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# Long Lake Meadows/Spring Meadows Homeowners' Association

## Spring / Summer Newsletter

Web Site: [llmsmhoa.org](http://llmsmhoa.org)

March 2014

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### **MEET YOUR BOARD for 2014**

Barb Vleko, Sandy Paci, Matt Kukla, Frank Faron, and Jim Gabrysh.

Noted below is the list of Board members and corresponding email address you can use to reach them. When communicating with Board members, please be sure to provide your name, address, and phone number to improve the turnaround time on your request.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
President	Barb Vleko	<a href="mailto:president@llmsmhoa.org">president@llmsmhoa.org</a>
Vice-President	Sandy Paci	<a href="mailto:vice-president@llmsmhoa.org">vice-president@llmsmhoa.org</a>
Treasurer	Matt Kukla	<a href="mailto:treasurer@llmsmhoa.org">treasurer@llmsmhoa.org</a>
Secretary	Sandy Paci	<a href="mailto:secretary@llmsmhoa.org">secretary@llmsmhoa.org</a>
Web Site	Matt Kukla	<a href="mailto:webmaster@llmsmhoa.org">webmaster@llmsmhoa.org</a>
Welcome Wagon	Becky Garity	<a href="mailto:welcomewagon@llmsmhoa.org">welcomewagon@llmsmhoa.org</a>

For written communications, you may also correspond with the Board at the following address: Long Lake Meadows/Spring Meadows HOA, P.O. Box 1764, Troy, MI 48099-1764.

### **ANNUAL MEETING in 2013**

Attached are the minutes from the November 13 meeting. Please direct your questions, comments, or inquiries to the president via email. If you prefer, you may send a note to the Association's mailing address.

### **HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST in 2013**

Congratulations to the winners who each received a \$25 gift card: Jeffrey and Teri Kamlay, 2311 Sweet Drive for the best wreath display; and Brad and Susann Robinson, 5206 Saffron Drive for the best light display.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The expense for the web site is cheaper if the Association pays in advance for two years' service vs. one year. The expenses for the retention basin and insurance are required per the By-Laws and the increase in expense is unavoidable. The Board, however, checks out other insurance companies every couple of years to insure coverage is adequate and cost effective.

The Board discusses the budget with baseline expenses (current year) and discusses the anticipated charges for the next fiscal year. The Board solicits bids for lawn service, for example, to insure the "price is right" and the level of service is that of what the Association expects.

A big "thank you" to the homeowners who have paid their dues in a timely manner. However, we still have a number of homeowners who are delinquent in paying their account statements for the current fiscal year and/or the past couple of years. Please contact the president and let us know how the Board can assist in payment arrangements. Our goal is to work with everyone. We understand that trying times may be continuing for some homeowners; and responsibilities to the Association will often take a backseat to more personal, important issues.

The Board cannot, unfortunately, assume all homeowners will pay dues (including special assessments; i.e. mailboxes in Spring Meadows), and in a timely manner. This issue has a major impact on the budget. All homeowners in the Association have an obligation to pay annual dues. A lien is placed on the home when dues have not been paid in a satisfactory timeframe.

Of the 187 homes in LLM 1 and 2 and SM, 41 homes participated in the 2013 garage sale. As the garage sale is a bi-annual activity, the Board will decide in early 2014 if the Association will participate in 2015. To keep costs at a minimum and still advertise in respectable newspapers, the Association shares costs with Stoneridge 1 and 2.

### **ASSOCIATION and NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS**

**New to the neighborhood** - Welcome! Through the volunteer efforts of Becky Garity and Sandy Paci, a community Welcome Wagon is up and running. Questions or comments regarding the Welcome Wagon should be directed to [welcomewagon@llmsmhoa.org](mailto:welcomewagon@llmsmhoa.org). If you prefer, you may send a note to the Association's mailing address. Please visit the Association's web site as it provides easy and convenient access to all Association documents and its Board. In addition, you will find useful information and answers to calendar events, annual dues, annual meetings, up-to-date messages from the Board, and FAQs. Established homeowners will find the web site useful, too.

**Moving out of the subdivision** - Please note that if you are selling your home, before or at closing, your attorney or real estate agent should require a document from the Board indicating your annual dues are current. This is commonly referred to as "proof of assessment payment for sellers." When you require this document for your home sale, please contact the treasurer by email or you may send a note to the Association's mailing address. Please allow at least one week to clear all files for bank closings.

**Seeking volunteers** - Members on the Board are all homeowners who have volunteered to help manage and maintain our neighborhood. In order to reduce costs, please consider joining the Board or offering to help with Association activities. The Board is always looking for new ideas. The Board meets four-six times each year for 2–2.5 hours. The meetings are always interesting and is a good learning experience. It is also a great way to meet your fellow neighbors! The Board does their best to accomplish as many tasks as possible; however, some things cannot be completed due to limited resources and few Board members. The best method to contact someone on the Board is by email or you may send a note to the Association's mailing address.

**Expert for a day** - The Board has a mission to find an "expert for a day." The Association needs good skill sets to accomplish small tasks. The Board has put a list together to solicit assistance. For example, there must be creative individuals who could create a logo for the Association. Or there may be an expert in the advertising area for the web site; for example, want ads. While a two-year commitment on the Board may be difficult, one could be an expert for a few hours each month. If you are interested, please send an email to the president.

**Retention basin** - Lake Pro, the company the Association has contracted to treat the basin, did their best to control the bacteria with chemicals in 2013. Low water levels caused algae growth in the summer. Last year, Lake Pro put the first treatment in the retention basin in the month of May vs. April. This timing was due to the late receipt of the permit from the State of Michigan. Let us hope Mother Nature is not so harsh during the 2014 summer.

**Lawn maintenance** - As noted in the Spring 2013 Newsletter, we contracted Braniff Landscape, a homeowner in the subdivision, for lawn maintenance in the retention basin area, the berm, the courts, and along Long Lake Road. Braniff Landscape provided the Association a very competitive rate, which saved the Association money compared to the vendor in 2012.

It is noted that the Association is paying for the lawn service, and they should be held accountable for the services they are being paid to perform. In addition to mowing the areas mentioned above, edging and weed whacking is also done. A spring and fall treatment on the grass between the sidewalk and Long Lake Road will be scheduled. The Board will reach out to a number of lawn service companies within the next month to obtain quotes and references will be checked.

A homeowner brought to the Board's attention that a few years ago, he was cleaning the island on the court he lives on and, at that time, we had contracted with a company to clean out the beds in the entrance areas as well as the courts. The workers from the company did not allow the homeowner to clean the court. You will recall in previous years, a "Beautification Day" was scheduled. On that day, only a handful of homeowners and members of their families would clean the areas at the entrance signs on Saffron Drive, the courts, and around the retention basin. Consequently, due to a lack of neighborhood participation, Beautification Day was eliminated and the lawn service will be responsible for cleaning these areas.

**City ordinances** - Please remember that all homeowners are to comply with the ordinances the City of Troy has established. Noted below are common violated issues homeowners have provided to the Board in previous years. The excerpts are from the Code Enforcement section on the City of Troy web site. Please note that a complete list of questions and answers on these topics, as well as other code enforcement topics, are available on the City of Troy web site.

How often do I have to cut my grass - Lawn grass and weeds must not exceed 10 inches height. Ornamental plants and grasses are exempt. Lawns and grasses located between private property lines and roads is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. This includes areas between sidewalks and roads and between fences and roads. If a fence in the back yard separates the property from the road, the property owner should maintain grass on both sides of the fence, up to the edge of the road.

How early can I put my garbage out for pick up - Trash, recycling and yard waste should be placed at the curb no sooner than 5 pm on the preceding day. Collection starts at 7 am on your trash day. Empty containers shall be removed from the curb within 24 hours after trash pickup.

Can I store a recreational vehicle outside on my residential property - In residentially zoned districts, recreational vehicles can be stored anywhere on the property for up to a 48 hour period. At all other times, recreational vehicles and equipment must be stored inside a completely enclosed building or located behind the front face of the house, and no closer than 3 feet from the side or rear property line. Recreational vehicles cannot be stored or parked on vacant lots.

Can I put out signs advertising my garage sale - These temporary signs are allowed on private property subject to certain limitations (refer web site for information). Signs that are placed in the public right-of-way (City property) will be removed by the City.

Soon it will be time when lawn mowers will be out in full force. Please note that homeowners, as well as private services who maintain the lawns of homeowners, should not leave grass clippings in the street. The clippings will have an adverse effect on the retention basin by clogging the system.

**Keep eyes and ears open** - Please continue to monitor your newspaper box to insure that advertisements, newspapers, etc., are removed. An empty box will alert those driving or walking in the subdivisions that homeowners want a safe neighborhood--all part of "neighborhood watch."

**Door-to-door sales people** - It is that time of year when homeowners are looking to "spruce up" their homes. Please be aware of the "fly-by-night" individuals soliciting the work they "do"; for example, window cleaning, roofs, tree service, etc. Do your homework before you sign any contract or make payment as it may save you agony and disappointment.

## **WEB SITE**

**Feedback** - The Board is always interested in providing more value to our community through the web site. If you have suggestions to add content or to improve the homeowner's experience, please let us know via email at webmaster@llsmhoa.org. You may also send a note to the Association's mailing address.

**Advertise with us** - Please consider advertising your own business or service on the Association web site. For \$10 a year (\$5 for kids), you can add your information with a link to our Community Marketplace. Babysitting, lawn care, home repair--whatever it may be--get the word out through us! Be sure to support our community by checking regularly for local merchants and service providers.

**Register your email** - The number of homes registered to date is 65 percent and the goal is 100 percent before the end of the second quarter. In an attempt to increase communication and to reduce costs, we ask all new homeowners to send an email to register@llmsmhoa.org and provide the information noted below so our records can be updated.

1. Property owner's name/s on title (and occupant name/s, if different)
2. Property address and mailing address (if different)
3. Best contact telephone number
4. Best contact email address(es)

For established homeowners, if any of the information noted above has changed, please send an email to register@llmsmhoa.org. As a reminder, personal information as well as email addresses are not published. The communication of annual dues, annual meetings, and other official Association business will continue to be handled through the U.S. mail. Think Green!

Homeowners who have registered their email address to receive non-required mailings will not receive a Newsletter in the newspaper box but via email. The Board welcomes suggestions from the homeowners; just send an email to the webmaster at webmaster@llmsmhoa.org.

**Do not forget** - Be sure to visit the web site frequently to insure you have the latest information regarding the activities noted in this Newsletter and what is new since the issuance of the Newsletter. As always, the Board welcomes your input. Feel free to reach out to the Board at any time.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Halloween parade** - On Sunday, October 26, the ghosts and goblins will arrive! Join your fellow spooky characters from Stoneridge 1 and 2 at Wass Elementary. The Troy Athens High School band will begin playing music at 2 pm. The parade is scheduled from 2-4 pm.

**Annual meeting** - The date and time for this year's meeting has not been scheduled as we are requested by the Troy School District to wait until the first of September to check the school's schedule. Once the date and time has been confirmed, information regarding the annual meeting will be mailed to each homeowner and will be posted on the web site. The meeting will give the Board an opportunity to look back at the past year's accomplishments, review expenses over the year, detail the Association's full financial picture, and answer questions or concerns.

As this is your meeting--the homeowners--we would like to reformat the agenda based on feedback from the homeowners. We would like to schedule a guest speaker for the meeting (i.e. someone from the police department to talk about security). If you have suggestions regarding guest speakers, send an email to the president or send a note to the Association's mailing address.

**Road Rally** - While not sponsored by the LLMSMHOA, look for a flyer in the newspaper box in late October or early November for the details.

**Holiday decorating contest** - This year's holiday decorating contest will be scheduled in mid-December. Look for a flyer in your newspaper box in early December with all the particulars.

# THINK SPRING