



November-December 2018

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FIND THE Beaumont-Wilshire
Neighborhood Association
ONLINE AT www.bwna.us

BWNA Calendar of Events Community Events

Saturday, November 10

NatureSpace Planting Day
beginning at 8:00 a.m.
west of Wilshire Park pavilion by
picnic area (*see article on this page
for details*)

Wednesday, November 14

7:00-8:30 p.m.
Friends of Wilshire Park monthly
meeting at Bethany Lutheran
Church (corner of NE Skidmore
and 37th)
(*see article on this page for details*)

continued on page 3



Portland's "Plant or Else!" ordinance

by Al Ellis

Last March, the well-intentioned Portland City Council quietly approved Street Tree Planting Standards (City Code Chapter 11.50.060) ostensibly for the greater good of the planet. But does the laudable end justify the means? You be the judge. Consider this case study:

A retired couple on a fixed income has lived in Beaumont-Wilshire for decades, loves the neighborhood, and is hoping to stay in their home for years to come. But parts of the house, especially the kitchen, are in serious need of refurbishing. Bids come in, and all are well above the \$25,000 the couple has socked away in savings for home improvements. Borrow they must, and borrow they do, securing a home equity line of credit, and the remodeling begins. But soon the couple notice three painted white stripes on the curb next to their parking strip, each 25 feet apart from the other with no explanation. The mystery is solved days later when a letter arrives from Portland Parks & Recreation/Urban Forestry with the following terse directive in large bold print:

NOTICE:

STREET TREE PLANTING REQUIRED

Plant 3 Trees in the Right-of-Way Prior to Final Inspection

The couple is baffled. There must be some mistake. After all, the indoor remodel won't remove or damage existing trees or harm their extensive garden, nor will it affect the veritable forest across

the street in Wilshire Park. Moreover, the couple's parking strip (the referred to "right of way") has a vulnerable sprinkler system running the length of it, and the 20- to 30-foot trees planted in that location would effectively put an end to their lovely unobstructed view of the park. So they prepare an appeal, only to discover that unless the trees interfere with an underground utility line, which they won't, the \$110 fee for an "Administrative Review" would be wasted money. Facing significant costs to purchase, plant, and maintain the three trees, reconfigure the irrigation system to accommodate the plantings, and other potential costs, the couple assume the city is prepared to provide financial help. But not so, for homeowners are responsible for the entire bill, and the penalty for noncompliance is a fine of \$1,000 per day! With that knowledge, the couple reluctantly begins researching trees on the limited list of approved trees.

Such is the law now in Portland: a home remodel with a price tag of \$25,000 or greater, regardless of the homeowner's income level, triggers mandatory planting of up to three trees in the property's parking strip; with the number of trees, planting specifications, and tree selection options prescribed by the city. The main goal of the ordinance is clear: increase the tree canopy to reduce air pollution. Not so clear, however, is linking a \$25,000 trigger for indoor remodels to trees without city assistance.

Friends of Wilshire Park move forward on projects

by Tiffney Townsend

Friends of Wilshire Park (FOWP) has been very active over the summer, and it's fitting that the first results began showing up around harvest time. The NatureSpace is nearly complete after construction of a split-rail fence in early October and installation of a thick layer of mulch to kill the old layer of struggling grass and make the soil soft and ready for the

native plants that will make it a lush habitat for animals and park visitors. If you haven't had a chance to participate in this project, it's not too late: November 10 is planting day at the NatureSpace, when we finally install trees, shrubs, and ferns. Sign up online to participate (friendsofwilshirepark.org/volunteer), arrive at 8:00 a.m. just west of the pavilion. Bring gloves, shovels, trowels, water, and a sack lunch for the group

continued on page 6



President's message

by Tim Hemstreet

Homelessness and residential infill top concerns at October general meeting

Homelessness, unfortunately, continues to be a major challenge facing our city, county, and nonprofit agencies, all of which struggle with how to address the issue. Given the complexity of the problem, Central Northeast Neighbors (CNN)—BWNA's umbrella neighborhood coalition organization—formed a committee last spring to explore options for neighborhoods to respond to this crisis and be part of a solution. Volunteering to serve as BWNA's representative on the committee was board member Cliff Goldman, and at the BWNA general membership meeting in October, Cliff introduced Patt Opdyke, founder of Neighbors Helping Neighbors PDX, a nonprofit that collects trash from homeless encampments to reduce friction between neighbors, improve neighborhood livability, promote health and safety, and engage people with respect and kindness. Efforts such as this highlight the fact that although the problem of homelessness is daunting, individuals—especially neighbors directly impacted—and organizations can still be part of efforts to improve the situation. With no comprehensive solution on the horizon from federal, state, or local governments, CNN's homelessness committee is evaluating ways that residents,

with assistance from nonprofits like Neighbors Helping Neighbors PDX, might work toward addressing some of these needs and concerns on the neighborhood level. It is worth remembering that individuals and volunteer organizations can play a role in the overall solution.

Also at our general meeting, Barb Strunk reported that the Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) continues to deliberate on a Residential Infill Project proposal, which is likely to be modified prior to a final vote at year's end. PSC recommendations will then be forwarded to the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which in turn will craft policy for the City Council to consider. With a council vote possible early next year, we continue to follow this issue.

Once again it is time to take stock of the year and prepare for the holidays. As we give thanks this season, I want to acknowledge the board members, volunteers, and others who have spent their time on neighborhood activities and helped to make this a successful year for BWNA and our community.

Best wishes to all for a healthy and happy holiday season.



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helping
hand?

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Gary Hancock 503-367-0862
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Roger Price 503-287-9068
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Related Organizations

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Central Northeast Neighbors Board

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Kathy Campbell 503-515-6225

Areas of Interest

- **Beaumont Middle School**
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- **Transportation**
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- **Land Use**
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Editor's notes

by Al Ellis

Be it Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, or Christmas, 'tis the Season of Tradition. Holiday customs

from card-sending and gift-giving to light displays and ritual feasts to religious services and charity drives are long-standing and widespread. But as any empty-nester will tell you, even tried-and-true family traditions are vulnerable to changing realities. And so we evolve, creating new routines for new circumstances.

BWNA newsletter "traditions" have also evolved as we seek to stay relevant and compelling to our readers and serve as catalysts for the community. Each new wave of newsletter team volunteers has generated innovation. For example, during my time as editor alone, many premiered features have become commonplace: Letter to the Board editorials, Barb Strunk's gardening tips, Kathy Campbell's recipes, Susan Trabucco's investigative business reports, Mark Mohammadour's interviews, my Editor's Notes column, infill-development updates, John Sandie's reporting on health concerns at demolition sites, Beaumont Business Association updates, Friends of Wilshire Park updates, our graphic designer's creative accent graphics, and copy editor Myrna Sheie's streamlining of the information columns (Calendar of Events and Our Organization). But constants

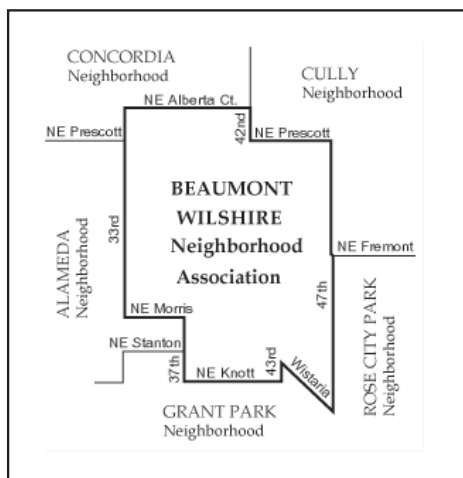
remain as well: the BWNA logo at the top of the front page, the President's Message column, the handy little B-W neighborhood boundary map, the listing of board vacancies and committee opportunities, showcasing of advertisers (NW Seismic in this issue), our eclectic array of content (from Plant or Else! to Holiday Fest in this issue), and of course, promotion of BWNA activities and projects.

But the tradition of BWNA itself may be in peril—or at least in limbo for awhile—due to a City Hall challenge to the heretofore venerated Portland system of 95 neighborhood associations and accompanying coalition organizations. Beginning a few months ago with an under-the-radar, but telltale, bureau name change—the Office of Neighborhood Involvement was replaced by the Office of Civic and Community Life. An exploratory committee was formed to brainstorm alternatives to the traditional neighborhood association model, which was lambasted by critics as insufficiently inclusive and institutionally elitist. I would urge the committee to take note of the broad scope of topics on neighborhood association dockets in general and BWNA's in particular. From BWNA's October meeting, for example:

- Homelessness in Portland (Neighbors Helping Neighbors PDX presentation)
- Beaumont Village grocery retention
- Wilshire Park improvements
- Art along Fremont
- Traffic/pedestrian safety improvements
- Beaumont Middle School scholarship

Are these the issues of an "elitist" agenda? I think not. And I don't see BWNA as an exception. Some traditions are worth fighting to maintain, and this is one of them.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS, and I hope to see you at the BWNA December General Meeting.



Calendar of Events (cont.)

Community Events

Friday, December 7
3:30-8:30 p.m.
Fremont Holiday Fest
Beaumont Village
(see article on page 4 for details)

BWNA Meetings

Location and Time:
Bethany Lutheran Church
Corner of NE Skidmore and 37th
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Board meetings in Library Meeting Room
(enter on 37th side of church)

General meetings in Fellowship Hall
(down walkway on Skidmore side)

Monday, November 12: Board Meeting
Monday, December 10: General Meeting
Monday, January 14: Board Meeting

BWNA Newsletter Submission Deadline

Friday, December 14 (for the January-February newsletter)

E-mail articles and editorials to
Al Ellis (editor@bwna.us)

Email photos, graphics, and ads to
Jane Feinberg (design@bwna.us)



BBA gears up for Holiday Fest as board extends beyond the Village

by Amy Hamdan

Fresh off another scary-popular Halloween Fright Night, the Beaumont Business Association encourages families to mark their calendars for the next big BBA event—Holiday Fest on Friday, December 7, from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. This year the tree will be bigger and better (and hopefully won't tip over). Come get your picture taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus or with Santa Paws, if you prefer. Stores stay open late and will have festive offerings and activities for kids. Vote for your favorite window decor, listen to the Royal Blues carol in the street, and join in a sing-along.

In other Fremont Street business news, the BBA board has a new member, but not from a business in the Beaumont Village area. Clint Elliot works for Union Bank, down the street on NE Fremont and 24th, and he's the first of his kind to be welcomed onto the BBA board. "This is a big win for us," exclaimed an ebullient BBA President Andrew Frazier. "We want to extend our business community up and down Fremont Street, and we hope Union Bank is just the first to see the value in joining forces with us." Welcome aboard, Clint!



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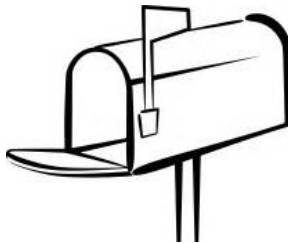
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Letter to the Board: The inspiration behind FOWP

by Gary Hancock

(Editor's Note: Even board members are occasionally motivated to submit a letter to the board! Gary chairs the Parks & Open Spaces Committee and Friends of Wilshire Park.)



When I moved here 10 years ago, my family and I discovered that we had a wonderful park located just blocks from our house. This park was Wilshire Park.

The park became our second home as we spent hours at the park playing soccer and baseball games, jogging the dirt track, throwing the Frisbee, and playing on the playground. But as the years went by, we began to notice the playground seemed to be getting in worse and worse shape. The paint was peeling on most of the wood structures, the small wooden play cars had chunks missing out of them, and the teeter-totter was spray-painted with graffiti.

I began calling the city to see if I could start the process of getting our playground area upgraded. My questions were met by many barriers. I was told by the city that I would have to submit a proposal to get the park on a waiting list. This was followed by an e-mail letting me know that the waiting list was no longer taking new proposals because of budget cuts. Discouragement grew, and I gave up the dream of getting our playground upgraded.

Months later at a spring BWNA meeting, I found myself in a conversation about the playground (and other parts) of Wilshire Park with a group of people who shared my frustrations, and soon Friends of Wilshire Park (FOWP) was born. Many meetings later, Commissioner Amanda Fritz was invited to be a guest speaker, and she informed us that one of the broken-down play structures (the toddler house) was scheduled to be replaced using bond funds. We asked her if it would be possible to raise funds for the rest of the toddler area, and she said yes. Meanwhile, our first major FOWP project had been launched—the grant-assisted NatureSpace, with the goal of creating a beautiful natural area for reflection and play near the park pavilion. More than 40 neighborhood volunteers, young and old, turned out in early October to participate in “Mulch Day” on a drizzly Saturday, and we thank you. Building on that enthusiasm, a fundraising drive is currently underway to upgrade the toddler playground—beyond the new toddler house—and we’re looking for interested parties to help.

FOWP meets every second Wednesday from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the basement activity room of Bethany Lutheran Church at the corner of NE 37th and Skidmore. Please participate in helping to complete the NatureSpace project, and join me in my quest to achieve a world-class play area! For more information, go to www.friendsofwilshirepark.org.



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Friends of Wilshire Park projects (continued)

picnic at noon, and stay as long as you can into the afternoon to get the planting done.

Another park improvement initiative is making the dog run more dog- and people-friendly. The first phase was accomplished in mid-October with the repainting of signpost lettering. This small but significant step will make the boundaries of the off-leash area more clear. A top complaint has been dogs that wander off across the park (flying in the face of basic courtesy, not to mention Multnomah County leash law). Concerned parents point out, with good reason, that a perfectly friendly golden retriever can be both massive and intimidating to a toddler. The hope is that the repainting will alert dog owners to area boundaries, but installation of a fence remains an option. The fence issue is a contentious one, with some advocating for a fully enclosed area, others for a partially fenced area, and still others for the current unfenced area. This issue, as well as the push for installation of a dog water fountain, will be front and center at the next FOWP meeting on Wednesday, November 14, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the basement

activity room Bethany Lutheran Church (NE Skidmore and 37th; Skidmore entrance).

Finally, the biggest FOWP project is fundraising to replace the remainder of the toddler play area. Wilshire Park has one of the few play areas in Northeast Portland that is designed for very young children, and it serves families from many nearby neighborhoods.

People with experience in fundraising are encouraged to help, as thousands of dollars are needed to improve the decrepit play area. Please visit friendsofwilshirepark.org for information about volunteer opportunities, upcoming projects, and fundraising needs.

(Editor's Note: In the previous issue, I quoted a document distributed by Portland Parks & Recreation staff at a FOWP meeting stating that "PP&R identified the capacity to replace 19 play pieces around the system," which, given the context of the meeting, I inferred to mean the play area within Wilshire Park. But as Gary Hancock's Letter to the Board (on page 5) points out, Wilshire Park ended up with only one piece replaced. My apologies for the error.)



Three steps to a healthier home

by Jean Johnson

When we think of interior design and décor, most of us contemplate the aesthetics, or how the home will appear to the eye. We're missing the boat, according to Dr. Sally Augustin and Dr. David Fell of FP Innovations. Incorporating certain outdoor elements in our décor can improve our health and mental well-being, they claim. Moreover, even though we live in the Pacific Northwest, where gorgeous natural settings abound, sometimes we don't get out as much as we'd like. So adding a pop of nature to our homes is a way bring the outdoors inside.

- 1) **Take Advantage of Natural Light:** While heavy draperies help insulate homes from winter and summer weather extremes, keeping them open and allowing the sunlight to stream in has health benefits. Research links exposure to natural light to an elevation in mood, weight loss, and other positive health outcomes, according to Augustin and Fell.
- 2) **Bring the Outdoors Indoors:** According to the EPA, the air inside our homes may be more polluted than outdoor air. Carbon monoxide is one of the most common toxins in the air in our homes, and formaldehyde and benzene are emitted from carpet and furniture. Pesticides, cleaners, and other household products also leave toxins in the air. Using plants to rid the air in our homes of these health

hazards is a process known as phytoremediation. NASA performed studies of indoor air in space stations and came up with a list of different types of plants that can remove the various toxins in the air. Flowering plants, for instance, remove benzene from the air. So consider growing gerbera daisies or chrysanthemums in the home. Concerned about formaldehyde? Pot up some golden pothos, philodendron, and spider plants and place them throughout the home. NASA recommends 15 to 18 plants (in 6- to 8-inch containers) per 1,800 square feet of living space.

- 3) **The Sound of Water:** The sound of water soothes and relaxes us. "Studies indicate that being in a coastal or marine setting causes a six point increase on the 100-point happiness scale compared with urban settings," according to Zachary Slobig, writing in *Psychology Today*. If you don't live near a body of water, you can still derive the benefits of the sound of water by incorporating water features in your home's interior decorating.

In conclusion, it is well known that being in nature helps us heal, relax, and restore. What is becoming better known is that bringing the elements of nature indoors provides many of the same benefits.

(Editor's Note: Jean works for More Realty, one of our newest advertisers. See her ad below.)



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Botanical plant names not just for geeks

by Barbara Strunk

Don't hesitate to learn and use botanical plant names. They tell us a lot about our plants and how to grow them. Using the botanical name made up of genus and species allows us to know exactly what plant we are discussing and growing.

Cyclamen (genus) hederifolium (species) bloom every October in my garden. But other cyclamen bloom in the fall, too. So how do I know whether my plant is *C. hederifolium* or *C. repandum*, and what is the difference in growing needs? The beautiful cyclamen we see at Christmastime, *C. persicum*, are not cold tolerant enough to do well in our gardens. How can we know this essential growing information if we know only that all three plants are cyclamen?

'Sowbread' is the common name of cyclamen. The only insight we get from this name is that pigs eat the tubers in some areas where cyclamen are native. Where do the pigs eat them? What growing conditions do they like (that is, the cyclamen, not the pigs)? Knowing the species along with the genus leads us to a wealth of knowledge about our plants gleaned from books and the Internet, the application of which gives them the best chance of surviving and thriving.

Beautiful blue and purple asters also bloom in the fall. Some species of asters need very free-draining soil and others grow along streams. Some are hardy in our area and some not. If I

had not looked up water-loving aster modestus, I would have killed my new plant by planting it in dry gravelly soil.

Botanical names come from a long history of classification and taxonomy, starting with the great scientist Linnaeus of the mid-18th century and carried on by Darwin of mid-19th century. The recent ability to closely study the DNA of plant material has led to significant reclassification from one genus to another, including some new genera. My beautiful asters are now in the new genus symphotrichum. Plant enthusiasts like me tend to snort in frustration ("That taxonomist just needed a reason to write a paper!") at the name changes. I do have to admit, though, that this reclassification is reflecting new, useful knowledge about plants and their relationships to each other.

Examining the botanic names of plants is interesting. The common name "sowbread" is silly and entertaining, but breaking down the words is also revealing. Using cyclamen hederifolium as an example: 'cyclamen' is from medieval Latin 'cyclaminos' and from Greek 'kyklos' circle or move around, referring to the round bulbous shape of the root. "Hedera" means ivy in Latin, "folium" means leaf, which tells you two things about the plant and how to identify it. Botanical names can tell us how and where a plant grows and what it looks like. Don't worry about how to pronounce the words because they are pronounced differently in varied areas of the gardening world. Okay, my "geekishness" is revealed.

For those of you who like digging into words as well as plants, I recommend *Stearn's Dictionary of Plant Names for Gardeners*. Also, *The Guardian* newspaper published a September 9, 2018, article, "Don't be Scared of Using Latin Plant Names" (https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/sep/09/dont-be-scared-of-using-latin-plant-names-james-wong?CMP=share_btn_link). Be sure to read the interesting comments posted to the article from around the English-speaking world.



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NW Seismic aims to protect homeowners from earthquakes... and misinformation

by Susan Trabucco

Selling “fear and doubt” is a strategy often used by sales people in a variety of industries. But for NW Seismic, whose business is seismic retrofitting of area homes, that approach isn’t necessary to clinch a client: “People who come to us are concerned for their safety and a desire to avoid losing their home in the event of an earthquake; they are already afraid,” says Michael Wieber, partner and Director of Operations for the family owned, NE Portland-based firm.

In addition to seismic retrofitting of homes, NW Seismic focuses its business mission on foundation replacement, foundation repair, and installing earthquake-activated gas shut off valves. “Our work is calculated to strengthen homes to the extent a homeowner can shelter in place after a moderate to strong seismic event. If we look at the project and don’t believe we can do that, we lose interest,” says Wieber.

The company’s website describes the process of seismic retrofitting as the technical process of transferring the lateral loads generated in an earthquake from the house to the foundation. For the non-engineering



Michael Wieber, partner in NW Seismic, was inspired to start his business after his parents experienced an earthquake. Photo by Susan Trabucco

crowd, that means attaching a house to its foundation. NW Seismic’s foundation repair and replacement services are a necessity that goes hand-in-hand with seismic retrofitting due to the likelihood a home’s foundation is in poor condition. “We find about 50 percent of the homes built prior to 1930 have foundations formed of unwashed Willamette River sand, which has a high clay content, and/or poorly formulated concrete. We even find bricks and 2x4s embedded in the foundation mix. These materials make for a foundation not worth retrofitting to,” says Wieber.

Happily and exhaustively self-taught on the subject of seismic retrofitting, Wieber was motivated as a result of the Spring Break earthquake of 1993, which caused his parents’ Portland home to shake, pushing them to seek earthquake insurance. Denied for lack of seismic retrofitting, they asked their son to

do the work. “The work qualified them for insurance, but I eventually realized the retrofit anchor bolts installed wouldn’t save the house,” Wieber says. That reality pushed Wieber to educate himself via copious amounts of reading and spending time with Bay Area contractors and engineers knowledgeable about the subject of how buildings respond in earthquakes. “Maybe because I’m a recovering Catholic, but I found that people in the retrofitting industry didn’t spend much effort to understand what actually happens to a home during an earthquake. I wanted to know.”

In 2008, Wieber launched NW Seismic with his brother John, who serves as the company’s director of production, following the “prescriptive path” approach to retrofitting houses, but kept encountering situations where that approach wouldn’t work. When structural engineers would design an appropriate alternative, Wieber wanted to understand why. It turned out that designing effective retrofits was a very complicated endeavor and is a learning process that continues to this day.

Wieber says there is no city code requirement for seismic retrofitting—permits being issued solely on the basis of work performed as proposed, not whether the work will keep the house from coming off its foundation in an earthquake, and he finds this code inadequacy puts uneducated homeowners at risk—which is one of the main reasons he spends a great deal of his time educating the public about the realities of home retrofitting. “I was approached by the Multnomah County Library years ago to present on the subject via their library programs about once a month. I readily agreed because I believe consumers should be more aware and more protected.”

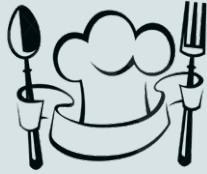
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Warm up with holiday soup from Kathy's Kitchen!
by Kathy Campbell

Lentil Soup with Hillshire Farm Smoked Turkey Sausage

2 Tb butter	¼ c dry white wine	½ c green lentils
1 large carrot, chopped	5 c chicken stock	6½ oz. (half a rope) Hillshire Farm smoked turkey sausage
1 onion, chopped	2 tsp dried thyme	1 tsp salt
1 leek, white part only, chopped	1 bay leaf	pepper to taste
1 celery stalk, chopped		

Melt the butter in a large dutch oven. Add the carrot, onion, leek, and celery. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes until golden.

Stir in the white wine and chicken stock. Bring to a boil. Add the thyme and bay leaf. Lower the heat, cover, and simmer gently for 30 minutes.

Add the lentils and continue cooking, covered, for 30 to 40 minutes until they are just tender. Stir the soup occasionally.

Add the turkey sausage and season with salt and pepper.

Serve hot.



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