



# BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS



City of Birchwood Village, MN

SPRING 2017

**Welcome New Neighbors:** Carl Bayley (268 Wildwood), Catherine Carlson (306 Wildwood)

**Our Condolences to:**

- Phyllis Huck on the passing of her husband Bill. The Hucks have been Birchwood residents for over 60 years.
- John Rubbelke on the passing of his wife Dee. The Rubbelkes have lived in Birchwood for 40+ years.
- John and Tammy Wyland who recently lost both John's mother and father.

**Our thanks to:**

- Volunteer staffers: **Cynthia Tomlinson, Lori Klimp, Gene and Shirley Ruehle, Kevin Woolstencroft and Mary Wingfield** for stuffing the budget newsletter. Good job, TEAM!
- **John Lund** for patching and painting the dent in the warming house.
- **The Roads Committee** for putting out sand cans and patching nasty potholes.

If you would like to add your name to future volunteer activities opportunities, contact me at [Wingfield.mary@gmail.com](mailto:Wingfield.mary@gmail.com)

**Generous supporters to the Community Club:**  
**Jeff and Karen Olson**

**Residents who add a bright light to our town:**

- **The Rasmussen family** for the cute snow sculpture Totoro (3 White Pine Lane):



- **Harlan Molitor and Ryan Malvey** and their LEGO league Team did a video on "How to Keep your Cats Alive" (A parody on Dumb Ways to Die). It is cute and funny and very well done. Watch it at: <https://youtu.be/IR-Y060Pcgg>

Do you know of someone who has gone the extra mile to make our community bright? Let me know and we will post it here! Send ideas to [Wingfield.mary@gmail.com](mailto:Wingfield.mary@gmail.com)

**NEW COUNCIL MEMBER**

Trilby White was appointed by the council to fill the remainder of Mark Anderson's term. Trilby has lived in Birchwood for the past 24 years. Trilby has a degree in journalism, is a nurse by trade, and brings a wealth of experience in communication and team building. She will be a great asset to the community and we look forward to working with her.

**NEW PLANNING COMMISSIONER**

Jozsef Hegedus has been appointed by the council to help the city with variances and zoning issues. Jozsef and his family have lived in Birchwood for 16 years and his mother in law is long-time resident Jeanne Barnum. Jozsef has a degree in financial management and is dedicated to keeping Birchwood a wonderful place to live.

**STREET LIGHT LED CONVERSION DONE!**

Xcel has completed changing out the city's street lights. This was part of the regional plan to convert to LED lights. Mahtomedi has also been changed out to LEDs recently.

**KAYAK/CANOE RACK INFORMATION:** Please register your boat before locking it to a rack. All boats must be registered or they will be removed. Registration opened March 1 at City Hall and the fee is \$10 per boat. Boats may be placed on the racks after April 1 and must be removed by October 31.

**SPRING LEAF PICK UP-- April 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>**

The city will again provide for spring leaf pick up. Pricing is as follows: \$40/small pile; \$75/large pile; mega piles will be determined on case by case basis; plus \$2 service charge. Leaves only, please!

Road signs will be put out at the entrances into town as a reminder.

## **2 BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS A SALTY PROBLEM...**

A recent gardening column by Bonnie Blodgett in The St Paul Pioneer Press highlights the issues communities face with icy roads and salt. This has been an especially difficult winter season. With the temperatures fluctuating above and below freezing, ice builds up. This has created nightmares for public works departments all over the area. The problem is exacerbated for us because of our hilly terrain, north facing slopes and heavy tree canopy. Now climate change is expanding the icy season throughout the winter, rather than just the springtime. So we end up applying more salt than ever to our roads.

Salt is a wonder chemical for keeping our streets ice free if the temperature is above 20 F. It loses its efficiency below that. The down side is salt is corrosive and is harmful to plants. Salt dissolves into the runoff water, so it moves through the environment very easily. Research recently found that "in the urban Twin Cities area, 70 percent of the salt applied to roads stays within the region's watershed. Once there, the contamination is difficult and expensive to remove." Every snow event results in about 5 tons of salt being applied in Birchwood. Birchwood and other communities are all affecting the quality of White Bear Lake due to road salt applications.

We will be facing the consequences of our actions for a long time to come. What can we do? We currently use 100% salt to treat our roads. We could opt for a 50/50 mixture of sand and salt, but the effectiveness of melting the ice is reduced and we receive many more slick-road complaints. Ms. Blodgett recommends we all take action on reducing the use of fossil fuels to help us get our climate back under control. Ideally, that is the best solution, but the problem is not going to go away any time soon. Let us know your thoughts.

## **NORTHEAST YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES**

Northeast Youth & Family Services is a nonprofit mental health and community services organization that has been serving the northeastern suburbs since 1976. Their mission is transforming lives today, creating a better tomorrow for youth, adults, families and our community. Their services are based on ability to pay and are available to anyone.

Each year, NYFS touches the lives of over 4,000 people through mental health counseling, senior chore services, juvenile delinquency diversion programming and youth development services. NYFS has offices in Shoreview and White Bear Lake and is dedicated to helping people at all ages and stages in life. For more information, please visit them on the web at [www.nyfs.org](http://www.nyfs.org) or call [651-429-8544](tel:651-429-8544).

## **SPRING 2017**

### **POPULATION 875, MEETING YOUR NEIGHBOR ONE NEWSLETTER AT A TIME\*** *by Rachael Drew*

Meet Birchwood neighbor Elmer Weber! Elmer was born in January 1924 in North St Paul. He is one of 10 siblings. His parents owned a restaurant and boarding house in N. St Paul. Elmer and his siblings helped with the cleaning. It was hard work but there was also play time. Elmer and his family had a home on what is now Bellaire Beach. They would spend summers on the lake. He recalls fishing, swimming and even surfing! He made a "surf board" out of plywood.

Elmer served in the United States Army during World War II. He worked in the Signal Corp hanging telephone wire in Germany between headquarters and the front line. This explains why you can still catch Elmer up on a ladder or trimming a tree!

After the war, Elmer owned a clothing and shoe store in N. St Paul. He ran the store until 1996 when, at the age of 72, he officially retired. When asked how his small business survived the big box stores, his answer- "volume. I just knew if I kept my margins down, I'd keep my customers coming." He had many loyal customers- some from as far away as California!

Elmer has hunted and fished all around the world. One of his favorite trips was fishing for Peacock Bass in South America. He continues to be an avid fisherman today. Elmer is our go-to for wildlife questions. Last spring he shared the discovery of baby owls in his backyard. His skills are endless. He has an engineer's mind-- if he needs a gadget, he builds it! He has made a portable ice fishing house, anti-squirrel birdfeeder, and other useful things. It isn't unusual to see him tinkering in his garage. We have him working on a deer deterrent now!

As his neighbors, we appreciate his service to our country, his keen knowledge of wildlife and nature and the kindness he shows us.

\*This is a new column we'd like to employ. If you know of a neighbor you think we should profile in our next newsletter, please contact Mary Wingfield.

## **EMAIL ADVANCED-NOTICE LIST**

Add your name to the list for important notices. We will advise you of upcoming concerns such as hydrant flushing, leaf pick up dates, road repairs and other matters that occur on short notice. This list is for internal use only and will not be provided to others.

**BIRCHWOOD DOCK ASSOCIATION**

Everyone is invited to join the dock assn to use the docks at Ash, Birch, Elm and Dellwood Easements. (Kay Beach is now a city dock and is free for all to use.) Membership is \$35 per year. Check off the box on your utility bill and include your fee, or send it to Mike Evangelist, 364 Wildwood Av.

- If you are not on the boat slip waiting list, contact city hall to do so.
- The Association will hold a spring meeting in early April. All current members and easement neighbors will be notified of the date/time/location by mail. To add your name to the list, contact BirchwoodDocks@gmail.com.

**TIM LESSARD RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE**

Thanks to all who attended this event to wish Tim a fond farewell after serving 30+ years as our postman. Here is the NE Journal link to that gathering:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmJV3xyEWF1&feature=youtu.be>

**MAYOR’S NOTES:**

Marlys Oliver recently passed away. She was the first woman mayor in Birchwood in the late 1970s, and early 1980s. My first foray in city politics was under her tutelage some thirty years ago. Times were different back then--

there was no cablecast, smoking was permitted at the meetings, and copies were made via a thermo-fax machine.

I recall those meeting were usually very long as Marlys always encouraged discussion before she would say, “What is the pleasure of the council?” I still employ that language today as it is important for consensus building. And for the past four years, Marlys words have served us well. I am proud of the fact that almost every vote we took was unanimous—not because we all had the same opinion, but because we worked through each other’s issues and concerns to reach middle ground.

It is my hope and commitment that the work of the Council continues in this tradition while addressing your concerns and solving your problems in a respectful manner.

Please feel free to contact me or any of the councilmembers if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to another productive term with your help and support. m

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

- Mayor Mary Wingfield 651-653-1022 [wingfield.mary@gmail.com](mailto:wingfield.mary@gmail.com)  
 Council members:  
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**DIRECT DEPOSIT YOUR UTILITY PAYMENT--NEVER RISK ANOTHER LATE PAYMENT!**

Please return this form with your payment this month and future payments will be withdrawn from your account at the end of the payment period.

City of St. Anthony       **YES!**      I'd like to sign up for electronic payment!

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>		Customer Account #:
Name on account (Please print):		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Please transfer payments directly from my:		<input type="checkbox"/> Checking account
Routing # :	Account #:	
I authorize City of St. Anthony to process debit entries from my account. This will remain in effect until I give reasonable notification to terminate this authorization. I have attached a voided check.		
Authorized signature on account:		Date: