



Halloween, Time Change



First up in the batting box is Halloween, also called All Hallow's Eve, this year it is on Wednesday, 31 October 2007.

This is a school night so let's wrap up the ghoulish event by a decent time. We ask all parents to accompany their little tricksters on their spooky rounds through the neighborhood.

Remember to light the way for the wee-folk by turning on your garage lights and porch lights for the children to easily identify which houses they should visit.

Let's keep the children safe by using flashlights and reflective material on their costumes.

This is the time of the year when we need to set our clocks back one hour and a special note here - it is NOT on the last Sunday of October.

This year it is on the first Sunday in November, 4 November 2007, at 2:00 AM. There are really only two ways to cope with Day Light Saving time settings, 1) set your clocks back prior to retiring for the evening; and 2) setting your clocks back after you get up in the morning.

Doing it before you retire means going around the house and setting each clock and

watch in the household and remember to set the ones in your cars as well.

Doing it after you get up means, first, remembering that you have to do it and then scouring the AO for all ticking and flashing time pieces.

(For the non-military - AO stands for Area of Operations - in this case - the house and driveway.)



So much to do and so little time!

Forest Pond Little Sweep

On Saturday, 6 October 2007, two wonderful people from our community volunteered their time and participated in the first Forest Pond Little Sweep.

John Vojtko, your Treasurer, and Amy Majchrzak

of Black Walnut Lane volunteered 90 minutes of their time to clean up trash and debris around Sunday Park and the pond.

These two collected five (5) bags, that's right, five

full trash bags and removed boards and litter from the pond.

When you see these neighbors of yours, give them a big warm

THANK YOU!!

Inside this issue:

HOA Meeting Scheduled	2
Final Notice Equals?	2
Vandalism Hits Home	2
School Aged Children	3
Help Your Habitat	3
Councilman Barnes	4

Special points of interest:

- *Plant some new trees very inexpensively*
- *Where DO the children belong?*
- *HOA Meeting Info Inside*

HOA Meeting Scheduled

Our Homeowner's Association Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 8 January 2007, starting at 7:00 PM in the Derita Baptist Church located at 2835 W. Sugar Creek Road (across from the old Food Lion).

This meeting is very important to all Forest Pond homeowners and you need to make it a point to attend this meeting, especially, this year.

"Why?" you ask. Indeed—is the answer! You will be voting on some very important issues. These issues will impact the upcoming year and the future value of your home!

Many points of interest will be presented to you, so that you can make an



Presentation of Current and Future Status

You will be offered refreshments and see an interesting presentation of our current situation, a projection of our future standing, and meet the people who are volunteering to be active HOA Board Members.

At the end of the HOA Meeting, an

informed decision about the issues being voted on at the end of the meeting.

election will be held on the issues that were presented for voting and a general election of Board Members.

In order for your vote to count, whether in person or by proxy, **all HOA dues must be current; that means the Annual HOA Dues and the Special Assessment Dues must be paid up through 2007.**

If your dues are not paid in full, you can still attend the meeting, you just will not be allowed to vote. That is a privilege reserved for the due-paying members of our community; and is not extended to the non-paying whiners mooching off the neighborhood because they don't want to pay their way!

Final Notice Equals Hearing

Several homeowners recently received a Final Notice letter concerning the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (C&R's) document that govern all homeowners in Forest Pond. The letters were written as the result of numerous attempts by the Board of Directors to have these homeowners cease and desist their violations of the articles in the document.

As a result, the homeowners will be

sent a Hearing Notice letter that will request that they appear before the Board of Directors concerning the violations. The homeowners will be given an opportunity to present their views on the violations. The hearing will be held even if the homeowner does not attend.

The Board will then decide on a course of action. If the Board decides to levy a fine until the homeowner corrects the violations, the cost could eventually be

substantial if lawyer and court costs have to be paid also.

The Board members do not relish the idea of having these meetings but they would be derelict in their duty if they allowed situations to continue that are obvious violations of the C&R's. That would be unfair to the majority of homeowners who are not in violation of the C&R's and want to live in a peaceful and orderly community.

Vandalism Hits Home

WAKE UP!!! We have vandals running around our neighborhood and very few people seem to care whether their property values increase or decrease.

That is until they try to sell their homes and can't get what they thought they should because their apathetic attitude made them into watchers instead of doers.

On Monday, 1 October 2007, some juvenile wannabe set fire to the slide portion of the playground equipment in Sunday Park.

Thankfully, Heather Nicholas of Moss Bank Court was walking by and put the fire out and alerted local homeowners and the Board of Directors.

Your Board members have posted a

Keep Off sign and boarded up the slide until we can repair it. The other sections of the playground equipment are still in playable shape.

Let's keep our eyes open, people - in this drought season, a fire in the woods would take out quite a few of our homes before any control could be established.

School Age Children in the Area

Have you seen school-aged children in the neighborhood during school hours, without parents or guardians? If so, you need to call a CMS school resource officer and report them. The closest one is at Derita Alternative School and can be reached by calling 980-343-5231. If they are behaving badly, call 911 and report it.

We have, as most of you know, an alternative school in our area, the Derita Alternative School (DAS).

The students that attend classes at DAS are the problem students that other CMS schools can not deal with and are sent here to be schooled in a controlled environment. DAS students can be recognized by the following:



Derita Alternative School Logo

The younger kids wear dark blue shirts with a DAS logo on the front

of the shirt ; while the older kids wear white shirts with DAS logo also on the front. No backpacks are allowed (if you see a kid with a backpack they probably aren't a DAS student).

If you see a student or a group of students in our park, or around the pond; contact the school and they'll send a

resource officer over (Principal is Mr. Peter Brown). Even if it is NOT a DAS student; they will detain them and take them to their school.

The bottom line is that school-aged children are supposed to be in school and not running around the neighborhood during school hours. Do the children and your community a favor, see to it that they are where they are supposed to be and not wandering around, letting their creative minds lead them down the wrong path.

It is our responsibility to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to prove themselves in a scholastic environment before we turn them loose on the world at large!

Help Your Habitat

Plant a tree and or shrub! Now is the time to place your orders for the upcoming Tree Seedling Sale! (The deadline for tree orders is October 31st).

Trees not only create wildlife and plant diversity, they also can help save money by reducing energy costs! Not to mention, they reduce soil erosion, noise pollution, and air pollution.

Mecklenburg Soil and Water Conservation District is having their annual tree seedling sale on:

Saturday, January 26, 2008

9:00 AM until Noon (or sold out)

Tree seedlings are sold on a first come, first served basis to the general public until supplies run out!

The Small Hardwoods for sale this year are: the Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*), the Eastern Redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*), and the River Birch (*Betula nigra*) for \$1 each.

The Large Hardwoods for sale are: the

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), the Persimmon (*Diospyros Virginia*), the Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*), and the Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) for \$1 each).

The Shrubs for sale are: American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa Americana*), and the Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) for \$1 each.

The Evergreens for sale are: the Waxmyrtle/Southern Bayberry (*Myrica cerifera*) for \$1 each, the Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) for \$2 each, and the Loblolly Pine - Piedmont (*Pinus taeda*) sales 10 for \$5.

Rain barrels are also on sale - 60-gallon barrel for \$85 each and the 80-gallon barrel for \$100 each.

If you are not a SWCD newsletter recipient, you can place your order by calling (704) 336-2455, FAX your order to (704) 336-3846.

If you want a copy of the 2008 Order Form please email me and I will hand deliver the order form to your house.

If you place your order and pay for it in advance - you will not have to stand in line to pick up your order (you can order a rain barrel in advance but you cannot pay for it in advance). Believe me - it was very cold last year standing in line waiting to get inside to pay for the plants and rain barrel I ordered - the wind did not let up for one moment!

If you pay in advance and you do not pick up your plants at the time stated, there are no refunds. Mecklenburg SWCD is not responsible for orders not picked up on time. All unclaimed seedlings will be considered a donation. All proceeds benefit Mecklenburg environmental education programs.

If you do order your seedlings now, go ahead and prepare the sites you will want to plant them in now. Trying to dig into the cold hard ground during January is not something you want to do, especially, if the weather is very windy and cold.

FOREST POND

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Putting good words
into good work!

Dear Constituent:

I wanted to take a moment to update you on a few matters relative to District 4.

I. In the coming weeks, I will be asking a number of homeowner's association presidents to join a new leadership group for northeast Charlotte. The group will tentatively be called The District 4 Neighborhood President's Roundtable. I believe this effort will better connect leaders and leadership. It will also help each part of the District become more fully connected with resources and opportunities.

II. You've probably heard about the prospects of a Wal-Mart Super Center coming to N. Tryon St. near the 29/49 weave in the next couple of years. I'm sure you were as concerned as I when you heard about it, but it is important for you to know that the new site has been zoned for commercial/retail use for many years, so it did not require a vote by the current City Council. Despite this, over the last several months I've been in touch with various parties relative to Wal-Mart's intentions and the potential for an empty retail store on J.W. Clay Blvd.

A few months ago, I met with development representatives for the new site and asked them to push the envelope on innovative design and quality. They've done so and in fact, committed to use one of their top tier designs for the new store. The preliminary drawings and commitments indicate that the new store will be unlike most of their stores. Consequently, I believe the store's design will meet my expectations and yours. I remain concerned

City Council District 4 Representative

about traffic generation and Wal-Mart will be funding a number of road improvements around the new site to help address those concerns.

In case you're wondering, there are retailers interested in Wal-Mart's current University City location and I believe one of those retailers will quickly occupy the old store.

III. A few months ago, I was made aware of a construction omission at a town home development off Prosperity Church Road that resulted in almost all the units being built without brick as required by the site plan. In fact, the site plan required that the units be predominantly brick. A few months ago, I met with the developer and its attorney and asked City Staff to do the same. The developer ultimately agreed to add brick and stone to the units. During a recent meeting with the community, the developer explained the omission and committed to correct the error in the next few months. The homeowners applauded the good news of realizing \$4,000+ in additional equity for each of their town homes.

IV. Anyone who's followed my work over the last 2 years knows that I've been working to improve the quality and value of development in northeast Charlotte. To that end, I've been working to attract a high-end homebuilder to our area. You may have noticed that but for a small number of exceptions, most high-end development bypasses northeast Charlotte. It seems to go to Huntersville, Davidson, Harrisburg, Concord and South Charlotte. Considering all the strengths of northeast Charlotte (UNCC, CMC-University, TIAA-CREF, Wachovia, etc.), I don't believe there's any good reason northeast Charlotte can't be home to more high-end residential development. If we have the right mix of good schools and good jobs, the private sector will respond with higher-end housing options. I'll hopefully have more to share with respect to quality jobs and quality housing in the coming months.

V. I've been approached about a num-

ber of apartment projects in District 4. I've been reluctant to support these projects for 2 key reasons: 1) CMPD data indicates that most of our crime hotspots are in and around apartment complexes; and 2) Approximately 3,000 apartments have been built in District 4 since 2002.

I believe there is an appropriate place for apartments –we've all lived in one-but I believe we have to determine the appropriate balance of for sale and for rent property. Market forces typically maintain appropriate controls, but that doesn't always seem to happen. Additionally, we face challenges determining the appropriate burden to be placed on our roads and schools and the amount of criminal activity we can accept and control.

On another note, I ask for your vote in the upcoming election and I encourage you to vote YES for the school bonds and NO to repeal the transit tax. I believe that part of strengthening and enhancing District 4 depends upon more and better schools and additional transportation options.

I appreciate your attention, thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you soon.

Michael D. Barnes
Charlotte City Council District 4

I, Raymond Thomas, your newsletter editor, wanted you, a resident of Forest Pond, to be aware of the position of our City Councilman, who is supporting you and your Board Members in trying to maintain your property values even though that may not be readily apparent all of the time.

This is in no way to be considered an endorsement for Councilman Barnes but rather an overview of what he stands for and what he is working towards for your community.