

Approximate boundaries:
N-Railroad; **S**-W. Hampton Ave;
E-N. 103rd St ; **W**-N. 124th St

NORTHWEST SIDE *Timmerman West*

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Timmerman West is a neighborhood of moderate population density with rolling hills throughout. There is a significant amount of green space along both sides of the Menomonee and Little Menomonee Rivers. The Little Menomonee River runs through the neighborhood from north to south and the Menomonee River runs from the western part of the neighborhood to the southern border. Both rivers converge into one river at the south border just west of North Lovers Lane. The neighborhood is cut in two by the north/south freeway. Another large expanse of green space lies just west of Lovers Lane to the freeway on either side of the Menomonee River.

Timmerman West's residential area is in the eastern portion of the neighborhood next to Timmerman Airport. Most of the homes are ranch-style. West of 110th Street and north of Silver Spring Drive is mainly an industrial/business corridor.



HISTORY

Over 50 neighborhoods on Milwaukee's northwest side once comprised the Granville Township in Milwaukee County, which extended from Hampton Avenue on the south to County Line Road on the north and 27th Street on the east to 124th Street on the west. The Milwaukee neighborhood of Timmerman West was once part of Granville Township.

Early populations

According to the *Milwaukee Sentinel* (March 22, 1877) there were originally three small settlements in Granville. The first, in 1835, was the family of Jacob Brazelton which included 11 sons. The second was duo Daniel R. Small and W.P. Woodward from Indiana who pitched their tents in the center of the Granville area shortly after the Brazelton family arrived and later built homes. The third group of settlers, the Joseph R. Thomas family and S.C. Enos, arrived shortly after Small and Woodward.

Within a few years a new group arrived from the town of Granville in Washington County, New York. The assemblage included the Evert, Brown, Crippen, Lake, Dutcher, and Norton families. They gave their new home the name of their former home in New York.

But it was not these earliest settlers that established much of the culture of Granville Township. That role belonged to a wave of Pennsylvania "Dutch" (i.e., Germans) who arrived just a few years later from Telford, Pennsylvania, including the Wambold, Leister, Scholl, Barndt, Price, Bergstresser, Borse, Klein, Martin, Huber, Groll, Horning, and Lewis families. The Pennsylvania Dutch, under the leadership of Samuel Wambold, quickly established the German Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church (now known as Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church) in 1847. The following year, the church's pastor, Wilhelm Wrede, called a meeting of local Lutheran ministers at the church. This group would later become the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. A museum of these early synod activities now stands on 107th Street (see outings).

In the 1840s there were over 200 people living in Granville Township, and the numbers continued to grow. A small Irish community settled on Granville's eastern border to the center of the township. Initially they set up tents, built brush shanties, and log cabins. But during these early years, Granville Township remained strongly German, and more Germans arrived every year.

Movement toward annexation

Economic prosperity reigned in Granville, due partially to the work ethic of these early German farmers. The town remained predominantly rural through the early half of the 20th century. From the late 1800s to World War II Granville was an important center for dairy and truck farming. Resident William Schlapmann owned a creamery that produced 100 pounds a day. Gradually industries began to open in Granville and the area eventually became the most concentrated base of industrial employment in Wisconsin—today including industrial parks and scores of companies.

In 1956 the residents and property owners of Granville were given a choice to consolidate with the City of Milwaukee. Needing services that Milwaukee could offer—especially water--the majority of voters said yes to the referendum. By the 1960s, the western portion of Granville (16.5 square miles) was annexed by Milwaukee and parts of the eastern section consolidated as the Village of Brown Deer. Milwaukee became one of the few large cities in the United States that still had working farms within its boundaries.

Late 20th century

Timmerman West developed industry early. It was slower in developing a business corridor, especially in the eastern section of the neighborhood. Below are lists of businesses that operated on Silver Spring Drive and on North 107th Street during the annexation period, in 1961. One of the business owners is also profiled.

<i>Addresses on N. 107th in Timmerman West in 1961</i>	<i>Businesses and organizations from <u>Milwaukee City Directory</u></i>
4851	Berea Lutheran Church
4915	Carl J. Young Jr. Contractor
4937	Margarie M. Logan Photo Retouching
4945	Office of Rev. William Truby
5111	E.P. Amenda Company Greenhouse Builders
5333	Jiffy Washer Service and Repair

Summary notes from the U.S. Census and other public sources

- Berea Lutheran Church remains open at that address and today has a strong youth ministry and youth center.
- See the profile of Carl J. Young Jr., the contractor, below.
- The Rev. William Truby later retired in Oostburg, Wisconsin.

Timmerman West business profile (1960s)

(Information from U.S. Census and other public records)

Carl John Young, Jr.

Carl Young, the building contractor, was born in 1923 in Springfield, Illinois. He was the son of Carl Young, Sr., a World War I veteran and son of a German immigrant. Carl Sr. worked as a watchman (security guard) for apartment complexes as Carl Jr. was growing up. Carl Jr's mother was Mary Daley, the daughter of two Irish immigrants.

Carl Jr. spent his younger years in Rochester, Illinois, and lived there until at least the 1940s. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1940 and served the duration of World War II until October of 1945.

It is not known when Carl Jr. came to the Granville/Milwaukee area or how long he stayed. He married Betty Jane Rivers sometime after 1940. She was the daughter of Erwin Rivers and Anita Keoske. Betty and her family were natives of Milwaukee.

Carl died in 1998 and was buried in Highland Memorial Park in New Berlin, Wisconsin.

<i>Addresses on W. Silver Spring in Timmerman West in 1961</i>	<i>Businesses and organizations from <u>Milwaukee City Directory</u></i>
11115	Herbert E. Larson Confectioner
11200	Nagle-Hart Inc. Contractors
11715	Bark River Culvert Supplies & Equipment Company Road Machinery
11811	Engine Power Company

Notes:

- Herbert Larson, the confectioner, lived in Kenosha. He was a World War II vet.
- Nagle-Hart dealt in tractors, caterpillars, and diesel marine engines. The business was sold in 2013.
- In its history, Bark River Culvert built bulldozers, hydraulic equipment, snow plows, and other machinery. It is still in operation at this address today.

In the second half of the 20th century African Americans began to migrate to the Timmerman West and other former Granville communities. This happened for two reasons: (1) the need for housing following the razing of over 8,000 homes in the African American Bronzeville community in the late 1950s through the mid-1960s (see [Halyard Park neighborhood](#)), and (2) the availability of family-supporting jobs in industry in the former Granville community. As in most German-dominated areas in Milwaukee, the integration of the new population proceeded relatively smoothly. Many African American families were able to purchase homes and move into the middle class.

Unfortunately, the deindustrialization movement that began in the 1980s arrested this course. Manufacturing employment in Milwaukee fell 77 percent, from a peak in 1963 to the present. What had been a working and middle class area on the Northwest Side was in economic decline.

Timmerman West also experienced another misfortune in the late 20th century. Beginning in the early 1960s, a large middle section of the neighborhood was cleared to make room for the North/South Freeway. Today the freeway splits the neighborhood in two.

Current populations (as of 2025)

Today there are nearly 5,000 residents in Timmerman West, most living in the eastern section of the neighborhood. Of these, slightly over one-half are African Americans and a little over a third are European Americans (the largest ancestry group still Germans). Approximately one in 20 residents are Latinos (mostly Puerto Ricans), and the rest are Asians and people of multiple backgrounds.

The median household income for residents of Timmerman West is \$38,000, placing the neighborhood in the lower income stratum. The main occupations claimed by adults are in the fields of administration, production, sales, and food service.

INTERESTING FEATURES

- **Hyatt Place, Milwaukee West**, at 11777 W. Silver Spring, a 120-room hotel with a business center, restaurant, and physical fitness facility.
- **Milwaukee Harley-Davidson**, at 11310 W. Silver Spring, a dealer of new and pre-owned motorcycles.

RECURRING NEARBY OUTINGS

In the following section the website addresses have been eliminated due to technical problems with the various ways different web browsers display PDF files.

TOUR OF MUSEUM OF WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD (WELS)			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
By appointment	Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, lower level, 6814 N. 107th St.	Tour of more than 1,000 artifacts and pictures of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod	Free, but donations welcome

OPEN SWIM			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Daily, 1-5pm, holiday times vary	Noyes Park, 8235 W. Good Hope Rd.	Open swim year-round at indoor pool with diving boards, locker rooms, vending machines.	unk

BUTLER FARMERS MARKET			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Early Jun.-mid Oct., Mon. 12-6pm	Hampton Ave. at 127th St.	Fresh produce from Wisconsin farmers, baked goods, arts, crafts, activities.	Free

Most of these outings are provided courtesy of MECAH Publishing. To access the book that provides nearly 600 outings—all priced under \$10—for the entire Greater Milwaukee area, go to <http://mecahmilwaukee.com/NonFiction.html>

QUOTES FROM RESIDENTS

In *The Golden Years of Yesteryear* by Emily Treichel Boehlke (reprinted in *A History of Granville* by Miriam Y. Bird, 1996), Treichel Boehlke writes about her family's history in Granville from the mid-1800s through the late 20th century. The following are passages from this work.

“When my Grandparents Treichel were first married and lived in their one room cabin, the Indians would stop in and admire their baby. At Grandfather Hackbarth's the Indians set up camps in the woods every spring and fall when they came to do their trading in Milwaukee.”

“Weddings in the 1860s and later were quite different from today. The invitations were hand written by the bride and groom and they were the hosts, not the parents of the bride. The silk material for the brides' dresses was only 18 inches wide, so for a fancy dress, it took 18 to 20 yards of material. It was not unusual for a man to wear his wedding suit 20 to 25 years, or as long as it fitted.”

“... the settlers were having church services at the home of Ernest Zautcke, who had brought a reed organ from Germany to help him with his singing. One of the men could read a text from the Bible and the other religious books which they had brought from across. Mr. Zautcke then donated land for a church and school on the corner of [today's] Hopkins and Silver Spring Roads. They were served by visiting pastors from Milwaukee and vicinity.”

“School [of her parents] was then held at the house of one of the member's house one month and at another one the next month, whoever had a room big enough to seat the children.”

“The housewife had to plan well ahead for her household. There was the Arab that would come about once a month with two heavy suitcases full of notions and yard goods for house dresses. When he begged for a night's lodging the housewife would get a spool of thread for payment. Also a man with a big basket of oranges and bananas would come. Bananas were 25 cents a dozen for nice large ones. Later a baker would come once a week with bread and sweets.”

“Every mother had to be well-schooled in home remedies. Plants and herbs were gathered in the summer to be dried and stored for the winter, to be used for any and all ailments.”

“Grandfather would sit and knit many mittens and stockings for all the grandchildren while Grandma read to him and tended her many plants of which she had quite a variety.”

“Even the first street cars were propelled by horse power. There were only 2 lines, one on 3rd Street to Williamsburg, a section of the city at North Avenue and Center and [one] further north (an all-German settlement).”

“In the beginning of the 1900s, there was no Silver Spring Drive, not even a wagon trail west of Hopkins Street. But the plans were made to have a road there, so one of the farmers would ride through the woods with horse and wagon or on horseback as best he could, so it would be legally kept as a driveway to the next mile west.”

“During the first World War, all gathering of people was forbidden, due to the spreading of the flu. So at Freistadt Church only every other pew could be sat in, so all the people east of the church came for early services and all those west of the church came for later service. Also all talking and preaching was to be done in English, but Pastor Wehrs insisted on preaching in German as many of his older members could not understand English.”

“There were about 12 to 14 neighbors that exchanged labor. This was a hard job for the ladies also, with breakfast at 6, lunch at 9, dinner at 12, another lunch at 3, and supper at sundown. No 8 hour days.”

“When the first threshing machine came out the farmers started to raise barley for the Breweries in Milwaukee. My father raised quite a lot of it and we girls had to man the farming mill in the evening when milking was done and our lessons were finished. This was a cold and tiresome job until enough was cleared for a load to be hauled to town the next day.

Quotes from an oral history of the Granville neighborhoods currently being conducted by Urban Anthropology Inc.ⁱ—About THEN.

“There used to be old farms around Silver Spring and 124th where you could go and rent out a couple of horses to ride for about an hour. It would cost maybe 50 cents or a dollar and it was a great activity for teens in my generation.”

“I think [years ago] a lot of people worked inside the neighborhood. I think retail because I think there was so much retail here. We have a lot of manufacturing in our neighborhood but manufacturing is more of a skill trade and I think even back 15 years ago, I think there was just not a huge skill trade sense in our neighborhood. It is more of a general labor something more like retail.”

Quotes from the oral history of the Granville neighborhoods—About NOW

“I just know that we have language problems that we’re trying to address. A lot of our people that are working do not speak good English and we’ve taken on a new approach. We’ve had a lot of people coming where English is their second language. But they don’t really teach you work kind of terms. We’re working with our businesses now having the supervisors learning the language of the new employee. So [it’s] not always putting the burden on the new employee. Let’s make it a two-way street.”

“I think they are all pretty hard working and pretty family oriented--wanting to try to do [the] best by their families and try to have their families be involved in good activities. There’s [sic] areas with neighbors who have problems with drugs, dysfunctional families. I think for the most part--from what I can tell being involved in different opportunities and events in the area—[that] people want to have good neighborhood.”

“We are all in our silos. And that’s unfortunate--just really trying to figure out how to break down the barriers. It’s crazy because every block in the district is a melting pot. And they are all doing things on their own. It is just frustrating trying to break that down. I am in the mindset of recruiting other chiefs to be chiefs in that area to break down those areas. That’s why I love the block watch captains because they are doing that.”

ⁱ Urban Anthropology Inc. complies with human subjects requirements of formal research and asks informants to sign informed consent forms that stipulate anonymity, hence names are not provided with the quotes.

PHOTOS



Today's neighborhood-Houses at 106th & Lawn Ave.

Todays neighborhood-
Lovers Lane south of Silver Spring Dr.



Todays neighborhood-
Berea Lutheran Church



Todays neighborhood-
Houses on 110th & Harvest Lane

Today's neighborhood-N. 124th St. looking northeast



Today's neighborhood-
Playfield south of Parkview Public School

Today's neighborhood-
House on the corner of 110th & Harvest
Lane – decoration on the fence

For more information on the history of Granville, refer to Miriam Y. Bird's *A History of Granville Township*.

For more information on Milwaukee neighborhoods, refer to John Gurda's *Milwaukee, City of Neighborhoods* and Jill Florence Lackey's and Rick Petrie's *Germans in Milwaukee: A neighborhood history*.

Do you have great photos of this neighborhood? Are you a resident with an interesting quote about this neighborhood? Do you have recurring outings, additions, corrections, or general comments about this neighborhood? Please email your input to:

JFLanthropologist@currently.com

OLDER PHOTOS FROM RESIDENTS

Gardeners near Timmerman Airport (a nearby neighborhood). (Photos courtesy of Dennis Lukaszewski of the University Extension.)

