

Volume 5, Issue 1

February 2011



Willow Creek Messenger

www.wchoa.org

WCHOA
P.O. Box 546
Westfield, IN

Willow Creek Homeowner's Association —
2011 Winter Newsletter

Check out our Website at:
www.wchoa.org

Annual Meeting and Dues

- Please join us on Monday, March 21st, 7:00 pm at Radiant Christian Life Church for our annual meeting; located at 16162 Carey Road, across from Carey Ridge Elementary School.
- At the annual meeting, we will review our 2010 income/expenses and our 2011 budget. We will also discuss landscaping maintenance and upgrades scheduled for this year, neighborhood garage sales and the neighborhood picnic. Election of board members for 2011 will be conducted.
- If you are unable to attend the meeting but are interesting in volunteering, please contact Amy or Hitesh via email
- In an effort to be respectful of everyone's busy schedules, at the meeting we will adhere to the topics on the agenda. If you have a complaint regarding an individual property and/or homeowner, please contact the HOA President to discuss.
- **The dues for 2011 remain at \$115 for the 7th year in a row. They are due no later than April 15th.** You may send your payment to P.O. Box 546, Westfield, IN 46074. Cash, check or money order. We are unable to process credit or debit cards.
- While we always discuss the budget at the annual meeting and we receive very few requests to review the HOA's expenses, we realize that homeowners may be interested to see where the HOA spends your money. To ensure that the information is readily available to you, the 2010 income and expenditures are posted to the website. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the treasurer. The HOA's books are open to any homeowner who may wish to see them.
- Our website was revamped last year. The new software enables us to more readily post announcements and to keep them current. We'll provide a short follow-up newsletter after the annual meeting, but it will only be posted to the website and not mailed out—so check back!

2010 Westfield In Bloom Winner in Willow Creek!

A huge congratulations to our neighbor Billie Essex on Amberwood Court! She won Westfield In Bloom's contest last summer in the category of Best Small Front Yard. If you weren't lucky enough to see her yard in person last summer, you can check it out on the wchoa.org website.

Flowers at Signs

- We've been planting annuals at the signs for a nice show of summer color. Last year, our landscaper did a phenomenal job on the annuals at the Grassy Branch sign (a service we paid for).
- Did anybody notice the flowers? If you did and you enjoy them, please let us know.



Common Complaints

- The most common complaint we receive is with respect to parked vehicles. It is not against the law to park a vehicle on the street. However, parked vehicles may not block fire hydrants, be close to a stop sign or face the wrong way. They must be parked parallel to the curb. Vehicles must also have current plates on them and be operable.
- Be kind to your mail carrier and make sure that vehicles do not block drive-up access to mail boxes. Park your car in your driveway during winter storms to make plowing easier for those who do that work.
- Issues with vehicles parked on the streets may be reported to the City of Westfield Police at their non-emergency number (804-3200).
- Trailers, campers, motor homes, commercial trucks and boats! Our neighborhood is not designed for storage of these items on the streets, in the driveway or in the front yard and our covenants reflect that. These items need to be stored off-site or in your garage. This applies to homeowners, renters and any guests.
- Trash Bins: Another common complaint. Please store them out of sight, on the side of your house, in your back yard or in your garage. Do not store them on the curb, in your driveway or in your front yard.

Home Maintenance, Yards and Fences

- Our neighborhood is aging and that means so is your home. In this economy, it is tempting to put off home repairs and maintenance, but routine home maintenance, inside and out, is important in preventing very costly damages to your home and in preserving property values for all of us.
- If you need help finding a reputable company to help with home repairs, ask a neighbor, friend or family member for a recommendation or check out resources such as Angie's List.
- Weeding and mowing are low-cost, simple ways to maintain your yard. Trim back plants that obstruct sidewalks (Lucas Circle).
- Dilapidated fences are a danger to pets and children and a liability to the homeowner. If your fence is in need of repair, take care of it (Rollingwood Circle and Windwood Circle). Chicken wire is unacceptable for use in a fence, even as a gate (Windwood Circle).

Post Lights and Entrance Lighting

- Our neighborhood, by design, does not have large overhead streetlights. Instead, there is a post light in each individual yard. Please do your part and keep your light in good repair (too many of you to even list).
- Posts can be easily and inexpensively painted on a nice, calm day with black high-gloss exterior spray paint (White Willow Drive).
- Replacement lamp post cross-bars can be purchased at Lowe's for around \$5.00. Lamp sensors and new fixtures can be purchased at Lowe's/Menards. If you do not know how to replace, contact an electrician.
- If you notice that any of our entrance lights or sign lights are out, please let us know. Do not assume that someone else has already reported it or that the HOA is just ignoring it or that we don't have money to fix the problem. We probably simply don't realize the problem. You can also check the website to see if there is an announcement indicating that the problem is being addressed before you contact us.

Home-Based Businesses

- Did you know? Homeowners and/or residents who are operating a business out of their home may be in violation of a City of Westfield zoning ordinance.
- City ordinances permit only specific businesses such as art studio, dressmaker, typing/office services and teaching musical instruments and specifically prohibit businesses such as lawn care and mowing from operating out of residential homes. The ordinances also specifically prohibit residents from employing any persons other than themselves in the business.
- Residents with questions or a complaint about a home-based business may contact Jack Spaulding, Code Enforcement Officer at 557-2038 to discuss.

Potholes, Snow Removal and Damaged Mailboxes

- Potholes. If you are aware of any, please contact Westfield Public Works at 896-5452 to report them.
- Snow Removal. We receive this complaint every year. You pay for this service through your property taxes to the City of Westfield. The HOA does not hire private contractors for snow removal. Any complaints regarding speed/quality of the work or poorly-placed mounds of snow should be directed to the City of Westfield Streets Department.
- Damaged Mailboxes. If the City's snow plows damaged your mailbox, please contact the Streets Department to file a complaint. If you are otherwise in need of mailbox repair or replacement, Otto's Streetscape bought out Caporal and is the vendor with knowledge of our neighborhood. You may find a link to them on our website.

Homestead Verification Form

Did you receive a pink form with your property tax notice in April 2010? The Indiana Legislature passed a law that requires all homeowners to reapply for the homestead deduction on their primary residence. If you fail to complete and file this form, you will lose your current homestead deduction and your property taxes will go up as a result. Please see <http://www.hamiltoncounty.in.gov/services.asp?id=7797> for additional information.

Foreclosures

Foreclosures. Yes, we have homes that are at some point in the foreclosure process. We do our best to keep track, but your help in this area is needed. If you are aware of a vacant house where the yard is not being mowed, please contact the treasurer.

Overpayments/Nonpayments

- A small number of homeowners have either a credit on their account from a previous overpayment or an outstanding balance due on their account from nonpayment of 2010 dues. These homeowners will find a statement in their envelope along with their newsletter and invoice.
- If you receive a statement, please pay the amount indicated on the statement instead of the amount on the invoice.

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Current WCHOA Board Members and Volunteers:

Hitesh Patel — President
President@wchoa.org

Amy Pappas — Treasurer
treasurer@wchoa.org

Tamie Ellis—Garage Sale Coordinator
garagesale@wchoa.org

Norma Barley and Nancey Abbott—
Picnic Organizers
picnic@wchoa.org

Steve Thomas—Webmaster

Jennifer Nordin—WeCAN Rep.



Holiday Decor

- Thank you to Norma B. and Tom T. for putting up the wreaths on our signs at Christmas time. They were lovely.
- We are planning to add electric outlets so that we will be able to incorporate holiday lighting next season.

Welcome New Homeowners

- Welcome to our new homeowners who chose in 2010 to make Willow Creek their home. If you are a neighbor to a new homeowner, be neighborly and introduce yourself.
- Please welcome Douglas Chase, Robert Kibler, Randall Adams, Peggy Coomer, Joseph Lackey, Jennifer Buell, Phillip & Leah Keene to our neighborhood.
- If any homeowner finds that their address label or invoice has an error in their information, please let the treasurer know. Thank you!

Neighborhood Garage Sales

- WCHOA sponsors neighborhood-wide garage sales each year. We provide the advertising, you sell your unwanted stuff, while earning some cash and freeing up space in your home and garage.
- If you have feedback/suggestions on how we can encourage better participation in this event, please let us know!
- We may set minimum participation goals this year and if they are not met, we will not continue to sponsor neighborhood sales.

Neighborhood Picnic (or not?)

- After a brief hiatus, a neighborhood picnic was held last September at Quaker Park. Our volunteers, Norma B. and Nancey A., did a fantastic job organizing the event, with fun games and delicious BBQ from Big Hoffas. Thank you to both for your hard work.
- Despite the tremendous work of Nancey and Norma, this event was poorly attended, as our picnics usually are. This is such a shame, since it is a nice, relaxing opportunity to visit with your neighbors and enjoy the games and activities. Most of the attendees were from Rollingwood Circle!
- If you have any ideas on ways to convince you (yes, you!) to attend a neighborhood event, we'd love to hear them, including suggestions for a different type of neighborhood event.