



Walnut Grove Homes Association

News in a Nutshell

May 2015

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Focus on Communications

New Walnut Grove Website

The new website is live!

Many thanks to Ann Moser for her years of service managing the "old" website. Visit our new website at:

WalnutGroveMadison.COM

We value your input! Feel free to leave comments on the site, or email Tina Hogle with your suggestions.

Follow Us on Facebook!

Our Facebook page is up and running. Don't miss neighborhood and city news and events! Like and follow the page when you visit Walnut Grove Homes. You can also find the Facebook page by clicking on the link in the right navigation menu of the website.



Wanted: Facebook Page Contributors

We're hoping that several people will volunteer to share updates, photos and information of interest to the neighborhood. We're looking for parents of young children, teenagers, retired people and anyone else who thinks it would be fun.

Please contact Tina Hogle if interested.

Next Door Walnut Grove

A social media connection point for sharing information, asking questions, and learning about your neighbors. Share as much or little about yourself as you want.

Sign up at walnutgrovewi.nextdoor.com

Block Captain

Block Captains are your link to the board. We thank Eileen Goode for her many years of service coordinating the Block Captains and we welcome anyone interested in filling that position to please contact Tina Hogle. Block Captains are listed on the website. ■

Please help us improve communications by taking the **SURVEY** on the last page of the newsletter and returning it by **June 1st**. In addition to gathering input, we'll be updating our email address database.

Help Needed on the Greenways

The neighborhood needs you! Please consider volunteering...

Our March newsletter quoted board president Eric Lewandowski stating, "Our Greenways continue to be the glory of the neighborhood..."

But the Greenway Committee cannot maintain the greenways alone. It is a big job and they would be grateful to anyone who could devote an hour or two to assisting with

pulling garlic mustard, an invasive species, at the next scheduled Greenway Day.

When: Saturday, May 16, 9:00 a.m.
Where: at the Greenway entrance on Walnut Grove Drive

Questions? Contact Gabe Anibas ■

President's Message from Eric Lewandowski

Spring, safety, and satisfaction

I think this is the time of year I like best here in Walnut Grove. No, I'm not going to wax on about the finally vanished snow, budding plants (achoo!), freshly cleaned streets, or even the return of the red fox (apparently, now, with a litter of cute, little kits in tow.) Actually, I want to celebrate the sense of vitality that springtime always seems to bring, based on the numbers of neighbors, new and old, I tend to encounter in so many places: on the Greenways, ambling along the sidewalks, taking in the warmth sitting on the lawn. I also like to think about all of the folks who take the time to interact with friends, again, new and old, at the Walnut Grove family bowling social at Schwoegler Lanes, the well-attended Sunday afternoon neighborhood kids get-together at MadTown Twisters, and, most recently, at a very successful (from what I hear) Mom's Night Out. These and other events and activities like the annually-awaited Walnut Grove Garage Sale and anticipated volunteer greenway clean-ups really bring home the vibrant sense of annual renewal, regeneration and rejuvenation that clearly is alive and well, here and now.

Having said this, I also know that Walnut Grove is not a perfect idyll. Most of us have heard about or seen the comments and reports on the listserv and elsewhere about safety and security issues that have sporadically affected Madison's West Side: frustratingly sneaky and repeatedly broken Greenways light fixtures, the stupid spray painting of hateful signs and slogans only a development away, the inconsiderate unleashing of dogs outside the dog park, and even more serious acts like reckless driving along the Westfield corridor and wild, uncharacteristic criminal behavior along Gammon Road. But, we also should draw comfort from the recognition that if this is not Utopia, neither is it Dystopia, and why? Because, residents of Walnut Grove are essentially quiet, considerate people who have chosen to settle here, not recognized criminal elements or behavioral outliers, representing selfish, malicious attitudes alien to our area. We also should draw comfort from the fact that, precisely as demonstrated by our neighborly interactions, we are not willing to monger fear, tolerate intolerance, or hole up in fortress-like isolation or indifference. We look out for one another, take pride in our neighborhood and City, and (I'd like to think) are willing to work together, rationally, to help address its needs.

This winter, the Walnut Grove Homes Association saw two long-standing Board members, Tom Wall and Mary Kay Battaglia, reluctantly leave our company, followed very recently by Eileen Goode. We recognize,



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with gratitude and respect, their service to the neighborhood, wish them well in their next pursuits, and are eager to welcome their successors, Karen Kollath, Tina Hogle, and an as yet to step forward, third new Board member. Possibly you?

We are currently in the process of re-examining our overall approach to neighborhood communications and are eagerly looking for someone interested in joining the Board, who is especially willing to contribute his or her time and talents in making Walnut Grove more inviting and accommodating. The Board position we are soliciting interest in is our Block Captains coordinator, who, as currently envisioned, will work closely with our Communications and Social Committee members, as well as others, in quickly and effectively "getting the word out" about Walnut Grove interests and events. Please contact me directly if you feel you'd like to follow up and I will be happy to discuss this opportunity further with you.

In addition to improving communications, we also have witnessed several exciting initiatives unfold that will help the WGHA update our nearly fifty year-old Architectural Covenants and guidelines, review and refresh our Bylaws, proactively address perennial environmental interests and attend to pressing ecological needs, such as the Emerald Ash Borer and invasive species, and work to create an even more sociable, and personally well-connected neighborhood. My point is, the length of service and dedication of our retiring Board members, coupled with the ongoing commitment of our standing directors and the emerging dynamism of our new associates clearly point to a neighborhood upbeat and alive. On this basis, then, we welcome the arrival of new home-owners and their families. We relish the steadily returning real estate market with its variously reported increasing property values. And we continue to take great pride and satisfaction in our home here in Walnut Grove. ■

We have received dues payment from most of you. Thank you!

If you haven't yet submitted 2015 dues, please send payment as soon as possible to:

Karen Kollath
414 N. Westfield Rd.
Madison, WI 53717

Questions? Contact Karen (see page one)

Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

Covenant Review Update

The ACC has been working on revising, updating, and in most cases, just clarifying the 40 year old covenants to be more easily understood by all of our neighbors, new and old. We have sent out several surveys focusing on covenant issues that are important to the neighborhood and we hope to incorporate the majority of responses that we receive. The deadline for the final survey is May 12th. Thank you to everyone who participated in the surveys!

Once the results of this last survey are tabulated, we will be rewriting the covenants to be more user friendly, both by our neighbors as well as by the City of Madison zoning and building departments. Walnut Grove neighborhood was developed as a PUD – Planned Unit Development, which means that any work done to a property must be approved by the governing body which is the Architectural Control Committee of the Walnut Grove Homes Association. Our goal is to prepare a cohesive, updated document and a visual power point that addresses all the parts of the covenants which is the binding contract agreement deeded to every property within Walnut Grove Neighborhood.

We will be working on the revising the new covenants over the summer under the guidance of a lawyer for proper language in order to amend them with the Register of

Deeds – Dane County. Prior to registering the covenants, we plan on holding a “town meeting” with WGHA neighbors in order to present the revised covenants. We will apply any revisions that come out of that meeting and make a final presentation at the Annual Meeting in January 2016. We require over 75% approval by the home owners in order to make any revisions. For the most part, the new covenants will be focusing on issues that relate to our developed properties whereas the current covenants focus primarily on restrictions for new house construction required at the start of the development of our neighborhood. We appreciate any input that you would like to provide the committee that may not be addressed in our surveys. Please email any comments, suggestions or concerns to Denise Clearwood, ACC Chair at pineclear@charter.net. Thanks to all of our wonderful neighbors for making Walnut Grove a great place to call home.

Special thanks to the Architectural Control Committee: Denise Clearwood, Pat Delaney, Laurie and Jim Howard, Eric Lewandowski, Derek Pavelec, and Mark Schmitt. ■

Calling All Backyard Gardeners

Looking to start a gardening group to share tips, plants and laughs

Do you enjoy putting in the dirt? Do you help some plants thrive, but kill some too? Do you like to share perennials with friends? Do you want to receive sprigs of plants that you don't have? This group is for you!

Several people in the neighborhood are interested in getting together to form a backyard gardener's group. Whether you are a



beginning gardener or a pro, know the Latin names of plants or just enjoy the way they look, please consider getting together with other plant lovers to share tips, plants and laughs.

Contact Kathy McComb (see page one) and let her know you are interested. She will organize the first meeting and let everyone know where and when it will take place. ■

Architectural Review

Remember to contact the ACC

Are you considering making additions or modifications to the exterior of your home, such as a new three-season porch or new siding? Don't forget to contact the Architectural Control Committee with any questions concerning changes that must comply with the covenants and deed restrictions of WGHA, available for your review on our website www.walnutgrovemadison.com.

Please contact Denise Clearwood 833-7446 for approval of any plans to alter your property.

Yardwork, Pet Sitting, etc.

Consider hiring ready and willing youth of Walnut Grove for babysitting and pet sitting this summer. Many may be willing to rake, mow, and shovel snow as well.

To obtain a list of young neighborhood people willing to work, please email Mary Kay Battaglia at mary-battaglia@tds.net.

Circle Maintenance and Improvement Guidelines

The following guidelines will help our circles stay beautiful throughout the summer and fall.

- Any pruning or removal of dead trees/shrubs will be done as needed and paid for from the regular greenways budget. Please notify the Gabe Anibas (see page 1) of any circle maintenance needs.
- Circle grass cutting is a shared responsibility of the circle residents. It is recommended that circle residents be sensitive to special circumstances that might prohibit some of the homeowners from participating in this joint effort (age/illness).
- The standard \$40 per year minor maintenance allocation is available to all circles for flower plantings, mulch, fertilizer, or other beautification efforts. Please submit itemized receipts to the WGHA Treasurer (Karen Kollath) for reimbursement.

For major improvements, a \$500 grant is available to two of the circles each year:

- Residents of the circle will develop a written plan for improvements and present this plan to the WGHA board for approval. The plan must include a thorough description of the work being proposed, a formal bid, and a “growth” plan to ensure that any new planting will receive appropriate watering and other maintenance to ensure that they thrive.
- Residents are encouraged to utilize a licensed and bonded contractor for circle improvements. If you choose to do any improvements that require digging below the frost line without the use of a contractor, you must call Digger’s Hotline to ensure that all gas, power, cable and telephone lines are marked. Trees and large shrubs installed without a contractor must be purchased from a reputable nursery with a minimum one year growth guarantee. The plan must include the names of circle residents that will participate in the growth phase care. There must be multiple households willing to take responsibility for watering and tending of new plants.
- Plans for improvements should be submitted to the WGHA board by May 31st of the year in which the work is to be completed.

Light or Greenway issues?
Contact Gabe Anibas at 287-6495

Upcoming Neighborhood Events

Spring has Sprung!

Thanks to Kathy McComb for organizing a great night out for the women of Walnut Grove. About forty women got together at Old Chicago and took Kathy up on her challenge to meet four new people.

Movie Night on the Greenway

for kids of all Ages

Friday, June 19th at the entrance to the greenway on Farmington Court---check Facebook, the website or Next Door for updates!



Neighborhood Garage Sale

As you are doing your spring cleaning, start putting aside your gently used items for our neighborhood garage sale.

Friday, June 12-Saturday, June 13th
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

RSVP and questions to Kathy at kamccomb@tds.net to be included on the map.

Independence Day Parade and Celebration

When: Thursday, July 2nd
6:30 pm parade followed by dessert and refreshments
Where: Walnut Grove Park

Decorate yourself and your bike, tricycle or scooter with patriotic swag for a Parade around the Park!

Tina Hogle
2 Round Hill Cir
Madison, WI 53717