

Creek Speak Newsletter

Edition Number Three, September 2011

Annual ACHA Meeting

The annual meeting will be held on October 20 at 7pm at Gretchen's House. We are adding a few new exciting format changes:

- *We'll kick off with a fall cider/adult cider and cheese reception...come and meet and mingle with your neighbors!*
- *We'll follow that with a short board meeting*
- *One lucky attendee will receive a free pass for the 2012 annual dues...a \$250 value!!*
- *Two lucky attendees will receive a half off free pass for the 2012 annual dues...a \$125 value!!*
- *We will also be nominating and confirming three new board members and officers*

Please join us!!



Summer Party Review!!

The ACHA board would like to thank the Party Committee for planning such a successful party! And, a thanks also goes out to all of you who volunteered to help on the day of the party...you helped to make it a success and we could not have done it without you! Please visit our website (acha...) and review the great pictures. For the first time ever, we conducted a survey and want to thank those that responded. We received a lot of good feedback that will help us in next year's planning. Although the survey is closed, if you do have any comments, feel free to send them to the board at messages@arbor-creek.org.

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President's Corner - Third Quarter 2011

Neighbors:

This article will be my last as President of your neighborhood association. I have enjoyed resurrecting the Board from the entirely inexperienced but well-intentioned group of three that we started out being three years ago when we took over from the prior Board. Over three years the Board has transformed into an experienced, knowledgeable and still well-intentioned group of seven. We have increased the quality and responsiveness of our landscaping and snow removal provider while decreasing the expense by \$5000 per year. We changed our legal representation saving another roughly \$1000 per year. We've completed most of the replacement of our asphalt paths and made them thicker, better, and more durable than they were when installed by the developer. And in the path through the woods, we've improved drainage to avoid springtime flooding of the path accelerating its demise. We acquired and installed a fountain in the pond on Waters and Cook Creek. We pushed for and then monitored the County's dredging of all of the neighborhood retention basins, to ensure that additional basements don't become flooded out when we receive our seemingly annual 100 year storms. For the same cost as those that preceded this one, we had a summer party which included two wonderful never before seen additions: a 26 foot tall rock climbing wall, and a margarita machine (with adjacent beer cooler). Finally, we've instituted a quarterly newsletter that some of you have commented on as appealing and informative.

We were able to do all of the above without raising your annual dues because we did our homework and negotiated the terms of the services we procured very carefully.

The upcoming annual meeting will mark the end of my tenure on the Board. It will also mark the expiration of the two year terms on the Board of Vivek Jaikamal (Board Member at Large) and of Cynthia Wang (Association Treasurer). The remaining Board members and I extend our thanks to Vivek and Cynthia for their service over the last two years.

Aye, there's the rub: Three of us depart, leaving the Board three members short of a full deck. Take the time now to re-read my first paragraph. Look at the list of things your Board got done for you for your \$250 annual association dues. Now tell me how much you think you will have to pay to have a professional management company take over management of the Association and render the services described above if volunteers don't step up to occupy Board memberships. I honestly don't know what the cost of a private management company would be. We haven't researched the issue. I can tell you though that my guess would be that the management fees alone would run at least \$30,000 per year. All of the expenses which consume your \$250 annual dues would be over and above that amount. Continued on page 4.

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Hello Fellow Neighbors,

Hopefully it was a great summer for everyone. I just want to take this opportunity to tell everyone that the retention pond renovation and targeted walking path projects are now complete for the year and we thank you for your patience during the time that the work was being done. We still have some minor sidewalk repair that has to be done, but this should be completed within the next month or so with only minor disruption if any to our routines. We again, ask for your patience.

Since fall is now upon us, this is an excellent time for us as homeowners to be looking at trimming our trees and shrubs before the winter sets in. I have personally noticed that various homeowners are not trimming their trees as they should that line our public sidewalks and walking paths. As stated in our bylaws, the public walkways and common area paths should be kept clear of hazards such as branches and leaves that could injure us or otherwise cause an accident due to having our vision obstructed. Please be advised that the trees that exist on the easement or grassy area between the street and the sidewalks in front of our homes and any trees that might exist on or adjacent to our property that line a common area walking path belong to us in regard to their growth and maintenance. That includes trimming them if necessary and disease prevention. The Township, County, or our subdivision landscaping company, Yard Master are not responsible for these trees. If we are unable to maintain them ourselves, Yard Master or any other landscaping or lawn maintenance company can be hired to do this for a charge. Please take a few minutes and look around your property to see if you have anything that could cause an inconvenience or unsafe condition and please take care of it in a timely manner. Have a great Autumn. Thank you. Best Regards,

Bari Brown

ACHA Vice President and Landscaping Coordinator



Landscaping Contest Winners!!

Thanks to all of you who participated in the landscaping contest! It was nice to see so many homeowners taking pride in their yard! After much debate, the board chose the following winners:
1st place- Jim Anderson, \$50 gift card
2nd place- Mike Kofsky, \$30 gift card
3rd place- Brandt Jones, \$20 gift card

Honorable mentions go to the following:
Christine Wylie, Padma & Srinivas Vinukonda, and Chris Thomas.

As a gentle reminder, the by-laws require you to maintain your yard on a regular basis by mowing, removing weeds and general up-keep. Please help keep the neighborhood appealing for all to enjoy!

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President's Corner continued from page 2:

This would mean that our dues would rise to at least \$420 per year and would probably be closer to the nice round number of \$500 per year. The services provided would probably not be as well vetted or negotiated. After all it's not their money, right?

The perks are simple, exemption from dues during the years you occupy the office when dues are collected, and the satisfaction of knowing that you are giving something back to the community that you live in. I can tell you that as skeptical as I was that I would feel any level of satisfaction from serving on the Board, I did when I saw us leaving things better than we found them without taking any additional funds out of your pocket.

In short, the time is now: Step up! Stand out! And don't pay dues! Really, what more could you ask for? It's work, but it isn't that much and it can be fun. Call me crazy, but I think you should do it!!

See you around the
neighborhood,
Dan Shemke

Arbor Creek Directory and Email List

Our Homeowners Association keeps a list of the contact information of every homeowner and resident of Arbor Creek. This information is kept private and safe, and it is used only for the occasional communications normally needed to run the affairs of our Association and our community.

You can help our community by helping the Board of the Association keep this information up-to-date. If you are an old-time homeowner of Arbor Creek and your email address has changed, let us know. If you are a new homeowner, let us also know how to contact you. If you are a family renting a house in Arbor Creek, all the community news and events are also for you and we would like to inform you of them.

Write to us with your contact information at ... messages@arbor-creek.org. Thanks for your help!



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Soliciting New Board Members!

We are looking for three new board members:

Treasurer

Member at large—2

We all live very busy lives, but devoting a few hours a month to make your community a better place to live is worth it! It can be very rewarding and we need to have new ideas so we can continue to make the kind of improvements we have made in the last few years. If you can give of your time, please contact the board at messages@arbor-creek.org.

Halloween Announcements

We will once again ask our Pittsfield Township firefighters to visit us in their fire truck to kick off the Halloween party! For those of you who will be trick or treating in the neighborhood, please plan on meeting the fire truck at 5:30pm on October 31st at the path on Cook Creek Drive next to the subdivision mailbox.

If you'll be passing out candy to the trick or treaters, please make sure your front porch light is on and any debris is removed from your driveway and sidewalks so our kids can be safe! Let's create a fun time for our neighborhood kids!



Happy Halloween!!

Arbor Creek Homeowner's Association
Board Members

Dan Shemke — President
Bari Brown — Vice-President
Gynthia Wang — Treasurer
Luis Zapata — Secretary
Vivek Jaikamal — Member-at-Large
Julie Wigley — Member-at-Large
Bo Shen — Member-at-Large

Mark Your Calendar for
these
Upcoming Events:

- Annual ACHA Meeting - October 20th 7pm
- Halloween Parade - October 31st 5:30 pm

Arbor Creek Homeowner's Association
2898 Cook Creek Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
www.arbor-creek.org

To: Arbor Creek Homeowner

Don't forget to
attend the annual ACHA
meeting! Read inside
about the exciting new
format!!

