



SHERWOOD  
FOREST  
ASSOCIATION

# TATTLER

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2008

Kim Tandy,  
President  
341-8044

John Corvino,  
Vice-President  
861-0979

Marcia Baum,  
Secretary  
862-1897

Sue McMillan,  
Treasurer  
862-6366

Gail Rodwan,  
Editor  
342-5827

Gary Brown  
863-9659

Richard Carson  
861-3632

Daniel Clarkson  
864-2399

Michele Davis  
345-7120

Robert Gold  
861-3642

Valerie Leigh  
345-1826

Catherine Mayberry  
862-6342

Lois E. Primas  
863-0167

Walter Shapero  
862-2779

Scott Wilson  
Patrol Manager  
341-2490

## YEAR-END REPORT FROM OUR OUTGOING PRESIDENT

As we come to the end of 2008, I want to thank every Sherwood Forest resident for the honor of serving as your board president for the past twelve years. I have served on the Board of Directors of the Sherwood Forest Association, in various capacities, for more than thirty years. In that time, I never have lost sight of how fortunate I am to work with a group of neighborhood volunteers who give so much to the community and the city that we love.

In November, our new board president Kim Tandy chaired her first monthly meeting. Kim began working on behalf of our neighborhood several years ago when she agreed to serve as our representative to the Twelfth Precinct Neighborhood Coalition. More recently, she has worked tirelessly on behalf of University Commons and the Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative. She was instrumental in bringing Mike's Market to our community when Farmer Jack closed its store. When neighbors complained about the Livernois median, Kim worked to have trees and flowers planted there. I am so pleased that Kim has agreed to assume the position of board president. You will find, as I have, that she is a person who knows how to get things done.

I am equally pleased that John Corvino has assumed the position of vice-president. John, too, is making a real difference in our community, tackling issues like city property tax reduction and reforestation, and encouraging potential new residents to the city to look closely at the benefits of living

in Sherwood Forest.

Let me highlight for you just a few of the board's accomplishments in 2008:

- Nearly 200 new trees were planted in Sherwood Forest through the joint efforts of the city of Detroit, the Greening of Detroit and the Sherwood Forest Association. A reforestation program that began in the fall of 2007 continued through the fall of 2008. We feel so fortunate to have been one of the neighborhoods selected for inclusion in the city's tree replacement program, and we can see a real difference in our "forest."
- In April, the Sherwood Forest Association hosted a special tour and reception at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History honoring our own Catherine Blackwell, whose collection of African art and artifacts was on exhibition at the museum. Called "The Storyteller's Hat," the Blackwell exhibition was a favorite at the museum this year.
- In May, we hosted our annual meeting and potluck supper at All Saints Church, where we heard Charles Beckham, Director of the Department of Public Lighting, explain the proposal for new street lights throughout Sherwood Forest and Green Acres. Unfortunately, the city was unable to begin installing the new street lights this fall as originally planned, but we are hopeful that the project will begin in 2009.

- In July, board member Valerie Leigh and her husband Nathaniel hosted a summer Meet and Greet in their beautifully landscaped yard.
- In September, Sherwood Forest was one of six neighborhoods participating in the LGBT Friends Home Tour, where potential home buyers got to tour select homes and hear about the advantages of living in this community.

We have had our challenges as well as our successes. Vacant homes have continued to be our number one problem. I want to thank the many neighbors who have volunteered to mow, rake and pick up debris around vacant properties. The national problem of home foreclosures and vacancies obviously will not be solved overnight, but we continue to work hard on this issue, and we invite your suggestions for helping us find solutions.

Under the leadership of Kim Tandy and John Corvino, we can look forward to a successful year ahead. I want to urge every resident who has never been involved with a Sherwood Forest committee or project to make 2009 the year you become involved. We are always looking for talented volunteers, and I can attest to the fact that there is no more satisfying commitment than a commitment to the community we call home.

I extend my warmest wishes to every member of our Sherwood Forest family as we look forward together to a happy and healthy new year.

Lois E. Primas

### **CALL THIS NUMBER TO REPORT STREET LIGHTS OUT**

The Department of Public Lighting (DPL) has a new director. His name is Stan Topolewski, and he is requesting that we call 313-267-8159 to report street lights that are not working. This is an internal DPL number. You will receive a work order number that you can use to track your complaint. When you call, give the address of the house that is closest to the light that is out, as well as the nearest cross street.

If the lighting problem is not corrected, contact Helen Broughton, our community manager for the Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative. She will assist neighbors with lighting issues. You can reach Ms.

Broughton at [BroughtH@detroitmi.gov](mailto:BroughtH@detroitmi.gov) or 313-394-1034.

### **HOW TO CHALLENGE YOUR PROPERTY TAXES**

In January Detroit homeowners will receive their annual property tax assessment notice (officially, "Notice of Assessment, Taxable Valuation and Property Classification"), marked "THIS IS NOT A TAX BILL" in large letters. This notice will also contain instructions for appealing property tax assessments.

Given the recent downturn in the real estate market, we do not expect assessments to rise, and in fact we hope they will drop. However, we encourage all homeowners to check their assessment notices carefully and to follow the instructions for appeal if dissatisfied. The "State Equalized Value" (SEV) of the home should be roughly one half the fair market value of the home. Your appeal will be most effective if you can cite evidence of nearby homes of comparable size and condition, not in foreclosure, that have sold for substantially less than twice your SEV. (Foreclosure sales and other "distress" sales are not counted among the "comps" used for assessment.)

**How to Appeal:** If you disagree with your assessment, you must appeal during the Board of Assessors Review period, **February 1-15**. Protest during this period may be made in person (8:30 am to 4:30 pm) or by letter to Assessors Review, Two Woodward Avenue, Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Room 804, Detroit MI 48226.

If you are dissatisfied with the Assessors Review, you must appeal to the March Board of Review. Again, instructions for this procedure will appear on the notice. Protest at the February Board of Review is required to protect your right to appear before the March Board of Review, and protest at the March Board of Review is necessary to protect your right to further appeals to the Michigan Tax Tribunal and State Tax Commission.

While this process may seem cumbersome, we have found that those who present a solid case and are persistent through the various stages of appeals will often receive relief. For more information, contact

Sherwood Forest Board member John Corvino at 313-861-0979.

### **SNOW REMOVAL REMINDERS**

Remember that your Sherwood Forest Association dues pay for street snow removal whenever there is a snowfall of four inches or more. Please do not leave vehicles parked on the street when snow is anticipated. It is impossible to do effective curb-to-curb snow removal when there are vehicles parked on the street. We try to notify all email subscribers in advance once we know approximately when our snow removal contractor will be working in the neighborhood. Remember that the contractor will not remove snow from the bottom of your driveway after he clears your street. Please do not ask him to do so. The Sherwood Forest Association cannot pay for that service.

Thanks to all for cooperation during the winter months.

Marcia Baum  
Snow Removal Committee

### **ASSOCIATION DUES ARE NOW OVERDUE**

The fiscal year for the Sherwood Forest Association began on **October 1**, but some residents have not yet paid their \$55 dues. We can provide services like street snow removal only with strong financial support from you. If you have not paid your 2008-09 dues, please do so today. If you are uncertain about the status of your membership, call our treasurer, Sue McMillan, at 313-862-6366.

### **FOUR MAYORAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN 2009**

We will have no fewer than four separate opportunities to vote for mayor in 2009. A special election will be held on February 24. The names of fifteen candidates will appear on the February ballot. The two top vote-getters will move on to a run-off election on May 5. The purpose of the May election is to elect a mayor to complete the existing term, which ends on December 31, 2009. In August there will be a primary election to

begin the process of electing a mayor for the new term, which begins on January 1, 2010. The general election will be held in November.

No doubt there will be many candidates' forums in our community between now and the November general election. As we learn of these events, we will post the information on the Sherwood Forest website at [www.sherwoodforestdetroit.org](http://www.sherwoodforestdetroit.org) and send special notices via email to all residents on our email list.

### **RECEIVING YOUR TATTLER IN 2009**

If you have not yet provided the editor of the *Tattler* with your email address, now is the time to do so. The *Tattler* will be sent to residents electronically in 2009, along with timely security updates and notices of upcoming events in Sherwood Forest and surrounding communities. When you send your email address to the editor of the *Tattler*, rest assured that the address will not be shared with anyone, even other residents of Sherwood Forest. Please e-mail me today at [Rodwan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Rodwan@sbcglobal.net) and let me know that you want to receive the *Tattler* and other neighborhood notices electronically.

Gail Rodwan  
Editor

### **MEMBERS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Sherwood Forest Association was formed in the summer of 1929 and has been active ever since. The elected members of the board of directors serve for three year terms. The board meets monthly in the homes of its members. Each May, we hold a potluck supper and general membership meeting for all of the residents of Sherwood Forest.

Listed below are the current members of the board, with their telephone numbers, email addresses, and committee assignments for 2009. You will find a description of the work of each committee on our Sherwood Forest website at [www.sherwoodforestdetroit.org](http://www.sherwoodforestdetroit.org).

Kim Tandy	Association President; University Commons Projects	341-8044	kimsva@aol.com
John Corvino	Vice President; Reforestation	861-0979	j.corvino@wayne.edu
Marcia Baum	Secretary; Snow Removal	862-1897	marciabaum@att.net
Sue McMillan	Treasurer; Membership	862-6366	
Gail Rodwan	Editor and Communications	342-5827	rodwan@sbcglobal.net
Gary Brown	Property Maintenance	863-9659	browng641@mac.com
Richard Carson	Events	861-3632	rfcarson@yahoo.com
Daniel Clarkson	Reforestation; Membership	864-2399	dclarkson2yahoo.com
Robert Gold	Legal	861-3642	goodasgold5@comcast.net
Valerie Leigh	Realtor Relations	345-1826	shashe1@sbcglobal.net
Catherine Mayberry	Welcoming	862-6342	clmrjm5@aol.com
Lois Primas	President Emeritus; Snow Removal	863-0167	plep1227@aol.com
Scott Wilson	Public Safety and Manager of Security Patrol	341-2490	wilsonsa_det@yahoo.com

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**OF THE SHERWOOD FOREST ASSOCIATION**  
**NOVEMBER 10, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by President Kim Tandy at the home of Scott Wilson.

Members present were: Kim Tandy, Walter Shapero, Dan Clarkson, Scott Wilson, Gail Rodwan, Valerie Leigh, Catherine Mayberry, Robert Gold, John Corvino and Sue McMillan.

The reports of the secretary and treasurer were accepted.

The board voted to approve the snow removal contract with B & L Snow Removal Company for 2008-2009 subject to review and approval of the contract by Walter Shapero.

Valerie Leigh presented and reviewed with board members the listings of Sherwood Forest real estate properties on the multi-listing system.

Walter Shapero distributed a comprehensive proposal for addressing the problem of vacant properties, which we will use in developing a program for our neighborhood. Walter will meet with Robert Gold and Gary Brown to review options. Their recommendations will be presented to the board.

The board voted to expend up to \$500 for fall raking of vacant properties. The entire property at 19583 Shrewsbury will be raked, and the front yards of other designated properties will be raked. Gary Brown will be asked to review the new vacant house list to determine which properties should get priority attention.

The Property Maintenance Committee was asked to notify all resident who have placed plastic bags of leaves at the curb that plastic bags do not comply with the city requirements for collection of yard waste. Kim Tandy reported that

she learned at a recent meeting at the Western District Precinct that the number of enforcement inspectors for trash pickup violations has been increased and that there will be more ticketing. She also learned that residents who store their courville containers in a location that is visible from the street are subject to ticketing. Courvilles must be placed behind the house.

Gail Rodwan announced that any articles for the December *Tattler* must be submitted to her no later than December 1. She also announced that she is seeking a new printing service for the Association, as our current printer, Executive Assistance, has closed its Detroit business. John Corvino agreed to write an article for the December *Tattler* on tax appeals.

There was a general discussion of the contract controversy involving Detroit City Council and the Greening of Detroit. Gail Rodwan reported that she had heard from residents in Indian Village that they are contacting Councilwoman Brenda Jones, who is the member keeping the contract in committee and preventing a full vote of Council. Kim Tandy said that she has spoken to Councilwoman Jones, who is seeking a compromise with AFSCME, one of the city's largest unions. Kim expressed concern that the planting of trees in the Livernois median will be curtailed if the Greening of Detroit is not permitted to continue its work. Kim will monitor the situation and report to the board at our next meeting. Individual board members are invited to contact council members regarding this issue as they deem appropriate.

John Corvino reported that he is investigating how much fall cleanup of our parks will be done by the city and how much we will have to handle ourselves. John reported that as a result of the September LGBT Friends House tour, one couple is actively looking for a home to buy in our area. Kim Tandy reported that there has been one known sale to date as a result of the tour. Kim also reported that she will schedule a meeting of block club captains in January of 2009.

Scott Wilson reported that Gallagher has a new security manager. Patrol reports for the last month reflect no crimes reported. We still need to develop a procedure for the patrol drivers to get regular crime statistics from the Western District. We need to work this out with Sergeant Bledsoe, the community relations officer at the precinct. Scott will give the patrol drivers the new list of vacant homes and ask them to check those homes regularly. He will also ask that drivers spend less time with their cars parked. Catherine Mayberry said that she has requested escort service several times lately and uniformly has found the drivers to respond quickly and courteously.

Catherine Mayberry has delivered welcoming trays to new residents on Cambridge and Sherbourne. Welcome Lawrence and Pam Carter and Mike and Deborah Hood!

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Kim Tandy distributed a flyer announcing a series of community meetings with Livernois business owners as a part of the Shop Livernois campaign. These meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month at 7 pm at various business locations. During the holiday shopping season, residents may park free at the meters along Livernois.

Kim also reported that there will be a Mayoral Candidates Debate at 6:00 at University of Detroit-Mercy on December 11. The event is sponsored by the Detroit Neighborhood Coalition and Wayne County Commissioner Keith Williams.

The meeting ended at 9:06 pm with a special thank-you to **Walter Shapero**, who is leaving our board after many years of distinguished service to Sherwood Forest. We wish Walter and Kathleen well as they move to their new home downtown. Walter generously offered to continue to assist our board on special projects.

The December meeting will be held at the home of Gary Brown.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Rodwan (acting for secretary Marcia Baum).

**BEAUTIFUL SHERWOOD FOREST IN WINTER:  
A NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ALL SEASONS**

