Norton Hills Estates Recreation Association

Winter 2005 Newsletter

We're Having a Party!

OK, it's not until summer. But your neighborhood association is throwing a party for all residents, and it's not too early to start planning for it now.

We'll block off a side street for a Saturday afternoon and have a giant picnic, plus games and activities for young and old. Residents Julie Knowlton and Sarah McCarthy are organizing the party, and they invite your ideas; please contact them or your block chair with your suggestions.

You can reach Julie at 780-1395 or knowltoj@msn.com, and Sarah at 780-0476 or bellaireida@hotmail.com.

Your association dues will pay for some food, and we hope you'll pitch in and bring your favorite picnic food to share. Watch for more details in the next newsletter.

Board Cancels Trash Bin Rental After 2004 Problems

Problems with Dumpster Days last year prompted your association board to cancel the trash bin rental for 2005.

Last year, the bins were badly overfilled, trash was left on the street and lawn around them and a leaky paint can was left to stain the street. And apparently some residents of other neighborhoods used our trash bins, too.

All this caused added work for your volunteer board members and drove the cost of the bins more than 10 percent over budget.

Perhaps worst of all, many perfectly good items – including like-new furniture – were left in the bins instead of going to people or organizations who could have used them, even though the association arranged for a Goodwill pickup drive the previous weekend.

We will arrange another garage sale and Goodwill pickup drive this year, but we will spend the money budgeted for trash bin rental on other projects the board feels will better serve the neighborhood.

We will reconsider renting bins again in the future if you want it.

2005 NHERA Dues

It's time to pay your annual dues for 2005. You'll find a statement and directory update form attached to this newsletter.

We've held the dues steady at $50 again this year.

Your dues help pay for maintenance, improvements, taxes and insurance on common property; for the annual dinner; and for other neighborhood activities.

Please pay promptly to avoid late fees and save your volunteer board members the time, trouble and expense of following up.

Save the association money! Check the box on the directory update form to receive future newsletters by e-mail, saving printing and postage.

You can check another box to indicate that you want to advertise in the 2005 directory.

New Block Chair for Bellaire Court

Brent McCarthy volunteered to serve as block chair for Bellaire Court, filling the last vacancy on your association's board of directors. Thanks for stepping up, Brent!

Brent lives at 3757 Bellaire; you can reach him at 780-0476 or ChairBellaire@nhera.org.

Board Invites Mayor, City Manager to Annual Meeting

Norton Shores City Manager Mark Meyers accepted an invitation from your association board to attend our annual meeting in September. We've also invited Mayor Nancy Crandall and hope she will attend as well.

If you have questions for them or topics you'd like them to address, please contact your block chair. We'll pass your questions and suggestions on so that Mayor Crandall and Mr. Meyers can prepare.

The meeting is scheduled Tuesday, Sept. 27; the time and place are not yet set.

Owner Says No Immediate Plans for Land East of Dunecrest

The owner of the land east of Dunecrest Drive says he has no short-term plans for the property and doesn't know why surveyors were on the land last fall.

"I'm not planning on doing anything any time soon," said Ken Johnson, who owns the land.

Questions arose at the NHERA annual meeting in September about surveyors seen on the property last fall, but Mr. Johnson said he had not had any surveying done there for a couple of years.

Resident Paul DeHorn learned that the City of Norton Shores probably would allow Mr. Johnson to extend Blissfield Court through the outlot at the east end and connect to city utilities there, but had not been asked. Paul also reported that Dick Maher, development director for the city, expects that only about three buildable lots could be created from the property.

The long-term future of the property is uncertain, Mr. Johnson said. But he promised to tell the NHERA board if his plans change.

Mr. Johnson said he wants to be a good neighbor and asks that neighborhood residents treat his land respectfully, too. Specifically, he asks that residents stop dumping leaves and grass clippings on his property.

The board reminds all residents that it is not legal – or nice – to dump yard waste on other people's property. All three trash haulers serving the neighborhood offer yard waste recycling services, and the city offers free leaf disposal sites in the fall; please dispose of your yard waste and all other refuse properly.

Final 2004 Finances

Income	
Association Dues	6,800.00
Directory Ad Sales	120.00
Interest Income	120.44
Total Income	**7,040.44**
Expenses	
Advertising	$ 6.70
Activities	712.51
Depreciation	1,140.00
Dumpster Rental	840.95
Insurance	732.00
Maintenance	1,667.90
Miscellaneous	-249.94
Office Supplies	67.46
Postage & Delivery	95.88
Printing & Reprod.	452.83
Taxes	465.18
Total Expenses	**$5,931.47**
Net Income	**$2,234.88**

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Street light replaced. Consumers Energy engineers replaced the street light at the south end of Dunes Parkway late last year. The street light was lopped in a crash, which remains under investigation by Norton Shores police.

Adopt a hydrant. Several residents have adopted fire hydrants again this winter. We hope the hydrants are never needed, but if they are, having them clear of ice and snow can save firefighters precious time. On some streets, this is especially important after the street is plowed. Please check the hydrant closest to you after any significant snowfall and after the plow goes by, and clear it if necessary. Thanks!

Web site updates. Your association Web site (www.nhera.org) has been updated with a new welcome letter and maps locating the neighborhood. The West Michigan Lakeshore Association of Realtors agreed to link to our site and to mention it in their weekly newsletter to member Realtors to help prospective home buyers learn the rights and responsibilities of living in Norton Hills Estates.

Aid to tsunami victims. While many of you may have already donated to victims of the recent tsunami in Asia, we thought others might like a list of organizations accepting donations. Here are a few:

- UNICEF 312-255-0400; www.unicef.org
- Red Cross 800-435-7669; www.redcross.org
- Care 800-521-CARE x999; www.careusa.org
- International Aid 800-968-7490; www.internationalaid.org
- Or visit www.usaid.gov for a list of more charities providing aid.