the April 5 Commemorative 10th Anniversary event. Subsequent to the event, information will be available at Montgomery City Hall and on the City web site www.montgomeryohio.org starting April 6.