

The



Bridge

Newsletter of the Red Bridge Homes Association Winter 2008

What is a neighborhood?

A neighborhood is more than a collection of houses on a street. It should be more than a neighbor whose name you don't really know, but you recognize their face when they are in the yard. A neighborhood can be a collection of people with whom you share a sense of community. After all, next to our own homes and our work space, the neighborhood really is our most intimate living space.

Fifteen years ago, I was attracted to Red Bridge because of its accessibility to the rest of the metro area, the shopping center, the tree-lined streets, and the abundance of sidewalks. I liked that neighbors stopped to talk with each other, and that the neighborhood felt safe. Many of those attributes still fit today, but I've noticed that some of them are "slipping" a little....and that worries me. So I got back on the board and volunteered to lead as president to help change things, and strengthen our neighborhood. But, our skeleton board cannot do it alone....and the neighborhood's success depends on your involvement.

Our first priorities are better communication and trying to bring back a sense of community. Continuing with overdue maintenance of common areas (including a lot of snow-plowing this winter) is also on the list. We'd like to have more fun neighborhood events and contests, address deteriorating sidewalks, be proactive in crime prevention with formal neighborhood block watches, and know that children are safe riding their bikes in the streets, and safe from reckless drivers and speeders. In the next newsletter, we will be sending out a survey to find out what YOU want the board to address, as we work on this years projects and start setting long-term strategic goals.



So.....What does the Board do?

Board Meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday of "odd" months at Dunn's Coffee Shop, 6-8 PM. Any resident is welcome to attend and listen in. If you have an item you would like to present to the board, please notify Barb or Katherine in advance, so room can be made on the agenda. Please check the web page <http://www.haccd.org/moassoc/home.RedBridge> for schedule updates. The next board meeting is March 4, 2008.

Notes on Neighborhood Preservation.....

Curbside Rain Gardens & Rain Barrels



Kansas City's "10,000 Rain Gardens" is an initiative that was begun in 2005 by, "calling upon the creativity of citizens, corporations, educators, and non-profit organizations to join with government to voluntarily reduce the amount of runoff that pollutes our waterways" (www.rainkc.com). Rain gardens not only help control water runoff, but are also visually pleasing. The same cannot be said for most rain barrels. While they help control and conserve rainwater runoff from the roofs of structures, rain barrels are not known for their visual appeal.

If you are considering installing a rain barrel that would be highly visible to any of your neighbors in Red Bridge, please discuss your plans with your neighbors prior to installation. Even if a large plastic garbage barrel does not affect your sensibilities, you may find that it would bother your neighbors.

And consider this--- if your rain barrel is visible from the street, it can substantially detract from the curbside appeal of your home - and as such, affects everyone around you. Rain barrels are a wonderful conservation tool if positioned considerately, or disguised by shrubbery or landscaping grasses. So while you are being kind to the environment, be also kind to your neighbors!

Over the last couple of years, we've seen an increase in the number of houses for rent in the Red Bridge area. While most renters are considerate and as much a part of the neighborhood as property owners, we know that it only takes one "bad" rental to spoil an entire street. With the difficult housing market, it is more important than ever to keep your property looking its best... rented or vacant.



Kansas City, MO passed ordinance No. 071046 in October 2007, which requires most owners of rental dwellings in the KCMO are to register their properties with the City's Neighborhood and Community Services Department.

Registration during January did not incur a registration fee. Registration after January 31, 2008 incurs an administrative citation fee of \$50 EACH MONTH that a rental dwelling is not registered. Registration is required on a calendar-year basis. For more information, online registration and applications, visit www.kcmo.org/neigh or call the Neighborhood Preservation Division at 513-9041.



Delinquent Dues and Liens

Red Bridge Homes Association dues are among the lowest in the metro area. Dues help pay for snow removal, tree trimming, island maintenance, new markers, newsletters, neighborhood events, neighborhood directories, welcome packets for new neighbors and dozens of administrative duties taken on by the Homes Association of the Country Club District (HACCD) for the 872 of homeowners in Red Bridge...in addition to 43 other homes associations. Payment of dues is mandatory as stated in your property deed. Regardless of who lives in the house, the owner is responsible for the annual dues payment. Dues are no different than real estate taxes, utilities or mortgage payments. Failure to pay annual dues in a timely fashion may result in a lien being put on your property. A lien can adversely affect your credit rating and title search, hampering any refinancing or sale of your home. Once a lien is put on a property, additional fees must also be collected to cover filing costs, and the lien cannot be released until full payment is made.

Five homeowners are in serious arrears on their dues, ranging from \$304 to \$1,081. Property liens have been filed on the following addresses:

11501 Wornall
11505 Wornall
410 E. 109th St.
209 E. 113th St.
309 E. 117th St.

Unfortunately, a small number of households do not pay their dues. You know who you are by the "past due" mailings you regularly receive. Current year dues were due by December 31st. Any homeowner with delinquent dues risks having a lien placed on their property, and their address published in the subsequent newsletters.

Homeowners who don't pay their dues are not being fair to the 723 property owners who do pay their dues in a timely fashion. Currently, there are 149 homeowners in arrears to the tune of \$11,983. If you are one of them, please pay the bill now, rather than a much larger one later.

Island & Marker update

As you have probably noticed, our markers have undergone a renovation....rotten wood replaced and new calking and paint. However, the beds and urns of many of the markers are in a sad state. We are currently getting bids to get plantings in the markers, urns and islands rejuvenated where needed. If you have been taking care of an island or marker (planting, trimming, etc.) in the past, and are willing to continue to do so, please let us know...feel free to email redbridgehomes@yahoo.com with the exact location (i.e. Wornall & 113th Terr., south marker).

Wild, Wild Life

We had a report of a coyote roaming around the area of 108th and Oak in early January. Red Bridge sees a lot of wildlife....opossum, raccoon, fox and bats are all fairly common, as is the occasional deer. Please keep in mind that wildlife is usually looking for food, which make garbage and small pets prime targets. Please remember to bring dogs inside at night, and if you put your garbage out the night before pickup, a few drops of ammonia (I just keep a little spray bottle handy) will keep stray dogs and raccoons at bay.



Please welcome our newest residents to the neighborhood

Matthew Smith & Jill Erickson	512 E. 109 th Terr.
Sheryl Bateman	614 E. 109 th Terr.
Joanne Pash Wilbanks	111 E. 114 th Terr.
William Wright & Christina Kraft	112 E. 114 th Terr.
Sharon Bundy	107 E. 117 th Terr.
Lee & Kirsten Walters	10915 Forest
Sean & Kyle Clemons	11627 Kenwood
Miranda & Timothy Hager	10922 Troost

Stay connected...stay in touch

Red Bridge E-Alerts is being resurrected! If you ever anticipate having a lost/found dog, garage sale, inquiry about the best plumber, suspicious activity in the neighborhood, block party or just want to be more connected than newsletters provide, E-Alerts is for you! We promise, no spam, jokes and not too many emails to clutter your files. This is also a good way to voice your ideas or submit an article for the newsletter...maybe even the occasional brief survey. Send an email with your name and home address (for resident verification) to redbridgehomes@yahoo.com.



Board of Directors

Barbara Robertson	943-0872
<i>President-Treasurer</i>	
Katherine Coates	943-1407
<i>Secretary</i>	
Sharron Hill	942-1557
<i>Community Affairs, VP</i>	
Jason Albright	916-3534
<i>Parks & Islands/Snow</i>	

Useful numbers & Websites:

Homes Association of the Country	
Club District (HACCD):	523-2440
Action Center:	513-1313 or 311
Southtown Police Patrol:	234-5550



www.kcmo.org ---all things related to Kansas City, MO.
www.haccd.org ---view neighborhood information, calendar
redbridgehomes@yahoo.com --- Red Bridge Homes Association e-mail address

CALLING ALL....



Do you have a few hours A YEAR to help our neighborhood become a more active, desirable place to live? We are currently seeking board and/or committee members to fill the following needs:

- Snow/Parks & Islands
- Special Events Coordinators (garage sale, lighting contest, other contests, socials, annual meeting)
- By-Laws Committee (ours need updating, legal knowledge a plus)
- Zone Leaders
- Newsletter Editor
- Community Liaison
- Treasurer
- Your special interest/talent

In addition, we'd like to compile a list of folks that we could call on for special needs... attorneys for quick legal questions (or longer legal questions for a reasonable fee), extra help for neighborhood events or special projects, etc. If interested, or if you would like more information, please contact Barbara Robertson at by phone or at redbridgehomes@yahoo.com

HOLIDAY LIGHTING CONTEST:

December was a cold, but the holiday lighting displays warmed our hearts! This year's hands-down winner featured 5 blow-ups, a creek and pond of lights with deer, tons of lights and music! Picking second and third was much harder...but thank you to all who participated! Placing winners received a cash prize:

First: 110 E. 115th Street
Second: 10917 Tracy
Third: 11219 Wornall

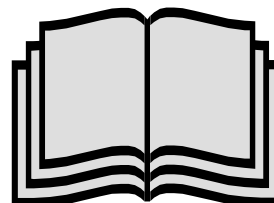
13 houses were nominated this year, and every single one was unique and sparkly! Start planning for next December, because the competition will be fierce!

Neighborhood Directory

Ad sheets for the directory are now being distributed. If you or your business would like to advertise in the directory, please email

redbridgehomes@yahoo.com.

This is also a good way for teens to highlight their dog walking, house sitting or lawn mowing services! Don't delay---space is limited! Deadline for ads has been extended to March 15, 2008.





Set your clutter free!

The Red Bridge Homes Association **Annual Garage Sale** will be Friday and Saturday, June 13 & 14, 2008. This is great way to get rid of your unwanted items and shop for bargains!

We are looking for 4-6 volunteers who would be willing to put up, take down, and store the neighborhood garage sale signs. We'd also like a volunteer to coordinate ads in the KC Star and Wednesday Magazine, as well as work on the map and list of participating homes and interesting items.

If you can help out, please email redbridgehomes@yahoo.com.

Spring Cleaning and Bulky Items

It's hard, once you're motivated to clear out "stuff," to keep those bulky items out of sight until Bulky Item Pickup on the 16th of the "even" months. However, using the curb as a long-term extension of the trashcan makes our neighborhood look well....trashy. Please try not to put bulky items out more than a day in advance of the scheduled pickup.

Red Bridge Homes Association
222 W. Gregory, Suite 201
Kansas City, MO 64114