



BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS



City of Birchwood Village, MN

Spring 2018

Welcome New Neighbors:

Seth & Zoie Plunkett

Our Condolences to:

- Bob Belknap, and Sarah and Dan Webber on the passing of Joyce Belknap, long-time resident.
- Carol Ranen whose partner Joe Prins (another long-timer), passed away after a long illness.
- The Jefferson Family who lost their sister Cynthia and father Tom, who had lived in the village for many decades.
- James Nelson on the passing of his mother.

Our thanks to:

- Volunteer staffers: **Suzanne Donnell, Don and Kathy Madore, Jim Rupert, Bob Landberg, Bruce Kolcinski, John McCormick, Larry and Judy Walker, Marilyn VanPelt and Mary Wingfield** for their super fast stuffing of the winter newsletter.
- **Matt Tschider** for donating and installing a new hockey net at the rink.
- **Amy Johnson, Angie Churchill, and Sarah Nephew** for putting on another great Kids' Christmas Party.
- **Our Hockey rink volunteers: Barton Winter, Bob Carson, John Lund and Steve Huntley.**

If you would like to add your name to future volunteer activities opportunities, contact me at Wingfield.mary@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATE:

Plant exchange AND City-wide Garage Sale: Saturday, June 2.

- Plant exchange starts at 10 AM at City Hall. Bring a few perennials to share.
- Garage sale signs will be posted on signs near the edge of town and in the local newspaper. Good luck and have fun passing your things along to bargain hunters.



Residents who add a bright light to our town:

Congratulations to Xander Haupt on making the rank of Eagle Scout in December. This honor has been earned by a number of Birchwood residents. Xander is continuing the tradition of making us all proud.

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!
Wingfield.mary@gmail.com

2018 WATER RATES

The flat fee to cover infrastructure remains the same. The use rate is increasing by 7% to cover the cost we are billed for water by White Bear Lake. The watermain surcharge has expired because the fund has recouped the expenses incurred from multiple breaks last season. The following chart shows the new water rates

	Usage by 100 Cubic Ft		2017	2018
Flat fee	NA	NA	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
Tier 1	1	800	2.30	2.46
Tier 2	801	2,000	2.65	2.84
Tier 3	2,001	4,000	3.05	3.26
Tier 4	4,001	10,000	3.51	3.76
Tier 5	10,000	999,999	4.03	4.31

MEET YOUR UTILITY COMMITTEE

This group of residents meets from time to time to review our sewer and water fund balances. The committee is made up of three residents, the mayor and our financial advisor from St Anthony Village.

The group also reviewed the final round of sewer lining assessments. As a result, the committee recommended the city transfer funds from general revenue to cover the costs while the sewer fund recovers the costs over the next five years. This approach will result in the city avoiding bond interest that would otherwise accrue if we took out a loan to fund the project.

The committee is comprised of Bob Manke, Michael Hanson, Paul Steinhauser and Mary Wingfield.

DOG LICENSES REQUIRED IN BIRCHWOOD

If you have a dog that is over 6 months old, please make sure you obtain a license for it. Our license fee is really reasonable (\$15 for two years.) The fee for failing to license your dog is not as reasonable. Applications can be obtained from the city administrator or on the city's website. Do it now to avoid a higher cost later.

KAYAK/CANOE RACK INFORMATION

Please register your boat before locking it to a rack. All boats must be registered prior to placement on a rack. 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. Please be courteous to your fellow boaters--**ANY BOAT PLACED BEFORE APRIL 1 AND BEFORE A PERMIT HAS BEEN OBTAINED WILL BE IMPOUNDED.**

SPRING LEAF PICK UP—Late April into early May

The city will again provide spring leaf pick up service. Pricing is as follows: \$40/small pile; \$75/large pile; mega piles will be determined on case by case basis; plus \$2 service charge. Check the city website or send us your email so we can alert you.

Road signs will be put out at the entrances into town as a reminder when the dates are nearer.

SEWER LINING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT INFO

The City has contracted to finish the last few bits of the sewer lining project that began in 2004. An assessment of \$628.36 has been levied against affected properties. This is considerably lower than the assessments levied in 2004, 2006 and 2008. And as one resident noted, we could have saved a considerable sum by paying these costs through our sewer fund rather than through the assessment process. That would have happened this time if the prior projects had not been assessed. Unfortunately, the die was cast long ago and for the sake of fairness to all those who already paid for the lining by their properties, the council continued the assessment approach one last time.

The assessment process added many more steps to an otherwise simple project. This added unnecessary costs. To avoid the potential of repeating this mistake, the council rescinded most of the assessment code and we will instead follow state statute from here on out.

SPRING CLEAN UP

Add your name to the list of helper bees by email or calling us. We might be pulling buckthorn or doing some other project this spring. Date(s) in April to be determined.

EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE by Tobin Lay

It's here - the Emerald Ash Borer has finally hit neighboring White Bear Lake! A recent article in the White Bear Press highlights the City of White Bear Lake's plan to prepare for the looming onslaught from this bug.

According to the article, homeowners can treat their Ash trees to reduce the chances of losing their trees to the bugs. The City of White Bear Lake is teaming up with Rainbow Treecare to treat area Ash trees and Rainbow is offering residents of White Bear Lake a special group price for treatment of private trees. Rainbow Treecare is offering residents of Birchwood Village the same bulk discount rate they are giving White Bear Lake residents for EAB treatment.

This bulk discount treatment pricing is \$5.75 per inch of trunk diameter (measured at 4.5 feet above the ground). Interested homeowners can call 952-767-6920 or visit www.rainbowtreecare.com/contact-us/ to schedule a free tree assessment.

DEER UPDATE by Houstoun Clinch

The Parks committee assisted the city council by addressing the question of what can be done about our deer herd. After looking into the issue, this is the committee's report to the city council:

“We don't think we can cull deer in Birchwood for two big reasons. First and foremost is safety. There is no location within Birchwood where deer could be shot, with any weapon, that is a safe distance from a house. Second, if we cull deer without coordinating with the neighboring communities then the deer outside of Birchwood will move into Birchwood as soon as we are done culling. The deer will move from high density areas to our low density area. Coordinating culling with the surrounding communities will be very challenging. [editor's note: the city reached out to our neighboring communities regarding this issue and none was interested in taking action with us].

Unfortunately, the best option that remains is to discourage the deer from residing in Birchwood. This can be done by not supplying a food source and actively scaring them away.”

The city has adopted a “Do Not Feed the Deer” ordinance. Please visit our website for details.

HYDRANT FLUSHING REMINDER

Hydrant flushing will begin about mid-April. Although the water will still be safe, flushing can cause turbulence in the water mains and discoloration may result. If this occurs, run the water until it is clear.

POPULATION 875, MEETING YOUR NEIGHBOR ONE NEWSLETTER AT A TIME

Larry and Judy Walker have lived at their lovely old homestead on East County Line for the last 43 years. Nevertheless, they still identify it as the old “Powers” residence. They raised their four children here in Birchwood: Wendy, Laury, Tadd and Jill. Tadd and Jill live nearby.

A few years back Wendy’s children, who are from Switzerland, came to the Walkers to be seniors in the White Bear Lake School system. The boys wanted to experience how their mother grew up. It was a great learning opportunity for all.

Larry is a former executive with Sperry Univac and now runs a leadership training organization with Tadd. Their intensive Leadership Tomorrow program is being provided to local leaders courtesy of the White Bear Lake Foundation. Larry is proud to be able to help community-minded people develop a means to achieve their goals.

Judy is a long-time gardener and a member of our parks committee. Judy likes to give back to others and is a genuine people person. She is the first person neighbors reach out to in a time of crisis. This has been a long winter for her as a number of friends have lost loved ones.

This fall Larry drafted the survey that was sent out to get a gauge on the community’s interest in our parks and open spaces. He has been helpful in interpreting the data and will be presenting his findings to the park board and council in the near future.

Larry can often be seen walking his neighbor’s dog “Huck” or one many other dogs that need walkies when their owners are tied up. And with six grandkids, Larry and Judy are always busy. But the neat thing about the Walkers is their door is always open and the coffee pot is always on. It is great having them as neighbors.

GET THE LATEST EMAIL POSTS

It’s free! This is a great opportunity to add your name to the list where you will be sent city updates, important notices, and some cool photography around town. Sign up and don’t miss a week by contacting us at info@CityofBirchwood.com. You will also get notice of upcoming concerns such as hydrant flushing, leaf pick up dates, road repairs and perhaps some interesting bits you might like to know about. Fear not, this list is for internal city use only and will not be sold or provided to others.

**MAYOR’S NOTES:**

There has been a lot of talk about water issues recently—road salt accumulating in our lakes, the White Bear Lake level, augmentation, and possible watering restrictions. But the big issue looming is a real paradigm shift: water recycling.

Sound like a long shot? Not so quick.

The Met Council recently put out an email to local governments posting public hearings for its Wastewater Re-use policies for 2040. (To give some perspective, the City is currently working on our 2040 Comprehensive Plan now.) I intend to go and see what is being planned. Regardless, in the land of sky blue waters, I think the days of unlimited access to clean well water are coming to an end sooner than we think.

If we could separate our waste water to re-use “gray” water (shower and laundry water) for irrigation, that would be a huge benefit to the environment. If we could have houses use “gray” water for toilets like they do in Europe, we could reserve our clean water for better uses. There are other ways to reuse water, but I would think we could do a better job of conserving water now to extend the luxury of using our clean water sources. Our neighbor Paul Steinhauser is doing a lot to raise community awareness of this. He is a great resource. You can contact him at www.race2reduce.org.

I will report back to you what these hearings are about. In the meantime, I recommend a good book by Charles Fishman called “The Big Thirst.” It sounds the alarm that clean water is our next oil crisis. Yet, it is survivable...and resolvable. We just have to get our head around the fact that extracting clean water from the ground to do everything from flushing our toilets to washing cars and brewing beer is coming to an end...even in the land of 10,000 lakes.

As always, be safe, and have a great 2018.

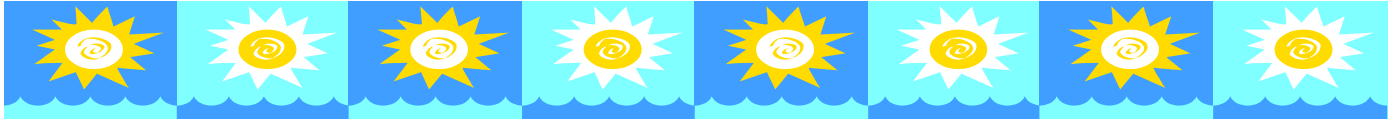
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DIRECT DEPOSIT YOUR UTILITY PAYMENT--NEVER RISK ANOTHER LATE PAYMENT!
Please return this form with your payment this month and future payments will be withdrawn from your account at the end of the payment period.

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

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	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: