



BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS



City of Birchwood Village, MN

Fall 2020

Our Condolences to:

The families of **Andy and Chris and Luke Sorenson** on the passing of their mom and grandma **Ellsa Sorenson**—a long-time resident.

Belated condolences to the family of **Kristin Brinkmann**, who passed away in January.

The **Dick Larson** and **Robert Berglund** families, both were long-time neighbors in Oakridge subdivision.

Welcome New Neighbors: John and Danelle Hartman, 234 Cedar, **Joshua Gagne and McKenzie Cruise**, 14 White Pine, **Terri Stanton**, 538 Hall.

Our thanks to:

- **Jim Rupert and Mary Wingfield** who did flag duty in time for Flag Day. **Kevin Woolstencroft** and **Jim Rydeen** helped **Mary** take them down.
- **Dave Trepanier** who did weed whipping along the pathways and road as well as trimming at the hockey rink. **Dave and Mary** also spent a half day trimming the trees at Tighe-Schmitz park and hauling them away. **Mary Cahill** got after the shrubbery along Bloomquist path.
- **Julie McKenzie** for hand weeding around the playground equipment.
- **Chris and Andy Sorenson and Mary Wingfield** for getting Kay dock in perfect alignment.
- **Carl Bayley** for putting his cool John Deere tractor to work cutting grass at Wildwood Park.

Thanks to all our wonderful volunteers! If you would like to add your name to future volunteer activities, contact me at wingfield.mary@gmail.com

FALL LEAF PICKUP

This will be scheduled in late October. Watch the city website, or better yet, sign up for our e-mail distribution list to get instance notice. (See article elsewhere in this newsletter on how to sign up). **Please keep your piles on your property or ask permission from clerk before moving them to city property.**

UTILITY BILL AUTO PAY

Save money on your utility bill by setting up automatic withdrawal on your account. Contact city hall for more info. about this discount.

TOILET EFFICIENCY REBATES

Get a rebate of up to \$200 for replacing your old water-guzzling toilet! See www.cityofbirchwood.com/events for more info. First-come-first-served while funds last.

FOURTH OF JULY “UNPARADE”

Birchwood celebrated our nation's 244th birthday in a more subdued fashion this year. Ginny Altman sang at the Wildwood Avenue Park flagpole with some patriotic songs to remind us why we gather. It was a simple event with folks happy to just see one another and appreciate our country.

And we had some very creative folks who participated in decorating their space. Here are the winners. Pictures have been posted on the city website.

Best House: Sorensons

Best Float: Monettes

Best Yard: Langeslay/Cosgrove

Best Mural: Drews

Best Mailbox: HaptsSee you next year!

PS. For the first time in 8 years, we had one of our flags stolen. Guess it was bound to happen...Just don't know why someone wants a flag that says “Birchwood Community Club”

CITY NEWS BITS:

- A Traffic Calming Task Force has been created to look into ways to reduce speed along Wildwood Avenue. Contact city hall if you are interested in serving. The city is also looking for ways to reduce cut-through traffic which seems to have been abated with the recent road construction on our eastern border. Stay tuned.
- Deer management returns this fall. Due to the ongoing concerns with our over-abundant deer herd, the Midwest Bow Hunters Association will again schedule two hunts. Look to the city Website or sign up for emails for further announcements.
- COVID \$--The city received \$66,000 to help address issues with the pandemic. The council is working on bids to install a radio tower to collect water meter reading data. This will negate the need to have people monitoring meters. It will also address the problem of our meter reading provider phasing out their service.
- More COVID \$--The city is pursuing the installation of a generator at the Dellwood Lift Station. This will protect residents in the area from dangerous sewage back-ups—which was brought to light with the recent power line failure there this summer.
- Credit card payments are NOW ACCEPTED for permits, licenses & misc. fees.
- Check city hall lost and found if you've lost anything.
- Please remove your kayak/canoe from the city racks by Oct. 31 to avoid penalties.

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- The city had Kay Beach surveyed to address the concerns about the property line on the south side of the easement. The homeowner's survey and the city's both confirmed that the city has more land than people knew. Markers have been put up by the property owner to delineate their space. Please respect their markers.
- Also at Kay Beach, with the increase use by everyone staying home, the bushes have been used as a potty. To help ameliorate the situation, the bushes (box elder, ash and other scrub) have been removed. Please use the biffy by the hockey hut.
- Diseased Tree monitoring. The city is again sending out a tree inspector to identify oak wilt, Dutch elm disease and emerald ash borer. The inspector will only observe trees from public rights-of-way unless you request an on-site review. Please contact the city administrator to assist with such a request.
- Lake Links. The city council has appointed Council member Jon Fleck to aid in the discussions about the trail's one-way direction along South Shore Blvd. The final resolution could adversely impact the safety of residents on Birchwood Lane. We will also be reviewing and advocating against any possibility of potential cut-through traffic either via Wildwood Avenue or Cedar Street. This will be a long process. Stay tuned.
- City Council Salaries: After many years of the same salary rate, the council is increasing the amounts from \$1500 for mayor and \$600 for council members to \$2500/\$1500. These rates are commensurate with our neighboring communities. More importantly, the service these officials provide is often time-consuming and difficult. The council felt the raises were long-overdue.
- 2021 City budget. Under construction at the time of this newsletter. FFI, please sign up on email notice list.
- 2040 Comprehensive Plan. After years of study, our plan is now complete and being sent to area government agencies for comment. It is available on line. Please see city website for more info.

TREE STUDY

Ten years ago, Chad Peterson did his eagle scout project by doing a tree study and encouraging tree planting. The city sponsored giving out 50 river birch. As a follow-up, did you receive one of those trees, did you plant it, did it grow? If so, can you let us know. Even better, send us a picture. We want to see what we can do to make our city healthy and greener. Please send any info to info@cityofbirchwood.com.

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EMAIL NOTICE LIST

Did you miss out on sending in for your Property Tax Refund (You would have been entitled if your tax went up more than 10% this year)? Or did you know that a recent hail storm may have caused enough damage to warrant an insurance claim? Or do you know that the city has a new study about our Historic Village Hall? These were some of the recent topics we addressed in our frequent email distributions to our residents. If you want to be included, please send a note to the city administrator asking to be included. It does not cost anything, and your information will not be sold or provided to any other users.

CALL 911

Reminder: If you notice an unsafe situation, a violation of Birchwood code, or other immediate concern, please contact law enforcement by dialing 9-1-1. While City staff and Council members welcome feedback from citizens to address policy decision-making, legally they are not able to issue citations or take action in these individual situations. This must be handled by law enforcement. The number the Sheriff has directed all of us to use is 911. Thank you!

MAYOR'S NOTES *by Mary Wingfield*

In late July, I was invited to a tour of the new Wildwood Library. It is a very impressive building compared to when it used to be housed in the old Willernie Bakery. The original library was started by two very dedicated public servants: Mrs. Garin and Mrs. Holly. They felt that our area deserved to have a space for kids and adults to congregate and learn over the love of books. That library bonded our small area communities together. Over the years it grew and re-invented itself. (I especially enjoyed the recent, communal jigsaw puzzle—pre-covic of course).

As we toured the new facility, I couldn't help but think of Marlyce Lee, our last "long-time" librarian. I am sure she would deny it, but she was one who made our local library one in which we all felt special. I remember more than once that I would find a book on reserve for me that I did not request. Marlyce and other staff would smile and tell me they thought it was one I would like. They were always right. How cool is that that we had our own "personal librarians."

Marlyce was our 4th of July Parade Grand Marshall in 2006. Perhaps Marlyce knew that we did not often seek GMs outside of our little town, but Marlyce had earned the award. She was very proud of that honor--her family even mentioned it in her recent obituary. We were lucky to have the library then, and we are lucky to have such a modern facility now. I hope you take time to enjoy the library. It is a part of who we are and where we have come from.