



BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS



City of Birchwood Village, MN

Summer 2018

Welcome New Neighbors:

Cameron Sigecan, 143 Wildwood.

Our Condolences to:

- Charlie Moore who lost his wife Linda, long-time residents.
- Kathy Madore on the passing of her husband Don.

Our thanks to:

- Volunteer staffers: A batch of newbies joined the stuffing gang last quarter: **Racheal Drew, Leanna Colestock, Cheryl Anderson, Mary K and Chris Sorenson, Jim Rupert and Mary Wingfield.**
- **Laura Manske** who donated the new ladder for the dock at Kay Beach.
- Buckthorn removal group: White Bear Lake High School Ambassadors along with **Bridget Sperl, Megan Malvey, Ben and Chris Creagh and kids, Doug Hough and grandson Logan, John McCormick, Larry and Judy Walker, Kevin Woolstencroft and Mary Wingfield.** All pitched in to make more open space in the play area.
- **Karleen Corliss and Mary Wingfield** replaced the birch trees in Tighe-Schmitz Park one nice Sunday in May. The dead trees were the result of too much weed whacking by the grounds crew.
- **Larry Walker** assisted **Mary Wingfield** in setting the pickleball lines in the hockey rink. **Kevin and Joe Woolstencroft and Mary Wingfield** set up the nets.

Thanks to Generous Community Club Donors: Mary and Adrian Skytland.

BOAT SLIP USE FEES

The City Council approved a boat slip fee increase to \$650 per season. The council felt this was in line with benefits the users receive. The winter storage of the lifts remains at \$100 per season. Please contact the city administrator to get on the boat slip waitlist.

ALL DOCKS ARE NOW PUBLIC

In the spirit of All are Welcome Here, all docks in Birchwood are now free to use to any Birchwood resident or their guests. Enjoy using the docks.

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. The fee is \$10 per boat.

BIRCHWOOD BELL TOWER PROJECT

A resident recently pitched the idea of building a bell tower in Birchwood for an Eagle Scout project. We have an antique cast iron bell in the basement of city hall that supposedly was used as our first civil defense warning system. It would be nice to pull it out of mothballs and display it as part of our heritage. Coordinating this with our centennial makes it all the more timely. This will make a good opportunity to add a plaque explaining the history of the bell and the beginning of our town.

Residents Gene Ruehle, John Lund and Andy Sorenson and professional engineer Bill Becklin of Becklin & Whitney are generously donating time and skills to this project. Volunteers and donations are welcome.

If you would like to participate with a donation for this project, we will recognize you like we did for those who donated to the hockey hut (\$25 minimum). This is an opportunity to create a legacy for our town and is a once-in-a-lifetime event. Please send your tax deductible donation to the city administrator, 207 Birchwood Avenue.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

4th of JULY PARADE- July 4th, 9:30 am at 5 Birchwood Avenue. FFI: Mary Wingfield. 651-653-1022, wingfield.mary@gmail.com

MARION JOHNSON ACROSS THE LAKE SWIM- July 7, 2018, 7 am Birch Beach. (See Info later in this Newsletter)

PLANT EXCHANGE AND ALL CITY GARAGE SALE- June 2, Plant exchange at 10 am Village Hall; FFI: Randy LaFoy, 651-426-9229

MUSIC IN THE PARK- Sundays starting 6/3

FIRE HYDRANT FLUSHING- Last week of May

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Please send your dues (\$4) in the enclosed envelope. Your support funds village events including the Fourth of July Parade, Marion Johnson Across the Lake Swim, Common Table Pot Luck and Christmas Party. Thank you to all for making our community great.

PICKLEBALL IS COMING TO BIRCHWOOD

Mary Wingfield and friends have strung some nets at the hockey rink. Lines will be coming shortly. Come and join the fun—Pickleball is probably the fastest growing outdoor game today. It is a combination of ping pong, tennis, and racketball. Better yet, it is easy on the knees and arms (unless you dive for the ball—don't do that). There are some unusual rules and it can be played by young and old. If you would like to play, join us at 9 AM Saturday June 9 and 23. The Birchwood Community Club has donated racquets and balls to use. You just need to come and have a good time.

CITY TREE INSPECTIONS NOTICE

If you want to be notified when our city tree inspector is out looking for diseased trees on your property, please contact the city administrator so you can be updated when the inspector will be in your neighborhood.

PLEASE DO NOT DUMP IN OUR PARKS

There have been some instances of debris being deposited in our city spaces. This is illegal and contrary to keeping our city beautiful. Please help us maintain our parks and make sure this does not happen.

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

Here is the link for our public water supply system. The analysis shows we are within the range of safety for all measured elements. Call 651-426-3403 for paper copies. <https://www.cityofbirchwood.com/ccr>

M. JOHNSON ACROSS THE LAKE SWIM

Join your fellow paddlers and enjoy a quiet morning swim across the lake from the Peninsula back to Birch Beach. Each paddler needs a paddle boat escort and extra life jacket on board. All are welcome! Meet Sat July 7 at 7am at Birch Beach. FFI / RSVP: Mary Wingfield at 651-653-1022 (cell)

FREE CABLE TV!

If you are not currently subscribing to cable, but you would like to view: local community events; gov. mtgs; school district info.; local and regional cable programming. Subscribe to Universal PEG Service. For more information call 651-747-3801.

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FOURTH OF JULY GRAND MARSHAL

Jim Rupert is our Grand Marshal this year. Jim is an Eagle Scout, Order of the Arrow member, a Silver Beaver recipient and a lifetime volunteer in the Boy Scouts of America. He has held a number of leadership positions, locally, nationally, and internationally in the organization. He was instrumental in a number of fundraising endeavors and became an honorary Life Member of the Northern Star Council in 2014.

And Jim has been profiled twice by the St Paul Pioneer Press (front page, above the fold!) for his work as a Scoutmaster helping special needs Troop 594 members earn Eagle Scout status. Normally, the Eagle rank must be earned by age 18, but being special needs people, the Scouts in Troop 594 were exempt from that requirement. One member in Jim's troop was age 71 when he received his Eagle award.

Jim is also an avid birder with nearly 600 species on his life list. He is a wealth of information if you are at a loss for identifying a bird you just saw. Jim is the embodiment of a good neighbor—always willing to help, lend an ear or just be a good friend. We are lucky to have him here in Birchwood.

ALL BIRCHWOOD GARAGE SALE/PLANT EXCHANGE by Randy LaFoy

For the first time, we are having the Village-wide garage sale/giveaway AND the Plant Exchange on the same day. Put a big star on your calendar for Saturday, June 2nd.

If you have things to sell or give away, there will be signs and ads on Craigslist and the White Bear paper. Set your own hours and prices. Feel free to tell others.

If you have plants you want to exchange/get/give away or just hanging out with your neighbor, come to the City Hall at 10:00. If you have plant-like tools, pots, hangers or stands, bring those as well (we can't guarantee they will go) Those who bring treats are especially venerated.

If you have questions, contact Randy - lafoybwd@gmail.com

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MUSIC IN THE PARK CONTINUES

In April, the city was asked to take over responsibility for managing Music in the Parks. The Council immediately implemented a plan to continue the tradition. Look for notices electronically on the web and via list serve as well as on the city bulletin board. Chairs and sandwich signs will be placed at the edge of town if people are willing to volunteer. We have had a number of people who mentioned they are willing to help. Please let the administrator know which Sundays you can help.

The council is encouraging everyone to come with their own chairs. As like in years past, the city has budgeted for these events, however tips for the performers will be gladly received by the bands. We know folks will be willing to show their appreciation for their talents.

GET THE LATEST EMAIL POSTS

Be in the “know” by signing up to receive regular email updates of current city events, news and more – it’s free! Fear not, this list is for internal city use only and will not be sold or provided to others. Register on the city website or send your name and email address to info@CityofBirchwood.com.

MENTAL HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICE

The City of Birchwood Village partners with Northeast Youth & Family Services (NYFS) to provide discount services to Birchwood residents for mental health counseling, senior chore services, juvenile delinquency diversion, and youth development.

NYFS 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.

Each year, NYFS touches the lives of over 4,000 people through mental health and other community services. NYFS has offices in Shoreview and White Bear Lake and is dedicated to helping people at all ages and stages in life. *To access these services* or for more information, please visit them on the web at www.nyfs.org or call 651-429-8544.

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HELP STOP LAKE POLLUTION

The City of Birchwood Village asks your help to stop the discharge of illicit liquids and materials from entering the City's storm sewer system. Illicit discharges are generally any discharge not composed entirely of storm water; such as oil, paint, fertilizer, pet waste, car wash chemicals, and grass clippings. Storm sewer systems are not designed to handle anything other than storm water; everything dumped down the storm sewer eventually drains into lakes and streams. Illicit liquids and materials can kill important plants and animals and negatively impact the water quality.

Please take measures to keep the storm sewer system free from illicit discharge. If you see any unusual liquids or materials draining into a storm drain, ditch, stream, or lake, please call City Hall at [651-426-3403](tel:651-426-3403) or email info@cityofbirchwood.com. If it is after hours or on the weekend please call the Washington County Sheriff’s department at 651-439-9381 or the 911 non-emergency hotline.”

In addition to keeping our water safe, the city is always looking for ways to improve our natural resources. The city of Maplewood recently posted the following information to its residents to help in this endeavor. Here are some of their ideas. We think you might be interested in doing the same:

1. Protect a storm drain. Keep leaves, grass, and debris from getting into the drains by keeping them on your property and off the streets.
2. Mulch or compost your Grass. This reduces the need to fertilize.
3. Use zero-phosphate fertilizer – the soil does not need it and the runoff creates more algae in the lake
4. Reduce storm-water runoff – direct downspouts into your lawn, use rain barrels or create rain gardens
5. Use native plants. They have deeper root systems and help with water infiltration
6. Properly dispose of all hazardous waste

MAYOR’S NOTES:

After 29 years with the State Public Defender’s Office, I have retired. Councilmember Randy LaFoy has also joined the ranks of the newly minted leisured folks. Funny thing-- I now find myself busier than ever. I am afraid that my dog is wondering if he even knows me due to a lack of quality time lately.

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Here are the things I have been working on recently in our town to help build community:

- As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, arts, culture and history help define us as a community. We are working on getting our city bell back on display and educating the public on how things used to be here.
- I have asked the council to foster a new community identity with a “barn quilt” on city hall. There are many regions of the country that use these artistic displays to entice travelers to their areas. Birchwood could become a quilt village and peg the “quaint-o-meter” if more folks join in. If you want to add one to your property, I have lots of paint colors and am willing to help anyone who is looking for ideas to get started. The good thing is there are no rules, just use your creativity!
- Picking up litter is spring time ritual for me. I don’t like looking at trash and don’t mind picking it up as I walk the trails and roads in the area. It is astounding how much trash accumulates, especially in the ponds and waterways. Hall’s Marsh had the most refuse. Thanks to those who pick up refuse while out in the community.
- I recruited a number of volunteers to pull buckthorn in Bloomquist Park over a period of five days this spring. This is a very physical job and we were lucky enough to have some very dedicated volunteers pitch in. This job was made especially difficult because prior “eradication” was done by lopping the plant only to have it sprout a bunch of suckers that were made more vigorous due to the intact root system. The good news is our method of removing the whole plant will make the park a much better habitat for birds and other wildlife and it will result in better plant diversity. We are making good progress at Bloomquist Park.
- There were a number of birch trees in Tighe-Schmitz that were weed whacked to death. The trees were planted as part of an Eagle Scout project to “Put the Birch Back in Birchwood.” Karleen Corliss and I spent a Sunday morning

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replacing the trees. This greenery should enhance the park in the years to come.

- Pickleball is a fast growing sport for all ages. The hockey rink surface lends itself well to some courts and Kevin Woolstencroft and I cobbled together some nets to see if this “proof of concept” passes muster with the community. If you would like to be learn the game or play some round robin games, send me an email and I will send you information as to when we will be meeting.
- The Mahtomedi Garden Club awarded our city a grant to help defer the cost of sedges (grasses) that will be planted in the Birch swale to reduce erosion and trap sediments from getting into the lake. This is the second year the Garden club has assisted Birchwood with improving the environment.
- And continuing the long-time tradition of writing this newsletter helps connect everyone to the fabric of our community. And if you want to be a part of the “meet your neighbor” utility bill stuffing party, let me know. It is a nice way to catch up with your neighbors.

Birchwood is a unique town and the fact that many families have second, third and even fourth generations living here is a testament to our quality of life. Let us continue to look for ways to expand this vision together.

Have a safe and pleasant summer.

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

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