



THE HARPETH HOLLER



March 2005

Volume 13 - Issue 1

President's Letter

Busy, busy, busy! We've enjoyed a mild winter since the last edition of The Harpeth Holler; we have much to cover this issue.

Your Board is pleased to announce the date of the Annual Homeowners meeting as Thursday, April 21, 6:30 PM prompt. We'll meet at the Harpeth Valley Elementary School Cafeteria this year, not Bellevue Middle as we have in the past. Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend. If you can not attend, be sure to take a signed proxy to a Board member or to a neighbor who will be attending to have your vote count toward our quorum. Each meeting costs us roughly the annual dues of one Sheffield household, so it's important that we reach our quorum of 50% of the homeowners either live or by proxy. Without a quorum, we would need to reschedule the meeting and double its cost. The person showing up with the most proxies will get a gift certificate to Lowe's or Home Depot and another will be raffled off at the meeting to those attending.

Many neighborhood issues will be on our meeting agenda. We will continue the discussion of our association's assessment. Be sure to read the article in this issue. Rather than wait for critical failures, we have long range plans to save for these upgrades rather than issue an emergency assessment later.

As always, we'll have an open forum to listen to your specific issue or compliment. All board members, Tom Deweese, Stacy Rucker, Rod Frank, Ryan Bult and I will be present. We have one board member opening this year; everyone has an opportunity to join our Board or a neighborhood committee. Our Board and its committees are 100% volunteer positions. If you see any of these volunteers out and about the neighborhood, they are probably doing some work for you and Sheffield. You may wish to join me and say thank you to them.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our website www.sheffieldhoa.com. There is a wealth of information there for all of us. For example, the News section kept us up to date on the recent gas outage and how it affected us. You can even sign up to receive email notification when the News page changes. Don't forget to visit the Community Noteboard where you can share in the discussions of Neighborhood Safety, Home maintenance vendor recommendations, and Sheffield Activities. There is also a place for you to advertise your home based business. If your kids baby-sit or cut grass, there is a place for that too. It also helps in promoting Sheffield to people considering moving here. Please check it out. We are always looking for your participation and suggestions.

See you at the meeting on April 21st.

Joe White, Gina and Rosemary

SHEFFIELD CONTACTS

Telephone Hotline: *Discontinued*

E-mail Hotline: hotline@sheffieldhoa.com

Contact	Position	Term	Phone	E-Mail
Joe White	President	Apr-06		
Ryan Bult	Vice-President	Apr-05		
Tom Deweese	Secretary	Apr-07		
Rod Frank	Treasurer	Apr-07		
Stacey Rucker	Member-at-large	Apr-06		
Brent McGarr	McGarr and Associates		615-366-8876	info@mcgarr-associates.com
Metro Police			615-862-8600	
Richard Schnittjer	Mailbox Vendor		615-646-5350	

Please use the E-mail Hotline to get in touch with the board. All board members will receive your e-mail.

FY 2005-2006 Assessment

First, let us assure you that the financial picture of the Sheffield on the Harpeth Homeowners Association is currently quite sound. There is indeed money in the bank. What has been happening is that the Association has been hit with a large number of extraordinary expenses related to the aging of our facilities over the last few years, and we expect this trend to continue. It is because we are being fiscally responsible by anticipating these expenses that we have increased the assessments approximately 15% to \$629.00. We are saving in anticipation of need, rather than borrowing or expecting an onerously large special assessment.

To put this amount in perspective, it is an under \$7/month increase from the last assessment. Also, it has been four years since we had an increase, so compounded over four years this is equivalent to an annual increase of 3.53%, or about the rate of inflation. Also, one mortgage lender who tracks this sort of thing reports that the average assessment in Davidson County for neighborhoods similar to ours is \$690 and we are under that. Considering that Sheffield is approaching 20 years old and that average takes into account many new neighborhoods who are not dealing with extraordinary maintenance expenses, we look even better.

The last increase was due to expenses we anticipated with the pond. Last summer we replaced the pond fountain and the pond river refill pump. This required upgrades to our electrical equipment as well including refurbishing the electrical panels in the pump room. We installed quality equipment with expert installers. Additionally we rehabilitated the volleyball court and basketball court. In past years, we needed to replace all the pool deck furniture, add an awning, replace the roof on the pool house, replace the unusable showers, and the endless list goes on.

As to the future, we have several projects looming. The biggest project in our near future is the pool. Last year Metro would not pass our pool mainly because of numerous cracks and problems with the deck. (Jump in, the water's fine!) We are in the process of weighing our alternatives, but all the alternatives are expensive. We will discuss this in more detail at the general meeting.

Also, you may have noticed that our streetlights are continually requiring repair. We are in the process of replacing the heads with a new style that should last longer and cost less to maintain. We will continue this as the old lights need attention. This is a once in a 15 to 20 year expense which we are drawing out over several years. Also, we still have the dam burn to consider reinforcing.

Please keep in mind that your Association is mandated to maintain the common grounds and recreational facilities. That's where almost all of your money goes and that hasn't changed; we don't create new things to spend money on. It's true that high HOA dues affect property values, but the other side of that coin is that a poorly maintained neighborhood also affects property values. Besides, we've demonstrated that in comparison our dues are not high but below average. In that light, you are getting the best of both worlds.

As we approach these larger projects around the neighborhood, we certainly appreciate the cooperation and support we have been receiving from our neighbors. Rest assured we always remember that it is your money the Association is spending. Remember, too, that your money is going back into the common areas and facilities whose ownership we all share. We are always looking for people to help us who have expertise that could benefit the Association. Feel free to contact us on our e-mail hotline at hotline@sheffieldhoa.com.

For the board, Rod Frank, Treasurer

Springtime Honey-do's

This weather is teasing us into spring. The warm days serve to remind us that Spring approaches and with that come thoughts of outside maintenance, i.e. Honey-do's. If you are considering a home maintenance project that involves the outside of your house, please

remember that you are required to submit a request for approval for such projects to the Sheffield Architectural Control Committee.

While we receive many Architectural Change Requests seeking approval for home exterior changes as required by our Covenants, we are now experiencing an increasing number of homeowners who do not seek any approval to exterior changes. The result:

- Many homes do not meet covenant standards.

Without seeking prior approval, there is no opportunity to discuss small modifications that would have made the changes acceptable to the standards established in our Association covenants. Neighborhood bylaws and covenants not only protect our property values from "inharmonious" neighborhood changes, they are attached to your home ownership deed and are a legally binding.

We know everyone takes great pride in living in Sheffield. Most homeowners have been diligent in keeping up their homes and getting proper pre-approval. Some may simply have forgotten that approval from the Homeowners Association is required before making external changes. Give your Architectural Committee an opportunity to assist you in keeping Sheffield homes harmonious with one another. Better yet, request a member of the Committee visit and tour the outside of your home when considering a project.

You are welcome, though not required, to use the handy form on our website. Visit www.sheffieldhoa.com and click on the "For Homeowners" section. The form is listed as the first "Quick Link." You can also see online and printable versions of the Covenants by clicking "For Homeowners", "Sheffield HOA," then "Governing Documents and Rules."

The committee has 30 days to respond to your request so allow plenty of time though we'll respond A.S.A.P.. Send change requests to:

*Sheffield Architectural Committee
c/o McGarr and Associates
325 Plus Park Blvd, Suite 205
Nashville, TN 37217*

Change Guidelines

Any exterior change, including work to make it look "just like it was before," needs approval. This includes but is not limited to repair or replacement of exterior doors, shutters, roof, decks, fences, gutters, fresh paint (even if the paint is the same color) and mailboxes. Mailboxes need to match the approved design also found on our website.

It is unlikely we will approve pet doors on overhead garage doors, storm doors with partial glass, inconsistent paint colors, non-cedar fences, above ground pools and satellite dishes visible from the street. We are also concerned about cars parked on the sidewalk, curb or lawn, and mailboxes in disrepair.

Most importantly, don't proceed without prior approval. All changes need prior approval.

Ho Ho Ho Award

The Arnow family Christmas decorations earned them a spotlight as 2004 winner for the highly coveted Sheffield on the Harpeth Ho Ho Ho Award. For those of you new to the neighborhood, the Architectural Committee members travel the neighborhood each December in search of one home displaying the best Christmas decorations. The winner gets the Ho Ho Ho award. This year, the award went to Paul and Debbie Arnow on Onslow Way. Paul and Debbie had help from their daughter Dana and son Paul Jr. Even Debbie's mom, Grandma Pat, got in the act this year!

So elaborate were their Holiday decoration that neighbors had to direct traffic to accommodate the onlookers from surrounding subdivisions. For the second year in a row, the best street honorable mention went to Welton Court.