

Dear Homeowners

March is the beginning of a new year for the HOA and it's time for homeowners to send in their dues. The board members are asked many times,

“Why should we pay dues, and what are they used for?”

We're glad you asked, and hopefully the following responds to your concerns:

The HOA was established by the builder in 1982 and compared to other HOAs in the larger community, we have done very well with our limited resources.

Our covenants were also established when the neighborhood was built. The Covenants are filed with the Jefferson County Recorder and they state that a Board of Directors is required for the primary purpose of enforcing the Covenants. The Board is governed by By-Laws and Rules of Order. The Board is also required by law to carry both, Directors and Officers Liability and Crime bond insurance. Homeowners dues covers that expense. The Covenant Committee of the Board works very hard at seeing that the neighborhood follows covenant and County rules. Our homes continue to sell for 10-15% more than other neighborhoods around us for comparable homes. That fact is a direct result of homeowner's pride of ownership as well as consistent monitoring of covenant violations.

“Why don't we have a pool?” There's a simple answer to that question. The HOA does not own any land in the subdivision to build a pool. If we *did* have a pool, the associated costs of maintenance and liability insurance would require *mandatory* HOA dues at a much higher rate than the voluntary \$35 annual fee currently in place.

Landscaping:

Several years ago, the board decided to spruce up the front entrance, as it was 25 years old and looking decidedly run down if anyone bothered to notice it. Dead trees and overgrown bushes, gave it a very untidy look. One of our members who is a landscape Architect, volunteered his time on the front entrance years ago, and with his help, we began a four year clean up and replanting program, always making certain that there was enough money in the bank to pay the bills. Our plans included a Xeriscape landscape with trees and bushes that needed a minimum amount of upkeep, since our **volunteer** board does not have the time to spend on ongoing landscape maintenance.

The board kept the cost down by doing much of the work, whenever possible. Larger plantings of course had to be hired out.

New plants require water for the first year in order to survive, even if they are low water plants. There is no water on the North side of the front entrance, so a watering service had to be hired to water the plants for the first year.

- **The Front Entrance Sign** was a separate phase of the plan. The brick fence was beginning to crumble and the wiring needed to be replaced to prevent any possible fires. The old sign was also very dated and needed a fresh look. New lighting was added to the sign area and electricity to light the sign is a monthly expense.
- **The Message Board** was put up because the sandwich boards that were used for 15 years were constantly being knocked down and run over by bicycles, vehicles etc... and were constantly having to be repaired. The board members were also weary of having to haul them back and forth and pick them up every time they fell down. The family on the corner where the message board was built, was gracious to allowed us to use their water free of charge to water the plants. Dues were used to buy the plants, mulch and message board.

Community Events:

- **The Easter Egg hunt** is held every year, with our own rabbit, and your dues pay for the candies and supplies that make this a popular event, especially for the children.
- **Movie night** in the park is a new event. This event is a little more expensive, as seen in the budget. Your dues are paying for it.
- **Yard of the Month** is done in June, July, August and September. The winners display a sign in their yard for a month and receive a gift certificate paid for by your dues.
- **The 4th of July bike parade**, is always a big hit with the kids. The last couple years, the West Metro Fire Department has provided a fire truck to lead the parade around the neighborhood. Dues pay for the popsicles, drinks and prizes.
- **Santa and Sleigh Ride** was held for many years in December, however this event was decided to be too expensive. The cost escalated to \$1000 this past year, nearly three times the cost of just a few years ago. In addition, there continued to be a lack of participation from the community. Given these factors, it became apparent that the expense was not warranted.
- **The Lighting Event** is held in December. Winners are given gift certificates for the best lighting displays, and are recognized in the newsletter. The gift certificates come from your dues.

Misc. Expenses:

- **Welcome packets** have been resurrected and will be given to all newcomers in the neighborhood. The packets will contain useful information such as the HOA Covenants, By-Laws, school phone numbers, a map of the neighborhood, and some information from business owners who live in the neighborhood. The cost of putting the booklets together is paid for by your dues.
- Many HOAs have a lawyer on retainer. In an effort to minimize expenses, **we do not**. We do have access to a law firm which specializes in HOA matters and is available to us as needed. Your dues have paid for this.
- The HOA maintains a **website** for the convenience of the neighborhood. The newsletters and all other information about the HOA is on the website. There is a monthly charge for the site and your dues pay for this.

All of these items are posted in the monthly newsletters and on the website several months in advance of the activity and if there are questions please call any board member. The phone numbers are listed in the newsletter and on the website.

The volunteer HOA board is very open and honest with our fellow homeowners. The Board makes every effort to maintain the highest level of integrity. Everything is in the newsletters or on the website or message board. The minutes from our meetings are publically posted in every newsletter. We have a historian who has kept all newsletters from the past 12 years for our reference when necessary. All done in an effort to keep the community apprised of all Board business as well as on the advice of legal counsel.

All this for the nominal price of **\$35 a year!** It's hard to find such value for your dollars these days.

Your HOA Board