

Whitehills Neighborhood Association of East Lansing

Fall NEWSLETTER 2011



President's Message

Dear Neighbors:

As president of the Whitehills Neighborhood Association, Inc. for the past 20+ months, I have enjoyed serving the residents of our neighborhood. I am stepping down as President on January 1, 2012, and I will hand over the position to one of you. This is a perfect opportunity for a committed and energetic person to contribute leadership and vision to the place that we all love so much: Whitehills neighborhood. The WNAEL is important to the well-being of our subdivision; it acts as an important voice that is heard by City Council and that also addresses the month to month issues, ideas and challenges that come before it. The WNAEL has been instrumental in influencing public policy and in protecting the integrity of the neighborhood. We have a lot of great people who have served on the board for a very long time and carry out their volunteer activities proudly. With their ready and capable assistance, the president's job is that much easier. WNAEL will profit from an organized person who understands our residents—those who are new homeowners, those raising young families, and those older residents who have lived here and nourished the neighborhood for many years. The WNAEL board meets on a monthly basis – the basics are already in place, including standing committees. If you are spirited and ambitious, and would like to shape the future of our beautiful subdivision, please don't hesitate. Come forward to take on the mantle of leadership!

So many good things have happened while I have been president – but not because I was president. We welcomed three replacement board members, maintained neighborhood aesthetics, revived Neighborhood Watch, planted trees, repaired entrance walls and lighting, hung holiday decorations, and shared great fun and conviviality at the Spring Social at the Glens of Whitehills. The Woodland Pass entrance is improving. New families are buying houses and moving in!

It has been a joy to serve this neighborhood in its endeavors over nearly two years. I will continue to support the WNAEL board in another capacity. Ballots for president and vice-president will be handed out at the annual meeting in November. Watch for Annual Meeting signs posted at neighborhood entrances.

Roberta McElmurry, President, WNAEL



Calling all Little Imps, Scalawags and Monsters!

Put on your most beguiling or fearsome costume and come join the parade! Whitehills parents will accompany their children while relatives, friends and residents serve as the cheering section for what has become a beloved neighborhood event—the yearly Halloween parade. Meet at Whitehills Elementary School on October 31st at 5:30 p.m. for a jolly good time before scattering for the Trick-or-Treating that commences at 6:00 p.m. Please contact Hillary Henderson for further information at 351.0203 or hillhenderson@hotmail.com

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Whitehills Neighborhood Association of East Lansing will be held at the Whitehills Elementary School gymnasium on November 16, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. Watch the website, wneal.com, for the evening's agenda. All neighborhood residents are invited to attend, catch up with your friends and neighbors, pay annual Association dues, nominate board members for the 2012 term, and vote. Let's replicate last year's great turnout!

Pride in the Neighborhood Awards

The Annual Meeting will be the venue for introduction of a new WNAEL award, the “Pride in the Neighborhood Award.” This special award will be presented to selected homeowners who meet three basic criteria: (1) have made significant changes in their property over the past twelve months, (2) have made the changes in line with the covenants following approval of their plans by the WNAEL Pride Committee, and (3) have supported the WNAEL by paying their annual dues. Come to the Annual Meeting and find out if you are one of those receiving an award.

Save Whitehills School Update

East Lansing residents will have the opportunity on February 28, 2012 to vote on a \$53 million bond expansion to finance improvements at the local elementary schools that are so vital to the reputation and vibrancy of the East Lansing community and the Whitehills neighborhood. The bond, if authorized by voters, will underwrite renovations and technology upgrades at Donley, Glencairn, Marble, Pinecrest and Whitehills Elementary schools and provide funding for a new sixth grade wing at MacDonald Middle School.

Please put out your “Save Whitehills School” yard signs about a month in advance of the voting.

Fall is Ideal for Planting Trees and Bulbs

Most people think of spring as the time to plant trees, shrubs and know that cool temperatures and adequate rainfall make fall a good The soil may be warmer and less damp than in the spring, you may the job done, plus most garden centers are motivated to sell stock the fall.

Fall-planting does require some extra attention. Be sure to plant allow them to get established before winter hits. Cold winter winds plants to lose water from their branches, and the roots must be able to replace that water if plants are to survive. Evergreens are particularly susceptible to winter desiccation. A nice 2-4” of mulch (lawn and leaf clippings are perfect) will help guard against this.



flowers. But, did you time to plant as well? have more time to get at discounted prices in

things early enough to and sunshine cause

Likewise, some species of plants do not adapt well to fall planting and should be saved for spring. These include: Magnolia, dogwood, tulip tree, sweet gum, red maple, birch, hawthorn, poplars, cherries, plum and many oaks.



Make sure plants are getting about 1 inch of water per week. You can continue watering until the ground is frozen, even after deciduous plants have lost their leaves. Wrap the trunks of thin-barked, young trees in late November to prevent frost cracks, sunscald, and animal damage, but be sure to remove the wrap in March. Don't forget about planting spring flowering bulbs, ground covers and shrubs. You'll be rewarded nicely next spring with brilliant colors and your plants will have a head-start on the growing season ahead.

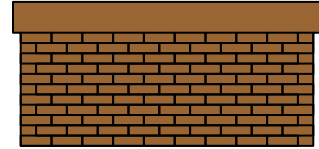
Landscaping News

Plentiful rain and sun (with the exception of a hot, dry spell in early July) brought forward extravagant floral displays at the Stonegate, Foxcroft and Northgate entrances this spring and summer. How beautiful it all was, and what a way to say “Welcome” to our lovely neighborhood! The WNAEL long-term landscaping plan is taking shape, with every year bringing new abundance to our common areas.

Annuals were purchased during the Donley School Spring fundraiser and planted at the Stonegate and Northgate entrances. Mulch was added at the Stonegate entrances. Foxcroft plantings were held in abeyance this season because of road and curb construction that took place during the summer months. Thank yous are due to many homeowners and board members who volunteered their time and their labor to continue neighborhood improvements: to Kevin Sayers for spreading the mulch and for assistance with preparing the entrance for plantings; to Elizabeth Vanis for deciding what plants/flowers to purchase, for keeping in touch with our landscape service and for putting in many hours

of planting and planning to keep our subdivision looking top-notch; to our president, Roberta McElmurry who, with the help of a few, masterminded weeding, fertilizing and planting perennials at the Woodland Pass entrance .

It should be noted that the Woodland Pass entrance is not within the neighborhood boundaries, but has a definite impact upon the image of our subdivision. The City of East Lansing is not in a financial position to expend funds on the median, so it is up to the good graces and hard work of Whitehills volunteers to spruce up this area. If you are willing to donate funds for future plantings and upkeep, please send them to Roberta McElmurry, or call her at 332-1575. This is a work in progress that will show continuing results from year to year if, that is, we have enough residents who are willing to open their pocketbooks and pick up a trowel. Landmark Landscape Service continues to maintain the entrances with monthly fertilizing and weeding, plus Spring and Fall clean up.



Homeowners With Exterior Neighborhood Boundary Walls

If you are not already aware, please look up the covenants for your subdivision (wnael.com) and read them. As a property owner, you are financially responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, replacement and repair of that portion of the brick wall that borders your lot at either Lake Lansing Road or Stanlake. It is suggested you include the wall in your homeowner's insurance policy, so that you will be protected in the event of an accident, a fallen tree or other mishap. Please check your lot lines and make certain that mature trees are not compromising the condition of your brick wall. If trees are within 2-3 feet and are fully grown, they could well have roots that will cause the wall to "heave" and lean. Other items which can jeopardize the integrity of your part of the wall are vines that will grow into the mortar, standing water, or leaning tree limbs. Your neighborhood association has the names of contractors who have worked on our neighborhood's north boundary brick wall. Please email us at wnael@wnael.com for more information. **Remember that any improvements or replacements must be strictly in conformance with the materials, quality and style of the wall already in place.** To our knowledge, there is no financial assistance available from the City of East Lansing for maintenance. Total repair can be very costly, as the WNAEL board discovered. In September this year, your annual dues funded replacement of the east entrance wall at Foxcroft and Lake Lansing Road, thus preserving a valuable and readily noticeable neighborhood asset.

Speaking of Dues.

Just in case you are wondering, please know that your dues are instrumental in the overall functioning of your neighborhood. What follows are just some of the activities, issues and improvements that the board has implemented or addressed in the last year: landscaping, twice-yearly newsletters, the WNAEL website, Neighborhood Watch and e-blasts to warn of security or crime events, review of homeowner renovation or addition plans to make certain of covenant (deed restriction) compliance, common area maintenance and repair, representation of neighborhood concerns to the East Lansing City Council, liaison with the East Lansing Police Department, welcome/outreach to new homeowners, monitoring of East Lansing ordinances, payment of WNAEL, Inc. insurance premiums, planning for and bringing to fruition the Spring Social, the Annual Meeting, the Halloween Parade. The more homeowners who pay dues, the more the WNAEL will undertake to improve the neighborhood for the benefit of all. So, if you've forgotten to pay your dues, or perhaps thought you'd stand on the sidelines while others contribute, please think again and come forward to do your part. That's what "community" is all about!

And If You'd Like to Do More.

As mentioned above, contributions for plantings at Woodland Pass, which is not within subdivision boundaries, but which has huge visual impact, are badly needed. Also on our wish list are monetary gifts that will allow the purchase of more Winter Holidays decorations. You likely noticed how cheerful the Stonegate decorations were as they brightened that entrance last year "in the bleak midwinter". At present, the budget does not allow additional purchases for the Foxcroft and Northgate ingresses, but if generous residents make contributions, we can expand this effort.

Many Thanks to Those Who Did Just That

Hooray, hooray, and heartfelt thanks to those neighbors who not only paid their annual dues, but graciously, and generously, made additional financial donations to the WNAEL. Those dollars were put to good use beautifying the neighborhood above and beyond what we would otherwise been able to afford. When you are out and about, and cross paths with any of those listed below, please take a moment to extend words of gratitude for their evident community spirit.

Kenneth Beachler; Ted and Pat Hagan; Ronald and Carol Horowitz; Gerald and Karen Jennings; Michael and Donna Kaplowitz; Nathaniel Lakes and Patricia Baines; Jim and Cheryl Little; Terrell and Barbara Oetzel; Kay and Allen Schmid; Louise Shaheen.

News from the Council of Neighborhood Presidents

If you want to keep up-to-date with what is going on citywide, check out the East Lansing website: cityofeastlansing.com for information on conditional rezoning, City Council and School Board candidates, leaf raking tips and schedules for neighborhood leaf pick-up, the East Lansing Parks and Recreation survey and developing news about the new sidewalk and snow ordinance.



Get the Snowblowers and Shovels Ready!

The City of East Lansing has a new ordinance, Ord. 1262, effective this year, related to snow removal for all East Lansing property owners. The ordinance, drafted with the input of owners, residents and students, was adopted to clarify snow removal requirements and to create a safe, walkable community for all residents of, and visitors to, East Lansing. Snow that accumulates on sidewalks prior to noon must be cleared by midnight of the same day. Snow that accumulates after noon of any particular day must be cleared from sidewalks by midnight of the following day. Ice removal requirements remain the same. Ice must be cleared, or an abrasive such as sand or salt applied, within twelve hours of formation. Fines under the new ordinance are \$25 for first offense, \$75 for a second offense, and \$125 for any subsequent offenses. The North wind is gearing up to send chills and snow our way as another winter unfolds, so please keep in mind your responsibility to keep your sidewalks free of the slippery stuff.

WNAEL Board Members:

President: Roberta McElmurry (517-332-1575)
Treasurer: Kathy Daugherty (517-336-4321)
Secretary: Mary McDaniel
Covenants/Pride Committee: Thomas Jones (517-332-1683)
Landscaping: Elizabeth Vanis and Kevin Sayers
Newsletter: Meri Anne Stowe
Members-at-large: Hillary Henderson
Thomas Jones
Maureen Mayhew
Roy Saper
Kevin Sayers
Meri Anne Stowe
Elizabeth Vanis

Website Administrator: Michael Mackoul