



SHERWOOD
FOREST
ASSOCIATION

TATTLER

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

APRIL 2009

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ANNUAL MEETING OF SHERWOOD FOREST ASSOCIATION ON MAY 12

The annual meeting of the Sherwood Forest Association will be held on Tuesday, May 12, at All Saints Church on W. Seven Mile Road.

Our special meeting in March focused on two related areas of particular concern: vacant homes and neighborhood safety. We discussed specific plans for maintaining vacant homes and enhancing safety through a unique pilot program that will include Sherwood Forest. Residents provided a list of concerns and ideas for addressing those concerns. At the May meeting we will try to answer the question, "How are we doing?" How far have we come since the March meeting in addressing the vacant home problem and what is still left undone? What have we learned about crime in Sherwood Forest and what are we doing to fight neighborhood crime more effectively? Please be a part of this important discussion.

Also, a representative of **Gallagher's Security Service, Inc.** will be present to answer questions about the company and the services it is providing in Sherwood Forest. Gallagher is eager to hear what we like and what we would like to see changed about the way it is operating in our community.

Here is the schedule for the May 12 meeting:

6:30 p.m. – Potluck supper. Bring a hot dish, a salad, dessert or bread for 10 people. Everything else will be provided.

7:30 p.m. -- Business meeting and welcoming of new residents.

9:00 p.m. – Meeting ends.

I hope to see many of you at the potluck supper and business meeting. This is our annual opportunity for everyone in the neighborhood to celebrate a meal together and talk about issues of mutual concern. Please make attendance on May 12 a priority. As you can see, we have important items on our agenda.

Kim Tandy
President, Sherwood Forest Association

APRIL 4 SPRING CLEANUP A HUGE SUCCESS

On the beautiful, sunny morning of April 4, Sherwood Forest residents and others fanned out through the neighborhood for a spring cleanup. With rakes, brooms and blowers, some of us concentrated on cleaning the yards of our vacant homes, while others drove around in trucks distributing paper bags where needed and picking up full bags and taking them to a dumpster provided to us by the city. Although we wondered when we began if we would be able to fill a large dumpster, we actually more than filled it. At the end of our morning of cleanup, we met at the home of Sherrie and Gary Brown for a hot dog lunch. Our thanks to the Browns for hosting this event, and our thanks to Gary for organizing the cleanup. Thanks, too, to Mike's Market on Livernois, which donated the delicious hot dogs!

Although we felt proud of how wonderful the neighborhood looked by the time we were through, there is more to be done. That is why we are taking advantage of the opportunity to participate as a neighborhood in **Detroit's Spring Cleanup (formerly known as Motor City Makeover)**. We have registered Sherwood Forest with the City as an official cleanup site. On one yet-to-be-determined Saturday in May, we will need to transport bagged litter and yard waste to dumpsters at designated locations in the community. Check your email for more details as they become available. Let's build on the good work we began on April 4.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Several residents expressed concern at our March 19 meeting at the 12th Precinct (yes, the official name is once again the 12th Precinct) about the advertising circulars that are left on our porches in yellow plastic bags every Monday. When those bags pile up on a porch, it is a clear tip-off that the house is unoccupied, presenting a real security concern for our neighborhood. After that meeting, your board contacted the distributor, arranged to stop delivery at vacant homes and learned that at occupied homes homeowners must make individual requests to stop delivery. Individual requests can be made in three ways: 1) Call Kris Collin at 734-957-0255. If you do not reach her, you may leave a voice mail message; 2) Email klcollin@valassis.com; 3) Send a letter to Valassis Communications, Att. Kris Collin, 8200 Haggerty Road, Belleville, MI 48111. If you would like those yellow bags to disappear from your porch, call, email or write today. Although we tried sending a group request, the company would not accept it.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We have a lot of work to do in addressing the vacant home problem in Sherwood Forest. Our Strategic Action Plan for Unoccupied Homes in Sherwood Forest, which was published in the February *Tattler*, requires the work of dedicated volunteers. Listed below are some of the jobs that need to be filled. Please look at this list and then sign up for at least one of these projects. A volunteer form may be filled out electronically by going to our web site www.sherwoodforestdetroit.org and selecting the

“Volunteer Now” button on the home page. If you would rather, you may fill out the form at the end of this *Tattler* and return it to one of the addresses indicated on the form. This form was distributed at the March 19 meeting, and we are grateful to the many neighbors in attendance that night who signed up for one or more of the jobs listed below. Thank you! But we still need help, particularly for home monitors to “adopt” vacant homes on their blocks (see below for a description of the home monitor's job). Together we can, and will, maintain our beautiful community.

1. **Vacant Home Committee:** The Board of Directors of the Sherwood Forest Association is forming a new Vacant Home Committee. We need **several** residents to serve on this committee.
2. **Home Monitors:** A home monitor is a neighbor who is assigned to watch a vacant home near his or her home and try to keep the home from looking vacant. This may include mowing and raking the lawn, shoveling snow, picking up papers and debris or notifying the Chief Monitor that a contractor is needed to do some of these tasks. **If you have a vacant home on your block, please volunteer to be a home monitor!**
3. **Chief Monitor:** The chief monitor will coordinate the work of home monitors, take their reports on the status of vacant homes and arrange for maintenance work as needed.
4. **Home Maintenance Group:** We need to form a group of residents who are handy with tools to do minor repairs to the exteriors of vacant homes.
5. **Public Relations and Marketing:** Just as important as maintaining our homes is seeing them reoccupied. We need a group of residents with skills in these areas to promote our community and help attract potential buyers.
6. **Lawyers:** We need a small group of lawyers to deal with the occasional problems that arise concerning banks, mortgage companies, realtors, unauthorized occupancies, etc.

If you would like to volunteer in an area unrelated to vacant homes, consider the following:

1. **Block Captains:** We are creating a network of block captains for every block in Sherwood Forest.
2. **Meet and Greet:** Hold a neighborhood social gathering in your home. If you will provide the place, your neighbors will do the rest. We would like to have a Meet and Greet sometime this spring.
3. **Board of Directors:** To serve on the board, you must be willing to chair one of our standing committees and be available to attend a meeting on the second Monday of each month.

CRIME VIEW

To be safe in our neighborhood, it is essential that we know exactly what, when and where crimes are being committed.

The City of Detroit has a website that shows a map containing that information. Just type in your address, the proximity you want to view, the crimes you want displayed, and a map with icons indicating the type of crime appears. You can search back from one to thirty days.

If there has been a recent spike in crime, you will have a heads-up and be able to take extra measures to protect yourself.

We should be on our guard no matter where we are because crime has no boundaries.

To access "Crime View," go to:
<http://detroit.mi.crimeviewcommunity.com/default.asp>.

Select "I Agree" on the disclaimer page. Hit "What" on the top of the next screen and pick "Select All". Hit "Where" on the top of the screen. Type in your address and hit "Search" and you will see a crime map of the neighborhood.

Gary Brown

MUSIC IS IN THE AIR

Our friends in Palmer Woods have again extended a special invitation to Sherwood Forest residents to attend the final concerts in their "Music in Homes" series. There will be a jazz concert on May 9, following by classical music performances on May 30 and June 20. For a description of the concerts and to order tickets, go to www.palmerwoods.com.

KEEP THESE TELEPHONE NUMBERS HANDY

At the end of this *Tattler*, you will find a flyer entitled, "Twelfth Precinct at Your Service." This flyer was distributed to all residents who attended the Sherwood Forest meeting at the precinct on March 19. It includes the names and telephone numbers of the officers in charge of each shift, as well as the name and number of the community relations officer. We must continue to call 911 in emergencies, but keep the numbers on this flyer handy for the times when you need a direct response from the precinct in non-emergency situations.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION: WHY DID MY PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT GO DOWN BUT MY TAXES GO UP?

A number of longtime Sherwood Forest residents noticed something perplexing this year: the assessed value of their houses went down, but their taxes went up. Why?

This is actually a result of Proposal A, which was passed in 1994. Prior to Proposal A, property taxes were based on **Assessed Value**, which is 50% of the fair market value of the home. Back then, property taxes could fall or rise (sometimes dramatically) as housing values fell or rose.

Proposal A introduced the notion of **Taxable Value**, which is the amount on which your taxes are based. When you purchase a home, Assessed Value and Taxable Value are identical. Each year, the Assessed Value will rise (or fall) with market values, but Taxable Value will rise, if at all, no more than the rate of inflation (or 5%, whichever is less).

Taxable Value acts as a kind of “cap” on the amount your taxes will increase. So even if, for example, your home value increases 25% in a given year, your Taxable Value will increase no more than the rate of inflation.

With the dramatic rise of home values in the 1990’s, many longtime residents saw a dramatic rise in their Assessed Values. But their Taxable Values only rose by the rate of inflation each year. In the last year, market values have fallen, and thus Assessed Values have fallen as well. But Taxable Values can continue to rise, as long as they don’t exceed the Assessed Value.

For a fuller explanation, see the following article at About.com-Detroit:

<http://detroit.about.com/od/neighborhoods/f/PropTaxPropA.htm>

John Corvino

WILL YOU ADOPT A PASSIVE PARK THIS SPRING?

Each spring residents plant flowers in our passive parks and around our Sherwood Forest entry signs into the neighborhood. Then they keep an eye on those spaces throughout the summer to make sure they are watered and well-maintained. If you volunteered last year and would like to maintain the same area again this year, please let me know by calling 861-0979 or sending an email to j.corvino@wayne.edu. If you have not volunteered before but would like to help this year, or if you have shrubs or plants to donate even if you cannot do the planting yourself, please contact me as well. These are small areas, but beautiful plants and flowers make a big difference in enhancing the beauty of our community.

John Corvino

SAVING A COMMUNITY LANDMARK

Only one neighborhood in the world can boast that it is the setting for “the world’s oldest jazz club,” and that neighborhood is ours! Sadly, a few weeks ago Baker’s Keyboard Lounge on Livernois announced that it may be forced to close. Patronage is down and utility bills are up. Baker’s needs our support, and it needs it now. So we urge you to call your friends and neighbors today and make plans to spend a wonderful evening at Baker’s. If enough of us respond, we may be able to save this Detroit landmark.

Plans for a community fundraiser for Baker’s is in the works. Look for email with details soon.

WE HAVE MADE OUR WEB PAGE EVEN BETTER

In an attempt to make www.sherwoodforestdetroit.com more informative and easier to use, we have expanded and reorganized the material formerly found under the “Patrol” section. The name of the old “Patrol” button has been changed to “Neighborhood Security.” Click on this button and you will find:

1. Information about the security patrol and a patrol membership form.
2. Our new Neighborhood Incident Report, which you can fill out while sitting at your computer and return to us with one click.
3. A list of key telephone numbers at the 12th Precinct.
4. A copy of our Strategic Plan for Unoccupied Homes.
5. Our on-line volunteer form.

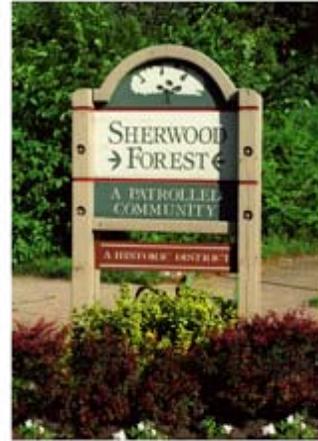
Please go to the new “Neighborhood Security” button on our webpage for important information about keeping our community safe.

Also, two additional buttons on the home page, “Volunteer Now” and “Join the Patrol,” will take you directly to the appropriate forms.

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING ON MAY 12!

I am willing to participate in the following way(s):

- Vacant Home Committee
- Home Monitor
- Chief Monitor
- Home Maintenance Group
- Public Relations and Marketing
- Lawyers Committee
- Block Captain
- Host a “Meet and Greet”
- Serve on the Board of Directors



Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email address: _____

Please return this form to:

Kim Tandy
19304 Warrington
Detroit, MI 48221

Or

Gail Rodwan
19580 Shrewsbury
Detroit, MI 48221

If you would rather submit this form online go to: www.sherwoodforestdetroit.org and select the “Volunteer Now” button.

**SHERWOOD FOREST ASSOCIATION
VACANT HOME AND SECURITY MEETING
12TH PRECINCT POLICE STATION
Minutes of March 19, 2009**

- Sherwood Forest Association President Kim Tandy welcomed neighbors and introduced SFA Board members. Neighbors introduced themselves. President Tandy introduced special guests including: Lt. Garaline – Special Operation Unit; Commander Bettison; Assistant Chief Flemming; Community Relations Officer Sgt. Shirley Bledsoe; Lt. Rochan– Home Invasion Task Force who can be reached at 313-680-0177; and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Stephen Taratuta who can be reached at 313-224-5770. A 12th Precinct non-emergency contact list was distributed.
- President Tandy’s opening comments explained that in order to keep the community better informed and to provide opportunities for neighbors to get involved, SFA will meet, as a community, two times a year. Additionally, SFA Block Captain Committee will be reinstated and a new Vacant Homes and Security committee will be created. She also summarized University Commons current activities and future plans.
- Board member Gail Rodwan addressed the first of two agenda items. Providing an overview of the vacant homes problem, she shared results of her extensive fact finding of other Detroit neighborhoods to learn which activities might be appropriate for Sherwood Forest. She distributed a summary of Boston Edison Association’s Strategies and Action to Combat Unoccupied Homes. To the point, she reviewed key aspects of the SFA’s Strategic Action Plan for Unoccupied Homes along with a list of jobs that will need to be filled. Explaining that the vacant home problems will require the support of many volunteers, a sign-up sheet was circulated. During her report, Gail described the functions and related tasks for Home Monitors and the Home Maintenance committee. The association is also looking for neighbors who have PR and/or media experience to help “sell” Sherwood Forest to the community. A group of attorneys are also needed to help with potential real estate issues.
- After a question and answer session, SFA Board member Gary Brown addressed the second agenda item: Security. He reported that while crime is NOT out of control, there has been an increase. He discussed the 12th Precinct’s renewed focus of working together with community groups. Gary emphasized that information is an essential ingredient in reducing crime: “Those who have it need to report or share it with those who can do something about it”. He distributed the new “SFA Incident Report” form and asked that all neighbors fill out the form for use by both the SFA Patrol and the 12th Precinct to determine when to schedule prevention services. During the Q&A, it was suggested that neighbors keep porch lights on to help light up the neighborhood. It was also noted that the Detroit Police Dept. offers free home security surveys. When asked about abandoned vehicles, it was explained that after a vehicle remains unmoved for 48 hours, it may be reported to Officer Fudge at the 12th Precinct [313-596-1221 or 1219]. The best time to call is 6:00 a.m.
- Board member Scott Wilson addressed questions about the SFA Security Patrol explaining that additional members are needed to provide extended hours of service. On related issues, it was explained that SFA is still slated to get new street lighting. Problems with traffic control, specifically speeding, were discussed. It was suggested that residents report the time and day to the 12th Precinct so that the supervisor can direct officers on each shift to specific locations.



TWELFTH PRECINCT
AT YOUR SERVICE

DO YOU HAVE A NON-EMERGENCY SITUATION?

A PROBLEM WITH LOUD PARTIES, BARKING DOG OR A PARKING COMPLAINT, YOU
MAY CALL THE 12TH PRECINCT DIRECTLY FOR A RESPONSE.

DURING THE HOURS OF 8AM TO 4PM
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE DAY SHIFT
LIEUTENANT JOAN GRAHAM (313) 596-1200 or (313) 596-1208
IN HER ABSENCE

SERGEANT DAVID BRANHAM
SERGEANT MICHAEL COLLINS

DURING THE HOURS OF 4PM TO 12AM
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE AFTERNOON SHIFT
LIEUTENANT HAROLD ROCHON (313) 596-1200 or (313) 596-1207
IN HIS ABSENCE

SERGEANT CARL SILVERS
SERGEANT TRACI HOGAN

DURING THE HOURS OF 12AM TO 8AM
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE MIDNIGHT SHIFT
LIEUTENANT KYRA HOPE (313) 596-1200 or (313) 596-1208
IN HER ABSENCE

SERGEANT PERRY SUGGS
SERGEANT BLAKE JOHNSON

ALSO DURING THE HOURS OF 9AM TO 5PM
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS
SERGEANT SHERLEY BLEDSOE (313) 596-1221

Commander Catherine Tuttle

Inspector Billy Jackson

313-596-1210