

LAKE COUNTRY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume VI No. 3 – June 2023 - Tom Maglienti, Editor

www.lcvillage.org



Google Earth

From the Prez!

By: Randy LaMora, President

Hello everyone In Lake Country Village. I hope everyone is in great health, doing great and enjoying the Spring Weather.

Our meetings are on the second Monday of the month starting at 6:00 pm at the North Country Alliance Church, located on New York Rd. We also may have a second meeting on the fourth Monday of the month, depending on what is going on at that time. Homeowners are encouraged to attend the meetings if possible.

The current board members are: myself, Linda Turner, Vice President, Tom Maglienti, Treasurer, Ron Deragon, Secretary, Melissa Mowry, Dave Andrews, and Kathy Firme.

Please keep us updated with your current E-Mail address so that you can keep informed of current happenings in the village.

As Homeowners are noticing the city is going through and repairing approximately 1 mile of sidewalks in the village. Some sidewalks are being repaired from the massive water project that occurred last summer/fall and others because of huge cracks, bumps, and tripping hazards. We were asked again to be patient with this project. We are also being told once that is completed, they will start repairing the grass, medians etc. from the water project.

We will be losing (3) Three Board members. Linda Turner, Vice President, has been on the board since May of 2017. Tom Maglienti, Treasurer, has been on the Board since May of 2015. Melissa Mowry, Member at Large, has been a board member since July of 2021. These 3 people have done an outstanding service for Lake Country Village, and they will surely be missed. I personally would like to thank each and every one of them for their outstanding commitment to the village.

The fence project is completed. In the next couple of weeks, Curtis, myself, and a representative from AFSCO, will be conducting a complete walkaround to make sure all fencing issues are completed in accordance with the contract. If anyone has any issue with their new vinyl fencing, noticed a crack, gate not shutting correctly, damaged panels etc., or any fence related issue, PLEASE notify Curtis ASAP and or submit a work order so we may address it.

Bulletin Boards have been installed and are operational. If you have any items that you would like to place inside the Bulletin Boards, please contact Ron or myself. Try to put the information on a 5x7 size or smaller sheet of paper, since we will have limited space inside. Any items that are inside the Bulletin Boards will be checked every couple of weeks and anything outdated will be removed. **AT NO TIME WILL ITEMS TAPED TO THE GLASS OF THE KIOSKS OR BULLETIN BOARDS BE PERMITTED.** If any items are taped on the kiosk or the Bulletin Boards, they will be removed.

We have received several complaints about dogs that are running loose in the common areas, playgrounds, and tennis courts. This practice is prohibited by our rules and there is a leash law in the city of Plattsburgh. Please, if you take your pet to these areas make sure they are on a leash.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Property Manager, visit our website,

reach out to a Board member, or attend a meeting, whatever is convenient for you.

We are always looking for committee members. If you would like to become a committee member, please let us know what committee you would like to be a part of. And yes, you can be on more than one committee at a time.

We are always looking for new ideas for the community. If you think you might have one to make this community a better place than it is right now, feel free to contact us with your ideas. If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter; your favorite recipe(s), gardening tips, an article that you might think would be interesting or helpful to the homeowners, feel free to contact the communication committee.



The 2023-25 HOA Board Election

By Carol Shuttleworth, Elections Committee

Greetings, homeowners! This year's election for the 2023-2025 HOA Board has now been completed and the results tabulated by EZVoteonline, the service we used again this year to help us run the election. EZVoteonline tabulated all ballots, both online and paper (i.e. sent to homeowners via mail).

This year, we had four candidates running for three open positions on the Board. The following individuals have been elected to the Board for the 2023-2025 term:

- Tammy Favro
- Margret Felty
- Dale Holzer

Many thanks to all of you who voted in this year's HOA Board election, and an extra-special thanks to our four candidates! The Board plays a vital role in maintaining a safe, attractive, and financially viable community, and all homeowners play a vital role as well by participating in the election process.

Just as a reminder, for those of you who would like to be more involved but are just not sure about the time commitment involved with being on the Board, we have many committees that serve an equally vital purpose in our community!

If you would like to learn more, please visit the HOA website, www.lcvillage.org for information. Have a safe and enjoyable summer!



Things are Looking Up!

By: Linda Turner, Vice President

What a gorgeous Spring we've had this year. It's absolutely wonderful to see the sun again. It's particularly great to see the neighborhood getting put back together. Between the disruptions of the new fencing project and the unbelievable torturous water project going on at the same time last year, it feels wonderful to be back to normal.



Photo by Linda Turner

The sidewalks have had a face lift in many places and replacement sidewalks have made a positive impact for walking safely. It's great to be out again enjoying our community.

I'm so proud to say how nice it was to have the support of everyone during this difficult time. We had to move our vehicles several times to find new places to park on adjacent streets for the work to go on. Most impressive was to occasionally find streets devoid of any cars to allow crews to continue the work. Everyone here

played a role in the success of these two very large projects getting done on time. Thank you. The City is still working to finish restoring the neighborhood. We will be looking pretty spiffy in no time.



From the Landscape Committee

By: Margret Felty, Landscape Committee

We are very excited to share the work we have done on our beautification projects on the entryways to Lake Country Village. We hope you have had a chance to drive by the new raised bed and garden at the entryway at Dakota St. and New York Rd., and the new garden at the corner of Maine Rd. and New York Rd. These gardens are filled with a mix of native perennials and vibrant annuals to provide 3-season color and interest. They also have new solar lights to welcome you home at night!

Other exciting plans for the summer include beginning a tree replacement project for trees that have had to be removed over the past many years. We plan to start with a survey of the existing trees and create a plan for replanting. Another project under consideration is planting along the Rte. 9 boundary fence to beautify the view from both



Photo by Margret Felty

sides. Both of these are long-term projects and, subject to Board approval, will be needing the support and help of you, the members of the

community, to accomplish these goals. To that end, I invite and encourage you to email the Landscape Committee and let us know if you would be willing to be notified when we have a need for volunteers for a specific project, such as an hour helping to plant trees, or if you have a skill set you can share for a project, for example. Our committee always welcomes new members, but you can also be a great help just by volunteering to help out for an hour or two. Please let us know by emailing me at margret.felty@gmail.com, and put the word "Volunteer" in the subject line. We are making a difference, and we are having a great time doing it! Thank you!

Wishing you a wonderful start to your summer, and we'll see you around the Village!



Treasurer's Tidbits

By: Tom Maglienti, Treasurer

Hi everyone and Happy Spring! Hope you all are enjoying the warm weather.

As I drive through the neighborhood, I am impressed by how much of a difference the new fences make in the overall appearance of the village. I hope you all can agree that this huge project was well worth doing. I will add my congratulations to the many people who were involved in this project, especially AFSCO who by all accounts did a magnificent job for us.

Luck Builders has completed restoration of the areas disturbed during the water line project in the cul de sacs and as the City works on their restoration elsewhere in the village, things are finally getting back to normal.

The Board has approved the 2023-24 Annual Budget and after great soul searching and much angst, has announced a dues increase to \$235, effective July 1. I can assure you, this was not an easy decision. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, there were many factors considered. These included the interest rate increase for our fence loan, insurance premium increases, a water rate increase due to the infrastructure project, revised estimates for asset replacements such as roofs, and overall inflation. Even after the budget

was approved, we were notified that our insurance premium for this year would be increasing by an astounding \$31,000. This increase is NOT reflected in the new budget and we are actively seeking quotes from other carriers to try to soften the impact of this necessary cost item.

A few more details on our fence loan. Our loan was designed to be a line of credit for two years, the time we expected the fence project would take to complete. During this “draw” period, the loan has a variable interest rate tied to the prime. When we conceived the project, our rate was 3.85%. As of May 4th, our rate had bloomed to 8.85%. Our balance in the first year was double the expected amount since AFSCO completed the project in less than a single year. As a result, a decision was just made to close our line of credit a year earlier than planned and convert our loan to the term loan with a fixed interest rate of 5.77%. Although this rate is also higher than originally anticipated, it will still save us almost \$30,000 in interest in the first year alone. However to do this means we must make the final payment to AFSCO, withheld pending a final inspection of the completed work, from our reserve. Naturally, this fund needs to be repaid in order to be ready for future expenses, so a portion of the dues increase reflects this need.

One final statement about the dues. Some have said we should have been increasing the dues a little at a time over the 8 years that they remained constant. That would certainly have been a strategy and some HOA’s do exactly that. (Interestingly, had we raised dues say \$5 per year we would be at \$255 today). However, our strategy has always been to start at zero every year and build a budget based on need, which includes both the operational yearly needs and a required contribution to our reserve fund based on a detailed plan to meet our future needs. In every year, the total amount of expected expense was covered by the approved dues amount of \$205. As you know, the dues increase last year was approved by a binding vote of you, all members. However, **no one** could have predicted the arrival of covid or the impact it had and still has on the economy, which is the principal driving force behind this dues increase. I can say

with complete confidence that your board has kept the dues at the correct level each year, since our strategy was, and continues to be, only to collect funds from you that we need, based on our approved annual budget.

Will the dues be raised again next year? As much as we all would like say “no” to this question, no one can predict with total accuracy what factors will influence the economy or what our expense needs will be a full two years from now. It is hard enough to predict one year in advance which is what any budget process does. Although the board will do its best to hold the line, to say with any degree of certainty that no dues increase will be needed next year, in this economy, would be just asking for trouble.

This will be my last newsletter article as your Treasurer as I will be stepping down from the Board on June 30th. I have had a wonderful tenure and I know your new board is completely committed to your needs. You are in good hands! I wish you all the best success in the future.



Meet My Neighbor, an American Beech

By: Rachelle Armstrong

I’ve long admired the huge tree that sits, stalwart, beyond my gate. In 2011 when we moved to Lake Country Village, just before closing, the inspector said it was a Mulberry. What did I know? With the move, it wasn’t a priority to find out whether he was right, and trusting what I thought was his expertise, I confidently told everyone who asked, “Mulberry”. While I could appreciate its grandeur as anyone who saw it would—or should—I didn’t know this neighbor very well at all and, generally, had little room for curiosity about it. Until ...

One fine afternoon when Covid isolation had eased, I sat in my lovely backyard and visited with a friend. We gazed at the tree while it swayed in the wind.

“What do you think of the Mulberry—amazing, eh?” I said. “That’s a beech tree,” she kindly replied, as if to a student. She’s lived in the boonies for forty years and knows her stuff.

Being able to attach the right name to the tree

didn't change my regard much, one which I must admit was passing. I continued to appreciate this mighty tree's presence, and tried not to resent having to rake up the profusion of leaves that fall in my yard. One year, I saw that a huge branch had reached out and leaned upon my roof, and so I dutifully called Curtis and asked whether it should be cut back for the benefit of the roof. He obliged, and I resumed my casual relationship with the great American Beech. Though it impressed me, in my daily life, it had not reached the rank of "Great" yet. Until...

This year I asked my husband, James, how old he thought the tree was. "Old," he said.

And then I got curious, and started looking at photos of the American Beech online and discovered, yes, old indeed; by the looks of it, over 100. I know, I know, implausible, right?



Photo by Rachelle Armstrong

My curiosity led me to measure its circumference, or girth, as tree lovers say. As James held the tape measure, I made my way around the tree and measured 12 feet! Did I say the tree is impressive? Because I'm not a math person, I consulted "The Tree Age Calculator" on the website [Good Calculators](#). I discovered that "my" tree (ok, I'm adopting it) is..., drum roll, please, 275 years old!!!!

How is that possible? How could the PAFB designers have been so kind as to build the housing for enlisted men around this tree? Are my calculations correct? I'll admit that my eyes

glazed over when I read the explanation of how the calculation was made—all Greek to me, as they say. I'm a former English teacher; I know that I should consult my sources, evaluate their repute, etc. etc. According to a 2017 article by Tracy Morris at the [Garden Guide website](#), to calculate the age of a beech tree: measure its circumference, divide by 3.14 and multiply by 6. THIS GIANT IS TWO HUNDRED-SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD!!!

I'm stunned. This tree is an elder! This tree is wondrous, a monument. It was a fair and supple 35 years old when Z. Platt settled Plattsburgh in 1784. In 1814, if, hearing battleship cannons on Lake Champlain, a girl might have climbed it and witnessed the Battle of Plattsburgh.

Part of me can't fathom that, in fact, this awe-inspiring life form is also ancient. I invite you, my neighbors, to correct me if I'm wrong. But more, I invite you to come by and visit, sit in my yard, and join me to admire OUR (not my) tree.



From the Communications Committee

By: Tom Maglienti

Greetings everyone. We all have to follow the HOA rules and regulations but it has always struck me that there did not seem to be any one place that I could go to read **all** the rules and regulations of the HOA. Although the website contains a great deal of information, I found rules were published in various places over the years, either individually in the minutes of meetings or in partial, non-exhaustive lists. Some were nearly impossible to locate. From the Board's perspective, this makes it difficult to enforce rules with consistency and fairness.

Last year our committee began an effort to assimilate **all rules**, and other pertinent HOA information, into a single document. At its June meeting, the Board approved this new **Owner's Handbook** which will be sent via email to all homeowners of record and posted to our website. **This Handbook supersedes all currently published rules except the Declaration, no matter where they exist.** It is a one stop shop providing all information about the HOA that a homeowner should need. We hope you find this

Handbook a useful resource. If you have any questions about its content, please contact the Communications Committee.



From Your Property Manager

By: Curtis Latremore (518-572-1505)

propertymanager@lcvillage.org

Hello Lake Country Village, wishing everyone a happy and fun summer. Just a couple of reminders for everyone. Both our rules and city regulations prohibit the use of open fire pits in the village. As many of you know the city has changed their garbage can size. The cans are much larger, but that does not change the rule regarding the cans not being left outside. If you cannot get the cans into your storage closets, they need to go in the garage or inside your fenced area. If left outside you're subject to a fine, so please put the can inside the building or in your backyard.

A reminder on work requests, these should be done online and for any project you may be considering. If the work request is not needed, I'll let you know, but sending one to me just helps protect you from doing something that needed permission to be done.

Several years ago, the board decided to trim or remove overgrown shrubs in the common area between garage and sidewalk. This is done by Harts at an extra cost to the village. As of July 15th, I'll be scheduling the work I feel needs to be completed. If you wish to trim your shrubs in that area, please do so prior to July 15th.

Finally, the village is a family friendly area. Use of the common area is always welcome. If your children use toys while playing, please remove them from the common ground after the day's activity is done. You should also be aware of the neighbors with regard to level of noise. We want everyone to enjoy the area you live in while respecting your neighbors.

As always please contact me with any questions and let's all have a great and safe summer.



Moratorium on Level II EV Chargers

By: Board of Directors

Due to the many unknowns surrounding the issue of electrical capacity in our development, and the potential for serious consequences to owners, the Board enacted the following policy on January 9.

Effective January 31, 2023, no new Level II EV chargers will be permitted in any units (except for the 10 newer units on Maryland Rd.) until further notice.

Level I chargers, which plug into a standard 120-volt outlet and which typically draw 15 amperes or less are allowed, subject to an approved Work Request.

Owners who install Level II chargers after the effective date may be required to remove them at their expense and will be responsible for damage to, or maintenance of electrical systems supplying them, including emergency callouts of electricians or utility workers.

For more information on why this is needed, see the article "How 'bout them Wires" in the January Newsletter.



Buildium is Coming!

By: Tom Maglienti

We are excited to announce we have entered into a subscription to begin using a Property Management software product called Buildium. This software promises to make our interactions with you much more transparent and open, greatly simplify financial record keeping, simplify reviews of Work and Maintenance Requests, allow for online payment of dues, and more. On July 1 we will begin to use the new software alongside our existing systems and beginning on August 1, we hope to be live on the new system. Each of you will be invited to establish a private, password protected portal which will give you access to the system. More information will be provided soon via email about this change, but we hope you will agree this system will be good for all.

