

Hello all Hickory Hills Condominium Association Co-Owners! We hope that you're enjoying the excellent fall weather that we are experiencing. This is, "The calm before the storm." To update you on all that has been going on, we are publishing this second newsletter for 2004.

GENERAL MEETING

We will be holding the next General Association meeting of co-owners on Tuesday, January 18, 2005, at 7:30 p.m. at the Ocoola Twp. Hall. Please plan on attending! *Your support is necessary for a well-managed and effective HOA.* We will be having a representative from Cobb Hall Insurance Co. speak to us at the General Meeting in January regarding our insurance needs as a site condominium association. We plan on having the annual budget for 2005 completed and ready for distribution to the co-owners at our annual meeting in January. Copies of the 2005 budget will be available at that time.

At the General Association meeting in June, we will be holding an election of officers. Please remember that we need a quorum consisting of 74 co-owners, which includes people present, absentee, and proxy ballots in order to have a valid election. The following officers are seeking re-election: Michael Kosla, Donna Clements, Judi Smith and Robert Schiebold. Dennis Palka, the current president, will be coming off the Board. If you have the time and would like to serve in some capacity, whether on the Board, Board advisors (co-owners who really do not want the responsibilities of a Board member, but want to help with input), or the Architectural Committee, please contact the Board.

SNOWPLOWING

With winter right around the corner and if you have experienced damage in the past from the snowplow, please mark your property with reflectorized stakes. If your property is damaged, please notify Rick's Outdoor Services immediately at (517) 545-5963.

DUES INCREASE

It has been approximately ten years since any dues have increased; however, because of the overall costs of maintaining and improving our subdivision the Board has decided to increase the association dues. Our current fee of \$180 per year is being raised \$20 to \$200 a year or \$50 per quarter. (If you check with other site condo associations in the area, HHCA has the lowest association dues of any for a community our size.) This will cost each co-owner a total of 55 cents a day. For your information, the largest expenditures that our association experiences annually are: general liability insurance (common areas, Board members and theft protection of association funds), mowing the grass for ten common areas, snow removal and salting of roads. Your 2005 dues coupons are included in this newsletter. Remember, if you can pay the annual association dues in full in January, please do so as it greatly helps in reducing the workload of our treasurer.

IMPROVEMENTS

Every year, the Board tries to make some improvements to the community. This year, however,

we spent more money than usual. We purchased lot #66 located at the very front of the subdivision, at a cost of \$18,659.22. We are currently in the process of changing the master deed to include lot #66 as common area. Also, at the request of co-owners and a vote on the issue, a play structure will be erected this year. There are no further large expenditures planned. Possible small expenditures may be made for beautification of some common areas.

We do, of course, have to continue reserving funds yearly toward future road repair. When selling your home, mortgage companies are requesting a “condo certification” from the Board. One of the items that they want to know about is the amount of money the association has in reserve for the replacement of roads. With 3.4 miles of roads, the \$65,000 currently in reserve will not be enough. Hopefully, except for some minor repairs, our roads should last another 10 years during which time we must save for the total cost to avoid a large, per home assessment when the repairs have to be made.

PLAYGROUND UPDATE

The Board has decided to go with “Little Tikes” out of Holland, MI, to erect a play structure that will consist of eleven play stations for children 5-12 years of age, and it will be ADA (American Disabilities Association) approved. By going with “Little Tikes” before November 15, 2004, the Board is saving the association over \$6000. The total cost of the play structure to be installed is \$14,878. The play structure will be erected in the common area at Hickory Hills Blvd. and Laurel Oak Dr. and will consist of neutral colors to blend in with the neighborhood. Two park benches will also be installed for parents. This is the only common area that is open on two sides, it is very assessable and has plenty of parking without infringing on co-owners’ property.

We are still taking donations to help offset the cost of the playground equipment and possibly make other improvements to the park. Please make out your checks to HHCA, and in the memo write playground.

PORTABLE BASKETBALL HOOPS

ALL BASKETBALL HOOPS MUST BE REMOVED FROM ROADWAYS. Over the past few months, the Board has received several written complaints of basketball hoops and basketball games in the roadways, obstructing traffic. The Board has no choice but to address these complaints as stated in the condominium by-laws. Since we have no sidewalks, there are numerous children and adults on our roads. We ask that when you have the occasion to be in the roadways as pedestrians or in a vehicle, that you be courteous and considerate to each other and act in a safe, responsible manner. Please be respectful of each other as neighbors.

VIOLATIONS

The Board is still getting complaints of co-owners not picking up after their pets, especially in the common areas. Remember, children play in these areas. Please pick up after your pet!

Please do not rake leaves into the street and leave them there for the wind to blow them on other co-owners property. There are trash-hauling companies that will take away leaves as long as they are bagged in the proper receptacle, at no extra cost to the co-owner.

Remember to slow down while driving through the subdivision and to stop for the stop signs!

The Board recently received a couple of complaints from co-owners regarding a stored

trailer and a home that appears to have been neglected. The complaints were anonymous stating they feared the Board would give out their names. To act on a complaint, it must be submitted in writing and be signed. The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to protect the identify of those making a valid complaint unless the Board finds it necessary to take the violator to court. Then the complainant's name would have to be revealed. Also, one letter of complaint chastised the Board for "not properly policing" the subdivision. Remember, we are all co-owners and it is the responsibility of all to comply with the by-laws and to report violations. Your Board members are not policemen. They are neighbors volunteering their time to make our sub a better place to live.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

Any major modifications or alterations to the exterior of your unit require approval from the ACC. Compliance with this by-law is required of all of us. Fines can and will be assessed to those in violation.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS OF THE ENTRANCES

Any person, couple, or group, preferably one from each end of the subdivision, wishing to purchase and decorate the entrances for the holiday season should contact the Board. The Board will cover the expenses of the materials. Afterwards, they will be stored in the association storage unit

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

When selling your home, contact the Board to obtain the phone number for the treasurer. Mortgage companies frequently call the Board phone number asking for an immediate response to provide a dues payoff letter or a condo certificate. As you know, all Board members are volunteering their time and many work full time jobs. We do not listen to the messages every day. If you contact us ahead of time, we can have this information for you on a timely basis.

Around the 20th of October in the early morning hours, a co-owner on Hickory Circle Dr. experienced a house fire. The mother of the home was awakened. She thought that she smelled smoke, so she woke her husband. Her husband agreed with her that there was smoke in the house. As they escorted themselves and the children out of the home, the smoke alarms activated. Upon seeking help from a neighbor, it was discovered that they all had smoke residue around their noses. We are thankful that everyone that was in the home is all right! The fire started in the garage from an electrical short. **Please make sure that your smoke detectors are functioning properly. Maybe we should all think about putting smoke detectors in our garages as well.** See you next year at the *General Association Meeting* in January.

Have a Happy Holiday Season!

Your Board of Directors