

### Newsletter of the West Hill Estates Homeowners Association

P.O. Box 5892 \* Salem, OR 97304 \* <http://WHEHOA.com>

#### Message from the HOA President

Greetings Neighbors. I hope you had a good summer and have enjoyed this beautiful fall. The 2017-2018 Board of volunteers has been very busy since the elections in June (see new Board on page 3). We've been working on a number of ongoing issues in need of immediate attention. These include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Making communication with the Board easier using our website ([www.WHEHOA.com](http://www.WHEHOA.com)) where you can find important information, forms and updates ... and soon, Board meeting minutes; *[Thank you Scott]*
- ❖ Streamlining the ARC approval and turnaround time; *[Thank you Terry]*
- ❖ Updating and improving financial record keeping; *[Thank you Lorna]*
- ❖ Making ourselves familiar with the bylaws, poorly written CC&Rs, excessive policy resolutions, county and state laws and revising the CC&R committee; *[Thank you Doug]*
- ❖ Dealing with inherited legal matters and repercussions from a lawsuit -- including work on the Tree Height amendment; *[Thank you Board]*
- ❖ Obtaining bids for and getting some much needed TLC done on the common areas; and
- ❖ Making Board meetings more accessible by posting signs with date, time and a convenient location for meetings for all Homeowners. *[Thank you Chuck and Sami]*

The most urgent task we were confronted with, and in conjunction with our attorney's recommendation, was the need to pass a CC&R Tree Height amendment. The amendment removed existing language stating that trees could not exceed the ridgeline of a house. It did pass with 220 "YES" votes, satisfying the 2/3 homeowner approval requirement. We'd like to give a very big thank you to all homeowners who turned in their ballots and thank you to the homeowners who helped collect ballots.

Please understand in WHE that state rules technically do not allow anyone to totally abstain from voting and this state rule cannot be changed. If you choose not to turn in a ballot it is automatically considered a "NO" vote. So you can see how important turning in your ballot is to making your voice is heard, your vote count the way you intended it to and to help ensure West Hill Estates continues to be the well-maintained neighborhood you want it to be. A few homeowners that were opposed to the passage of the new Tree Height amendment are considering a lawsuit against the neighborhood. This will cost all homeowners both time and money, so let's hope they will reconsider this action.

The CC&R amendment experience was an important one for all of us to learn from as we move forward to another major undertaking dealing with our CC&Rs. As you all know homeowners are governed by CC&Rs, but many may not know that there are actually five (5) separate sets of CC&Rs for the ten phases in WHE, each slightly different from the others. They are all poorly written, not easy to understand or enforce, and some are no longer relevant. One reason for this is that some of these original CC&Rs were copied and pasted from a set of condominium CC&Rs, and not pertinent to a single-family residence HOA.

So, the Board will be working with a law firm that specializes in HOA matters and has 30+ years of experience in writing proper CC&Rs and also have knowledge about dealing with enforcement challenges. Our goal will be to combine the 5 sets into one, updated, easy to understand and enforce set of CC&Rs for the entire subdivision. The new CC&Rs will need to be approved by a 2/3 vote (ballot) of all homeowners. We will ask for homeowners' input at a special meeting on this issue in a few months and will send meeting information to you in the mail.

In closing, "thank you" to all the homeowners who worked on their yards this summer, they look great. It does make a positive difference in our neighborhood when we all work to keep our properties in good shape. Let's also remember the importance of being a good neighbor (a person who shows kindness or helpfulness toward his or her fellow humans) and keep an eye out for each other. We are a diverse neighborhood with a mix of retirees, families and young adults. We are all busy but let's take a little time to look out for one another. If we treat others as we would like to be treated, imagine what a 'premier' neighborhood we'd truly be.

## Projects Need Prior Approval and Display of Orange ARC Placard

All exterior homeowner projects require prior approval from the ARC Committee **before** work begins. This includes, but not limited to, projects such as repainting (even the same color), major landscaping changes, roofing replacement or repairs, concrete work, decks and fences.

If there is a question as to what requires pre-approval, a detailed description can be found under the Architectural Control section on the website. The ARC form to submit can be downloaded from the HOA website, completed and mailed to the HOA's post office box address or emailed to <http://WHEHOA.com/contact>. When your ARC project has been approved, you will be sent a 5.5" by 8.5" bright orange "ARC Approved Project" placard to be placed in a street-facing window. The placard should be posted when the work is started and is to remain displayed until the project has been completed. This will assist the board and other homeowners in determining if a project has been submitted and approved.



If work being conducted is noted without this notice being posted, one can expect to be contacted by the ARC chair and may be required to suspend all work until an ARC form is submitted and approved. Please plan ahead and give ample time for your request to be processed before your desired start date. Homeowner's must fill out the ARC form completely and accurately describe the details of the project. Year to date in 2017 there have been 48 ARC requests submitted and approved. This is a vast improvement over past years. Many thanks to all those homeowners who have submitted their ARC forms as required.

## Communications To and From the HOA Board



Find HOA information on the West Hill Estates website at <http://WHEHOA.com>. Website manager Scott Gilbert periodically adds more content to help keep you informed about the neighborhood, so please check it on a regular basis. And don't forget, the best way to contact the board is through the website CONTACT form (see link below). This feature allows you to send a comment or question directly to the board. This is monitored and forwarded to the appropriate board director, so you should get a response quickly. The board's goal is to respond directly back to you, within 72 hours. We also welcome your input regarding other information you would find helpful on the web. <http://WHEHOA.com/contact> Any homeowner that prefers not to use electronic communications, feel free to use "snail mail" sent to West Hill Estates, P.O. Box 5892, Salem, OR 97304.

## Help the Board Welcome New Neighbors

Sami Wright does a fabulous job of welcoming new neighbors moving into West Hill Estates. She provides them with HOA information, a list of Frequently Asked Questions and a sweet welcome gift of See's Candy. We typically are notified of new homeowners when the title company does its title search for transfer of a sold property ... but not always. So if you see a new neighbor moving in, please let us know by using the website CONTACT feature so we don't miss anyone. That way Sami will be sure to pay them a friendly visit in a timely manner and welcome them into our great neighborhood.

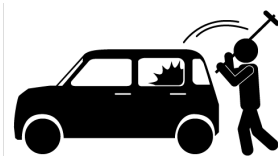
## Fall is a Key Time to Fertilize Your Lawn

Most properties in WHE have heavy, clay soils. This impedes water and nutrient filtration down to the grass' root zone. Periodic lawn aeration, maintaining proper soil pH and multiple applications of fertilizer are key to a year-round green and healthy lawn. Typical northern grass blends used in our area include Fescue, Perennial Ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass. Most experts recommend these type of grasses be fertilized four (4) times per year using the "holiday schedule" --- Memorial Day (late May); Fourth of July; Labor Day (early September) and Thanksgiving (mid-late November). The last application in November, known as "dormant feeding," should be LOW in nitrogen and is one of the most important times to fertilize. It prepares the grass for hardy over-wintering and to be ready for awakening next spring. Apply at the proper rate per 1,000 square feet as noted on the product's package label. Unless you have a very large grassed area, most bags of fertilizer, when used at no greater than that rate, will be enough for two applications -- minimizing nutrient runoff and saving you money. A great source of information on lawns and other gardening topics can be found at Oregon State University's Extension Service website <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/>



## Lock Your Vehicles and Keep Garage Doors Closed

**IMMEDIATE CONCERN:** West Salem including West Hill Estates has been experiencing an increase in vehicle break-ins and property theft from vehicles and open garages. **Don't make it easy for would-be thieves.** Keep your vehicles in the garage whenever possible and the garage door closed. Also never leave valuables or packages in plain sight within your vehicle, thereby encouraging a break-in. If you need to park your vehicle in the driveway, park it in a well-lighted area with the doors **LOCKED** and windows **completely ROLLED UP**. Should you see any suspicious action anywhere in the neighborhood or experience any criminal activity or vandalism at your property, be sure to report it to the Salem Police.



## Thanks for Helping Make WHE a Great Neighborhood



A neighborhood is only as great as the sum total of all its homeowners. Having neighbors who take pride in their property's appearance and the safety of our community has indeed made WHE a great place to live. Your cooperation on such things as limiting parking on the street, observing the 25 MPH speed limit, screening trash cans and RV's, picking up after your dog, maintaining grass and landscaping standards, keeping homes and fences freshly painted, to just name a few, all contribute to making WHE one of West Salem's premier places to live. The Board thanks you for doing your part. We really do appreciate it!

## Looking for Homeowners Interested in Committee Work

Ever thought about volunteering to be a part of your HOA? We are always seeking new (or old) faces to join with us in the running of our neighborhood association. At this point in time we are looking for volunteers to work on one of our standing "committees" such as Architectural Review, CC&R, Common Property, Newsletters or website communications. Prior experience is always a benefit but not essential as fresh ideas and different perspectives are important too. If you would like to know more about the operation of the Board and current issues, homeowners are always welcome to attend the monthly Board Meetings held at a WHE home residence on the third Thursday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Watch for notices posted at each entrance the week of a meeting.

## How to Avoid Additional HOA Assessment Costs

Homeowners are responsible for updating the board anytime their mailing address changes. Not doing so can result in late fees and interest on assessments or fines because the mailing address on file is not current. When a WHE homeowner's account receivable reaches \$500 a lien will be filed against the property that will include court filing fee costs. So keeping your mailing address current with WHE and paying assessments on time can save you significant frustration and money. If, at any time, you receive an invoice from WHE and you have questions please contact the treasurer Lorna O'Quinn through the <http://WHEHOA.com/contact> tab on the WHE Website. She will be happy to answer your questions and help you resolve any problems.



### 2017-18 Board of Directors

<b>Lorre Euen</b>	President; Common Property Chair
<b>Scott Gilbert</b>	Vice President; Website Manager
<b>Lorna O'Quinn</b>	Treasurer
<b>Chuck Strauss</b>	Secretary
<b>Doug Austin</b>	CC&R Committee Chair
<b>Sami Wright</b>	New Homeowner Welcome Committee Chair
<b>Terry Witt</b>	ARC Committee Chair; Newsletter

**West Hill Estates Homeowners' Association**  
P.O. Box 5892  
Salem, OR 97304

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SALEM OR  
PERMIT NO 106

[Homeowner Name & Address]

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## What is a Homeowner's Responsibility Regarding CC&Rs?

The CC&Rs are the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (sometimes called "Declarations") adopted to maintain the appearance, livability and value of our community. CC&R's are legally enforceable attachments to your property deed and **not** optional guidelines. This translates directly to preserving the overall value of our neighborhood, as well as each of our homes. Since our volunteer Homeowner Association Board is not a police force, and has limited manpower and resources, we rely on all neighbors to help achieve these common goals.



### **ACTION NEEDED**

Fall is a good time to review the landscaping standards document that can be found on the HOA's website and assess your yard's condition. Tasks that will soon be needed are things like regular raking of leaves, and needed fall pruning and fertilizing prior to winter. A little planning now will ensure your home and yard look good through the winter and into next spring. The most common issues we see requiring attention throughout the year are:

- Brown lawns from inadequate fertilizer or water
- Overgrown trees/shrubs encroaching on sidewalks
- Lawns with bare/dead patches in need of reseeding
- Leaves covering sidewalks or storm drains
- Bare dirt in planting areas needing ground cover (such as bark mulch) added
- Old bark mulch in need of refreshing
- Removal of weeds in lawn and planting areas
- Fences in need of stain or repair

The Board thanks you for your attention to these important items to help preserve the curb appeal and value of our neighborhood. If you are not sure what's in your CC&R's, go to <http://WHEHOA.com> and click CC&R's.