### PREDATORY OFFENDER MOVES INTO BIRCHWOOD—from the City Council

### In mid-November the city received notice that the Minnesota Department of Corrections had approved placement of a registered offender at a Birchwood residence.  This issue took the city by surprise and resulted in the largest outcry for action ever known to our community.  A community notification meeting was held Tuesday, November 17th.  In an unprecedented move, the council held a special meeting the following Sunday (Nov. 22).  The city hall was filled with concerned residents at both meetings.

### The council was presented with a proposed code to limit where an offender could live in our community.  The code passed a first reading and the council scheduled a public hearing for the following Sunday (Nov.29).  That meeting was moved up to Tuesday, November 24th due to the urgency of the situation.  The council approved the code adopted by a number of Minnesota cities.  The new code prevents an offender from living within 1000 feet of parks or playgrounds. It also prohibits an offender from being involved with activities where children are. Unfortunately, the law does not prevent the current offender from living in Birchwood with his family.

### The council also sponsored a seminar put on that week (held at St. Andrew’s Church) by the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center (JWRC).  JWRC advocates placement of offenders in a watchful community to ensure the safety of all.  The program was well received by those who attended.  The link to that program is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daNE8cI_eFo>

### The city council will also be sponsoring a JWRC for Kids program (perhaps in conjunction with Canvas Health) which is geared specifically for younger people. Please contact city hall to be placed on an email list to be notified of the time and date.

### In addition, the council is creating a committee to review and draft a city code restricting conduct and placement of offenders.  JWRC noted that predatory offenders move about our communities and are often beyond public scrutiny because registration laws only provide notice of where a person resides, not where they are when they are not asleep. If you would like to be considered for this group, please drop a note to the city administrator about your interest and concerns by December 31, 2015.

### This issue shattered the calm and peacefulness of our community. It also raised awareness that clearly needs to be a part of every community’s approach to child safety.  The council enacted the strongest lawful measures it could.  Ideally, the (state) legislature should have enacted laws regulating the release of predators back into the community.

The council wishes to thank all those that weighed in on this issue.  Our community safety and our children’s well-being are of utmost importance to us all.  Please feel free to contact any of us as we work together to help heal our community going forward.

 Mary, Randy, Bill, Kevin and Mark

### *Welcome new residents*:

Curt & Rachel Schuler, 22 Oakridge Dr; Sarah Watkins, 153 Wildwood; Taylor and Vashti Graphenteen, 2 Oakhill Ct; Derek Huebl 3870 E Co Line Road; Dylan Beehler, 312 Wildwood; Travis and Theresa Muench, 174 Birchwood Ave.

**GUESS WHO’S COMING TO BIRCHWOOD?**

That’s right, Santa Claus will make a special appearance at the annual Birchwood Holiday Party on Wed., Dec. 9, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Village Hall**.** All Birchwood children are invited to stop by and decorate their own cookie and sip on hot chocolate, make an ornament and tell Santa their Christmas wishes. This is an opportunity for all Birchwood families – kids and adults alike – to enjoy a bit of holiday cheer with their neighbors! This event is free and snacks and beverages will be provided. Kids wearing jammies are welcome. If you have questions or would like to help at the party, call Amy Johnson, 612-308-7902, Angie Churchill, 651-271-6334 or Sara Nephew, 651-249-3800.

### *Our sympathies extended to:*

* *Lou Schnellman whose wife Elizabeth passed away in September.*
* *Nancy and Terry Mueller. Nancy’s mother Betty Doyle lived in Birchwood for many year.*
* *Daniel Ferlic and family on the passing of Marilyn who was a long time Birchwood resident.*
* *Elmer Weber on the passing of his brother*
* *Friends (dogs and humans) of Dave Reynolds who passed away and was a long-time resident.*
* *Richard Clausen whose wife Mary Jo passed away last week.*

### *Our thanks to:*

* Volunteer Summer newsletter stuffers:  **Cynthia Tomlinson, Mary Sue Simmons, Gene and Shirley Ruehle and Mary Wingfield**. This team mobilized on Labor Day on one hour’s notice!
* Mike Evangelist, John Lund and Al Mitchell for another successful Music in the Parks summer series

**OPENING SOON:** This bit of warm weather has delayed the opening of the warming house. Check the city website for the latest information.Open through February, weather permitting. **Hockey Day** is coming back. Check the city website FFI.

**SUPER COMMUNITY CLUB DONORS**

Karen and Jeff Olson and Delores Schreiner are among the many who gave to the community club in excess of the annual dues. Thanks to so many who

have contributed this year and supported the annual community events. **** 

**PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE DEER**

The city enacted a new code that prohibits deer feeding and requires bird feeders to be located five feet above the ground. The goal is to reduce the deer population in Birchwood as well as lessen our exposure to ticks that transmit Lyme disease.

**Contact Information:**

info@cityofBirchwood.com

City Hall: 651-426-3403

Hours: Monday and Thursday 9-noon

www.cityofBirchwood.com

**EMAIL ADVANCED-NOTICE LIST**

Add your name to our list for important happenings. 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.



**DIRECT DEPOSIT YOUR UTILITY PAYMENT--**NEVER RISK ANOTHER LATE PAYMENT!



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