

Dear Homeowners,

12-15-08

It is that time of year again for the annual dues. This last year marks some great improvements in our commons. Firewise was completed by the Colorado Springs Fire Department this year at an estimated cost of \$100,000. However, thanks to the hard work of our previous board, Bill De Matte, and everyone who volunteered hours, we received a national grant and the cost to the homeowners was zero. In the fall, we repaved our paths and basketball court (with painting) at a cost of \$9,700. Because this was strictly an overlay, and we had competing bids, it kept the price in a cost range the board felt comfortable with based on our savings efforts for this year.

Financially, the board worked diligently (and thanks to volunteers), our cost saving measures for this summer saved over \$3,000. This means even with the big paving project (and no cost for the Firewise this year which cost \$5,000 previously), we are almost at the same point financially we were last year at this time. This leaves us in a position to truly work out a long lasting budget for future boards to deal with Firewise and commons maintenance so as not to fall into the same precarious position the previous board had to struggle with. I can also say (barring any catastrophes), I see no need for any assessments during my tenure as president.

The board has worked diligently in figuring a solution to the park and commons situation. We had town hall meetings, surveys and a lot of ideas brought to us. Although this will be an ongoing discussion as our community changes, the board made some decisions for the next year or two. The ideas for a walking trail system and a "South Park" has been tabled for future boards to consider as the community seemed split on these issues. We came up with a compromise of sorts for the community park. The upkeep and maintenance of ALL areas of commons is the homeowners (and Boards) responsibility no matter which street we live on. What is already in the park and commons and how it was designed is our responsibility, but we want to set precedence in "improvements" to any commons areas. Thus, we are establishing a separate "park" fund (apart from our general budget of dues) for donations to bring in new improvements. We will also set up other separate funds as homeowners bring them to us. When a project becomes approved by the board and then funded through the "extra funds" special account, that project will be completed.

We are working on an overall community park improvement master plan. We have held town hall meetings and continue to seek input and more ideas for how we want the park to be in the future. We want to have a "step" process and as each step is funded, we will complete that part of the Master plan. You will see a spot on the dues form for "extra funds" for the community park. You may designate to this fund and your money will only be used for the community park improvements. Again, we are open to other special project funds as the homeowners want.

Lastly, and of high concern to me, is the increase in thievery in our neighborhood. We have had 2 nights of numerous car break-ins and at least 1 attempted house break-in this fall. (NOTE: this is one reason it is imperative no one parks out on the streets at night!) Thankfully, the police have made 2 separate arrests and link them to our situation. First, I implore everyone to be more watchful. If you see a car parked on the street at night and don't know who they are, it is better to call the police and it be nothing than to do nothing at all. Second, we need to use the internet site ravenhillshoa.com as a way to communicate what is going on and what to watch out for as well as the "forum" page as a way to give ideas for a safer neighborhood. Once word gets out that we are actively watching and are calling police when cars are on our streets, hopefully we will be safer.

We will have 3 board positions open in May, consider serving your community.

Sincerely,

Brad Keating, President