

Spring 2004 Newsletter



From the President:

Dear Neighbors,

I am happy to report that our sign restoration project is still alive. In fact, I am very optimistic that we will raise the funds necessary to build the signs this year. With your financial support, we will succeed.

Within the next six months a **neighborhood advocate** will visit your home. This person is acting as a fundraising agent for the SWNA and will present vital information to you on the current state of our signs. They will explain why the signs need immediate attention, and they will answer any questions you may have about the sign project. Furthermore, they will make themselves available to you for updates on the progress of the construction.

Aside from sign replacement, the neighborhood has many events planned for the near future. Our **Spring Yard Sale** will kick off bright and early on May 15, and Tom Alexander from ReMax will once again sponsor it. Call Tom at 346-1252 if you plan to participate in the yard sale, and he will post curb signs directing customers to your driveway (note: Tom will remove those signs promptly, so please do not remove them from the curb). Check the schedule at the end of the newsletter for more details.

In closing, I would like to appeal to each member of our neighborhood to consider offering a little time in service to the neighborhood. We are in the middle of a monumental task with sign fundraising and construction, and that leaves little time for the current volunteers to take on the other important roles of the association. If you can help in any way, please fill out the membership card and volunteer.

Chris Conrad, President

Curb Appeal Important, Expert Says

The SWNA met recently with Paul Holst, an executive with Portrait Homes, the development firm responsible for building Rachel's Keep. Although the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the western expansion of the Rachel's Keep site, Holst offered some interesting perspectives on how curb appeal increases a neighborhood's desirability.

According to Holst, the single best improvement any neighborhood can make to increase its desirability is to improve each home's appearance from the curb. He stated that the condition of the lawn and the absence of lawn clutter are big factors in the single-family neighborhoods he manages.

If we take Holst's comments to heart, there are many ways we could improve our general curb appeal. For better lawn appearance, owners can treat crabgrass and weeds in March, irrigate during summer, and seed and fertilize in October. Those relatively inexpensive steps go a long way toward maintaining a lush green lawn.

In regard to lawn clutter, there are two important considerations for us. Remember that the City of Greensboro will remove brush from the curb only if it is cut and tied into bundles no longer than five feet in length. If an unacceptable pile of brush remains at the curb too long, the City may tag it and issue a \$75 fine, plus the cost of clean-up, to the owner of the home.

Additionally, it is essential that all of our vehicles be in working order. It is against city code to have a wrecked or disabled vehicle anywhere on our property, and violations could open the property owner up to unwanted fines.

The proactive steps we are taking with entrance sign replacement, coupled with individual attention to the points above should go a long way in improving our neighborhood's appeal.

Entrance Sign Update

Ever since the City of Greensboro denied our grant request for new entrance signs, the association has had to regroup and redirect its fundraising efforts. The board decided last summer to pursue a fundraising campaign that would seek funding from both neighbors and from sources outside the neighborhood. Here is our fundraising status:

2004 SWNA Board

President
Chris Conrad
854-4363

Treasurer
Donna Guinard
852-8791

Secretary
Mike Goad
855-6821

At-large members

Scott Edelman
852-7375

2004 SWNA Committee Chairs

Membership
Donna Guinard
852-8791

Crimewatch
Chris Conrad
854-4363

Zoning
Peter Kauber
852-8791

Open: Secretary,
Schools, Parks,
Traffic,
Webmaster,
Distribution

From outside the neighborhood, we received a commitment from Portrait Homes to absorb the cost of a portion of one sign, located at Eagle Road. Construction will commence as soon as possible. If you would like to thank Paul Holst personally for his company's generosity, you may e-mail him at pholst@pasquinelli.com.

From inside the neighborhood we have received approximately \$850 in donations toward the signs. Neighborhood advocates have volunteered to visit your homes, display close-up pictures of the signs, and make the case for a per-household donation of \$40.00. It is well worth the investment.

The SWNA contacted a lawyer to discuss legal protection of the signs once they are built. Although this legal work is not complete, we have made much progress, and we plan (rather than hope) to have reached agreements between all of the property owners and the association prior to construction of each individual sign.

Many people have been involved in this sign project, but there is more work to be done. We can use anyone who will volunteer to be a neighborhood advocate, helping us to raise the money necessary to complete the project. There will also be short notice opportunities to do some physical work. If you can volunteer in either of these roles, please contact Chris Conrad at 854-4363.

Granada Crimewatch Formed

In response to multiple breaking and entering events on Granada Lane, the residents in that area have formed a Crimewatch on their block. In a meeting held on March 18 at the home of Doug and Connie Ball, 25 neighbors discussed the problem and settled on some very proactive solutions, which will be spearheaded by a five-person committee, lead by Doug Ball. Committee members are Karen Pirello, Troy Patterson, Donald Ellis, and Darren Lilly. Everyone left the meeting with a sigh of relief, optimistic that they had a plan to take care of their problem.

The participants in the meeting discovered that the person breaking into homes was a teenager from a group home located on Stanley Road. Most of the residents now recognize the child and can take steps to confront him when he is roaming the neighborhood.

The committee is working with the SWNA board to ensure that this situation is resolved. We are researching the rules by which this group home operates and will confront the problem directly by meeting with the individual who runs the home. For the latest news on the status of this important work, call either Doug Ball at 299-9237 or Chris Conrad at 854-4363.

Upcoming Events

Here are the events on the calendar for 2004. Hope to see you there!

Saturday	May 15	Spring Yard Sale
Saturday	May 22	Yard Sale Makeup Day (Rain Date)
Tuesday	Aug 3	National Night Out
Tuesday	Sep 14	Annual Meeting
Saturday	Sep 18	Fall Yard Sale
Saturday	Sep 25	Yard Sale Makeup Day (Rain Date)
Saturday	Sep 25	Neighborhood Cleanup

Attention Stay-at-home Moms:

We are thinking about starting a playgroup for young children. If you have children five years and younger, this is a great opportunity! Please contact Julie Taylor by phone (547-8137) or e-mail (dtaylor2@triad.rr.com) to indicate your interest.

SWNA 2004 Membership Form

Joining the SWNA is simple. Just fill out this membership form and write a check for \$10, made out to Southwest Neighborhood Association. Forms and the check can be mailed to: Donna Guinard, 1602 Pepper Hill Road, Greensboro, NC 27407.

Annual dues secure your membership from September 1 through August 30 of each year. Become a member today!

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address: _____ **Email:** _____

Your

Volunteer Interests: *Traffic* *Special events* *Yard sales*
 Parks *Schools* *Zoning*
 SWNA board *Crimewatch* *Other (specify)*