Norton Hills Estates Recreation Association

October 2008 Newsletter

By Stan Miller – pres@nhera.org – 780-9219

Jennifer Christman is Our New Secretary

Residents Re-elect Other Board Members, Lower Dues for 2009

Jennifer Christman joins the Board of Directors as its new secretary, replacing Barb Miller.

Jennifer was elected by acclamation at the annual meeting Sept. 24, and has my thanks for stepping up. She and her husband, Steve Weinert, and their two sons moved into 2341 Norcrest in April after living in the Nims neighborhood for five years. Andrew, 5, is in kindergarten at Lincoln Park, and Jennifer's a stay-at-home mom with 3-year-old Gregory. She's an avid runner, and says she hopes residents on Dunes Parkway aren't tired of seeing her yet.

Jennifer and Steve met at Western Michigan, but he's from Wisconsin, so please forgive the Packers flag you may see on the front of their home. You can reach Jennifer at 747-7222 or secy@nhera.org.

The rest of your neighborhood association board was re-elected by acclamation. Tom Sanocki starts his first full year as Treasurer after taking over the job in March; Joe McNarland enters his eighth term as vice president; and I start my fifth year as president.

Thanks to Barb Miller for Six Years as Secretary

A special thank-you goes to Barb for her six years of service as secretary. She helped get the association back in good standing with the State of Michigan, served on every block party committee, and was a valuable newsletter editor. She's also worked hard to make our house a nice place to have board meetings since I got elected president – a duty she'll keep for one more year.

Dues Drop to $60

My motion to reduce annual dues from $75 to $60 for 2009 was unanimously approved. Thanks to careful stewardship, the association's finances are solid enough to allow this 20 percent drop in anticipated income next year. I know $15 a year isn't much, but I hope the reduction helps in difficult economic times.

Two Garage Sales Again in 2009

With only 10 homes participating in the August garage sale this year, I wondered whether we should continue having two a year. Residents at the annual meeting were solidly in favor of continuing that two-year-old tradition in 2009. The cost to the association is trivial, so we'll have two garage sales again next year.

The first will be Saturday, May 16 – as always, the Saturday before Memorial Day weekend. The second one is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 8; that's a week later than this year's sale and avoids the final weekend of the Coast Guard Festival. If you'd like to suggest a different date, contact any board member.

City Officials Tout Streets Millage; Questioned About Traffic Safety, Landscaping Ordinances and Sidewalks

We were pleased to have Mayor Jerry Wiersma and City Administrator Mark Meyers as our guests at the annual meeting. They spent about half an hour answering questions from residents, mainly focused on the millage the city is seeking for street repairs.

Most streets in our neighborhood rank very low in quality on an assessment of all city streets. While this does not necessarily mean they would be among the first to be repaved or rebuilt, it does increase the chances. And if the millage fails, Mr. Wiersma and Mr. Meyers say the city will proceed with special assessments on homeowners along a street to pay for repairs to that street.

Mr. Meyers agreed to check into accident history at the intersection of Seminole and McCracken after several residents complained of near misses there. The most likely change would be converting the intersection to a four-way stop, he said, but traffic engineers will need to study the intersection first.

Mr. Meyers also agreed to meet with me to discuss whether city ordinances can be amended to deal with additional home and property maintenance problems. We'll be talking about whether the city can allow us to do the work or can do the work itself.

Jennifer Christman pointed out that there's a school bus stop at Dunes and Norcrest, but no sidewalk or curb but allowing kids to reach the street from the west side, and said she's concerned about safety issues come winter. Mr. Meyers noted that federal regulations would require a sidewalk stub and curb cut if Dunes Parkway is reconstructed, and agreed to talk with me about that and similar work at a few other locations.

I hope to meet with Mr. Meyers on these issues this fall and report the results in the next newsletter.

Finances Through Sept. 23

Income	
Dues	$11,053.00
Directory Ad Sales	130.00
Interest	100.08
Total Income	**$11,283.08**
Expenses	
Block Party	$ 896.08
Bank Service Charges	22.10
Depreciation	760.00
Garage Sale Signs	99.64
Insurance	1,200.00
Licenses and Permits	-30.00
Laptop Computer	634.94
Lawn care	390.00
Office Supplies	4.01
Postage	122.00
Printing and Reproduction	619.10
Legal fees	2,164.02
Taxes	520.08
Total Expenses	**$ 7,401.97**
Net Income	**$ 3,881.11**
Cash Balance	**$10,851.45**

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2008-09 Board of Directors

President
Stan Miller – 780-9219, pres@nhera.org

Vice President
Joe McNarland – 780-4394, veep@nhera.org

Secretary
Jennifer Christman – 747-7222, secy@nhera.org

Treasurer
Tom Sanocki – 780-5406, treas@nhera.org

Block Chairs
Bellaire: Brent McCarthy – 780-0476, Bellaire@nhera.org. **Blissfield:** Jenny Opfermann – 780-4786, Blissfield@nhera.org. **Bloomfield:** Rachael Ernvall – 780-0207, Bloomfield@nhera.org. **Dunecrest:** Barb Miesch – 780-4099, Dunecrest@nhera.org. **Dunes:** Sue Schuiteman – 780-5427, Dunes@nhera.org. **Lower Norcrest:** Herm Zuidema, 780-2012. **Upper Norcrest:** Deanna Vander Ploeg, 780-2072, UpperNorcrest @nhera.org. **North Hilltop:** Fern Anderegg – 780-5101, NorthHilltop@nhera.org. **Pleasant Hill:** Ken Taylor – 780-9482, PleasantHill@nhera.org. **South Hilltop:** Deb Minner – 780-1182, SouthHilltop@nhera.org

New Beach Sign Almost Ready

Thanks to Joe Sherburn at Sherburn Signs, we have a great design for a new sign at the deck to replace the metal sign that looks too much like a highway sign and refuses to stay attached to anything for very long. Sherburn Signs makes the signs for city parks, and our new sign will have a very park-like feel more in keeping with its surroundings. The 36-by-21-inch sign will be deep red and dark green on a tan background; see it in color at www.nhera.org/news/200810.pdf

I expect it to be ready later this month, but we probably won't put it up until spring.



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Snow before you know it. When the snow flies, please remember to clear your sidewalk so neighborhood children have a safe place to walk to school bus stops. And don't forget to dig out the nearest fire hydrant to help prevent it from freezing shut and to allow firefighters quick access in an emergency; the home and lives you save could be your own.

New to the neighborhood? Did you receive a welcome packet? If not, contact your block chair or Secretary Jennifer Christman at 747-7222 or secy@nhera.org.