



# BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS



City of Birchwood Village, MN

Fall 2017

**Welcome New Neighbors:** Todd Stanhope 19 Birchwood Ln, Darren & Amy DeYoung 309 Wildwood, Michelle Groschen 3830 E Co Line Rd, Nick Ciapetta 4 Hall Ct, Elizabeth Potter 248 Wildwood, Michelle Murray 215 Cedar

**Our Condolences to:**

**Paul & Meryl Steinhauser** on the passing of Paul’s father “Freddie”—99 years young.

**Chris & Julie French** on the passing of Chris’s brother Mark.

**Mary Jane LaVigne** on the passing of her father.

**Our thanks to:**

- Volunteer staffers: **Diane and Bob Landberg, Bobbee Dowdal, Carol Ranen, Kevin Woolstencroft and Mary Wingfield** for stuffing the last newsletter in record time. Good job, TEAM!
- **Dave Trepanier and Corrie Potter** for taking down and hauling away a sagging box elder on Birchwood Courts.
- And **Dave Trepanier and Chris Sorenson** (now known as the “Brush Hogs”) have been busy clearing the city walking paths. And then they pitched in to trim the trees and haul brush at Wildwood Park to make it look great for the Fourth. These guys are golden!
- Paul Steinhauser for his years of work on the WBL Conservation District Board.

**Generous supporters to the Community Club:** (\$20+)

**Sutherlands, J/K Olsons, Hullsieks, Ruehles, Geisers, R Ebbotts, Jarosz/Carlsons, Trepaniers, Witthausen, Ferrys, Dixons, Kolcinskis, Alnes/Kruses, D. Andersons, Broomells, J/K Olsons, Sternals, D Webbers, Mercers, M Johnson, McCormicks, Bowers, Rahkolas, Hoffmans, Churchills, and Schways.**

**FALL PLANT EXCHANGE:** Saturday, September 23rd at 10:00 at the Village Hall.

**HELP WANTED:** Contact the City Administrator if you want to help at the ice rink this year.

**FOURTH OF JULY A SUCCESS—AGAIN** Scott Howe was our Grand Marshal this year. Scott has been a dedicated volunteer, mostly at the ice hockey rink. John Lund was the driver of the super cool Camaro that was loaned to us by Polar Chevrolet—for free!

Other worker bees who pitched were Bill Trinkka leading the gang and setting up the route, Dave Trepanier and his balloon team (Greg and Claudia Beckman, Bill and Mary Hullsieks, and Cadie Hegedus), Erik Arcand and Brian Brady led the games (whew, what a job!), Mary Sue Simmons, Lori Klimp, Jim Rupert, Cadie Hegedus and Jozsef Hegedus all handed out flags and balloons, Kevin Woolstencroft, Ron Sternal and Jim Rydeen were in charge of pop and ice cream, Sarah and Dan Webber and Chris and Mary Sorenson manned the cotton candy and pop corn and did fabulous for the first time out, Nancy Maas and Michael Lien organized the oh-so-good Birchwood Band with Anne Vail as the majorette, and Randy Lafoy took care of the garbage bins. The VFW 1782 Rifle Squad added dignity and honor to the event. Boy Scout Troup #434 did clean-up. Well done!

This parade was our 65<sup>th</sup> year...my folks and I have been coordinating it for the past 25 years. We are truly blessed to have such good neighbors and good friends come together to celebrate our country and our future. It is a tradition like no other. Thanks to all!

**CITY TEAMS WITH SOLAR GARDEN CO.**

In June, the city council heard from US Solar who provides solar energy “subscriptions.” The company is building a solar array that will provide energy to the city at a rate pennies below Xcel’s rate. The difference is the subscription locks in the initial rate for the next 25 years. The city saves substantial sums if the cost of energy increases...as it seems to do. The net gain could be as much as \$98,000 over the course of the contract. The potential loss would be if energy rates decrease and stay low. Historically, that has not been the case. If all goes as planned, the subscription will start next summer.

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### **ROAD COMMITTEE NEWS by Ben Creagh**

As the double yellow lines get painted on our roads this fall, I wanted to share some exciting news from the 2017 MN Legislative Session. Thanks to lobbying from The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, a new state law went into effect in May, 2017. It allows drivers to pass cyclists when safe to do so in a no-passing zone, like Cedar St./Hall Ave. While many people naturally move over and allow the legal three feet of passing zone when passing bikers and walkers, we can now feel lawful about doing it.

Since this goes against what was taught in driver's education courses, I'd encourage you all to share this new law with friends and family so that everyone can safely share the roads as get around town.

### **MEET YOUR PARKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The committee has been meeting regularly to create a survey of how the residents want to use their open spaces. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

The following residents make up our Parks Committee. They have been charged with ensuring our Parks are Judy Walker, Scott Howe, James Nelson, Bridget Sperl, Ana Vang, Dave Remely and chairman Houstoun Clinch. They are a dedicated group and we appreciate their enthusiasm. Please thank them for their efforts.

**DOCK ACCESS FOR ALL--** The City Council is happy to announce that effective immediately, every resident in Birchwood is automatically enrolled as a member of the private Birchwood Dock Association (BDA). Members will enjoy access to all private docks for non-boating activities.

Thanks to Nino Nardecchia, Mike Evangelist and Mark Greseth of the Dock Task Force, as well as members of the BDA, for negotiating this important change in this long standing policy.

(Note that Association rules still apply to dock use. This membership covers personal use only. It is not permitted to tie/attach any boats or other watercraft to the docks or shore at any time. It is OK, to pick up or drop off people with a boat, but any mooring is prohibited.) Any questions for the Association can be directed to [birchwooddocks@gmail.com](mailto:birchwooddocks@gmail.com)

## **FALL 2017**

### **MARIAN JOHNSON ACROSS THE LAKE SWIM**

We had another beautiful morning for those paddling from the Dellwood Peninsula back to Birch Beach. The water was smooth as glass! Thanks to Gene and Shirley Ruehle who provided power boat back up and extra spotting.

**KAYAK/CANOE RACK REGISTRATION:** Please make sure your Birchwood Permit is affixed to your boat or it could be subject to impoundment. Remember to remove boats from racks by Oct. 31.

### **MAYOR'S NOTES by Mary Wingfield**

The city council recently asked the Birchwood Dock Association to solve the problem of city residents being asked to leave the beach docks because they are non-members. The lake access beaches are the city's best resource and it was frustrating to hear this was happening. Fortunately, the Dock Association worked to solve this issue so that EVERY resident of Birchwood can use the docks, yet still keeping the docks "private". This will be a huge improvement and resolves a problem that has been festering too long.

The solution seems simple, but the process was difficult. One of the things pointed out to me was that the solution could have been sorted out with all parties before coming out publicly with a solution. That is how business gets done in the real world. Unfortunately, government open meeting laws do not allow that.

Councilmembers and the mayor may only speak to one other member about any city issue. Nor can that conversation be transmitted to a third council member for an update or input without violating the open meeting law. This means that a council will never be able to sort out the direction it decides to go except at a council meeting. Nor can it do any investigation or preliminary work as a body.

As mayor, ideas or concerns get presented to me in hopes they can be addressed somehow. Usually, that results in doing some fact finding and then presenting the information for public discussion. It's like watching sausage being made—not always pretty, especially on matters that are emotional.

Regardless, the council and I, through the city administrator, will continue to work with residents as issues come up. A thorough discussion with all does result in the best outcome. I look forward to working with you and our council and committees to continue to make improvements on our community. m