

September 10, 2012

Re: Third Quarter Update  
Requesting Board Nominees  
Requesting ACC Members

Dear Neighbors,

I hope you all had an enjoyable summer. I am writing on behalf of the Applewood Heights Homeowners Association's (the "Association") Board of Directors (the "Board"). I want to share with you some recent Association news.

Pursuant to the Board's initiative to collect all unpaid Association dues, through September 1, 2012, the Board has filed 27 liens, representing \$6,512.33 in unpaid dues, interest and filing fees. Eighteen of these liens have been satisfied, resulting in \$4,021.93 of collections! The Board will continue to strive to achieve 100% collections and will continue filing liens on an annual basis.

There will be a Board position opening in 2013. Vice President Barb Osborn will not be seeking another term on the Board. Therefore, the Board will need to elect a new member at this year's annual meeting. If you are interested in serving on the Board please email your name and address to Robyn LaMar at [Robyn@applewoodhoa.com](mailto:Robyn@applewoodhoa.com) so your name can be included on the ballot. The Board meets approximately once per calendar quarter and from time to time via telephonic conference call. This is a great opportunity to become involved in the actions of the Association.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of the Architectural Control Committee ("ACC") members. They have organized themselves and conducted their affairs in the spirit of the covenants, and they deserve our thanks in working to maintain the appearance of the neighborhood. That said, please make sure to submit all plans for exterior improvements to the ACC for their oversight and approval. A simple, easy to complete submission form is available to download at [www.applewoodhoa.com](http://www.applewoodhoa.com) (then click on the link for the ACC located on the left-hand side of the page).

Currently, the ACC has an immediate need for two additional members. ACC members review the exterior improvement plans submitted by the residents and are responsible for communicating the ACC's decisions with the residents. If you are committed to maintaining the appearance of the neighborhood, please consider volunteering for this important function. Interested volunteers can email the ACC at [ACC@applewoodhoa.com](mailto:ACC@applewoodhoa.com).

The Association will hold its annual meeting on Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m., at Hitchcock Elementary School. In addition to the Board election, we will discuss the Association's financial condition, the 2013 budget and open the floor to resident comments and concerns.

Finally, as mentioned above, Barb Osborn will not be rejoining the Board next year. She has been overseeing the maintenance of the entrance islands, and in particular, was instrumental in redesigning the islands this year so that we can continue to enjoy them in the seasons to come. The Board is very thankful for her service to the Association. She leaves us with some sound advice regarding tree replacement in our yards (see attached article).

Have a great fall, and we look forward to seeing you in November.

Sincerely,

**Aric Wenzl**

Aric Wenzl, President

## **Replacing Dying Trees**

By Barb Osborn

The Architectural Control Committee has been contacted regarding the removal of diseased and dead trees in the neighborhood. The maintenance of these trees, including perimeter trees, is the responsibility of the homeowner. All trees have good and bad characteristics. It is a rare tree that will satisfy your needs throughout its entire life span. A tree can outgrow its original purpose very quickly or grow into its intended purpose very slowly. Understanding this concept is the key to proper tree planting in your yard.

There are many good choices to replace the trees in your yard. Do you want an evergreen tree or a deciduous shade tree? Keep in mind the privacy and windbreak an evergreen will give to your yard. I believe the pine trees along 108th and Harrison streets are Austrian Pines, some of which are dead or dying. I spoke with Jay Moore, a certified arborist here in Omaha to ask him about recommendations. Blue Spruce is a beautiful tree to consider but keep in mind the mature spread at the base may be 25 feet or more, same with the White Pines. Do you really have room for that? There are columnar forms of both the White Pine and Blue Spruce that have a spread of just 10' at maturity.

Species diversity is a common measure of a community forest's overall health. In a sense, increasing species diversity prevents us from "putting all our eggs in one basket" and prohibits any single insect or disease from destroying a community's entire forest resource. Pine wilt, Dutch elm disease and the approaching emerald ash borer (EAB) all reinforce the importance of species diversity. In fact, forestry experts recommend that no single species make up more than 10 percent of the entire community forest resource.

The Nebraska Forest Service's ReTree Nebraska program is a 10-year initiative that works in partnership with people across Nebraska to achieve the goal of planting 1 million new trees by 2017. This year, the program features 12 trees for 2012. Because these are quality trees and have not been overplanted in Nebraska communities, they are good selections for most landscapes. These trees are well adapted to Nebraska's extreme growing conditions and have great ornamental characteristics. Please visit [www.retreenebraska.org](http://www.retreenebraska.org) for the Forest Service's list of recommendations.

Trees to avoid due to diseases, insects, poor growth habits, environmental intolerance, trees with weak, brittle wood that snap easily under snow and ice loads, or just messy trees include the following: Poplar, Silver Maple, Ash, Bradford Pear, Russian Olive, Cottonwood, Scotch Pine, Weeping Willow. Please do your own research to find out as much you can about a particular tree you choose. Call around to different nurseries before buying the tree, as many offer a two-year guarantee. Also, prices vary quite a bit so check around to get the best deal. If you need an arborist to evaluate a tree you can find a list of certified Nebraska arborists at [www.nearborists.org](http://www.nearborists.org)

When planting your tree avoid the common mistake of planting too deep. After planting, the trunk flare at the base of the trunk needs to be visible above ground. When planting a container grown or balled and burlapped tree, look for the trunk flare or first lateral root before

planting. If needed, scrape away soil to find the trunk flare, then plant so the flare is visible just above ground and the first main lateral root is just below the soil.

Other planting mistakes to avoid include pruning healthy branches at planting, not removing containers or tags, under or over watering, not mulching at all and piling too deep of mulch against the trunk so it looks like a volcano at the trunk base.

Remember that planting a new tree is a decision you will have to live with for years to come, so do your homework and enjoy the benefits of your new tree!