



Good Hope Farms Garden Committee

If you missed the Good Hope Garden Committee's first green newsletter which we dropped off at your home, you can find it on our neighborhood's website.

As you can see the work has begun on the entrance island. Dave, my husband, and John Brosious from Deerfield dug out the bushes and removed 2 truckloads of a gravel and dirt to lower it to curb level. Yesterday, I picked-up mulch at the township and spread it.

The next part of the project is collecting donations for the plants. In an email, one neighbor asked me why our dues cannot cover the entire project. This is a great question, so I want to take a minute to discuss this. Honestly, I had to ask Teri, because I did not know the answer.

Our dues are used for:

- Electric for Durkin Park and Entrance Sign
- Insurance for Durkin Park and Entrance Sign
- Maintenance for Durkin Park (pavilion, lawn, tree trimming and removal, etc.)
- Playground-grade Mulch for playground (This cannot be the township's mulch.)
- Port-a-potty at Durkin Park
- Maintenance of the sign (The new sign looks great!)
- Neighborhood Directory (Our great sponsors lower our costs with their advertisements.)
- Garage Sale Advertising Costs (Many neighborhoods charge residents who participate.)
- Newsletters and Website Costs
- Annual Fire Department Donation
- Neighborhood Events:
Hallowfest, Breakfast with Santa , Easter Egg Hunt, Block Party

As you can see our dues cover quite a few important and required items for the neighborhood. I strongly believe that it is important to build a community, so I feel we need events for our families and a park to play and socialize. This helps to build wonderful connections with our neighbors and makes our neighborhood desirable. Even if you or your children don't take advantage of these events and/or the park, this desirability is extremely important. There are plenty of available homes in other neighborhoods. You only have to walk over to Good Hope South to see that there are options. We need to make sure our neighborhood is attractive to families. If we have a healthy neighborhood with activities for the young and the old, if we have a park that is well maintained, if we have a beautiful entrance, then families will want to move here which increases our property values. Unfortunately, less than 60% of our neighbors pay their dues, and therefore our dues have been increasing. I am hoping this percentage changes, and we all work together to make our neighborhood thrive. Until this happens, we will have to seek some donations for the cost of our flowers and shrubs, because our current dues are just covering our costs.

ISLAND DESIGN: Through help from a Master Gardener friend, I put together a design for the island. If you are interested in seeing the design and flower prices, they are in the “Take One” box in the entrance island. We can thank Andy Green, our neighbor and realtor, for donating the box.

PLANT DONATIONS: I have approximate prices, so you can see that getting appropriate plants is not cheap. I would love it if some of you would decide to sponsor a specific plant. There will not be a silver name plate, but you can smile when you see it growing. ☺ Please be generous, even \$5 would help and give you some ownership. **Drop off donations to Teri Guelcher at 5277 Strathmore.**

I have had a couple of donations. My favorite one so far was a beer and a check donated by Marti and Susan Eichelberger. I have to confess to John, the other strong volunteer, that my husband drank the beer. Teri, our president, has received a few donations and encouraging notes, too. I love when she shares your comments with me.

VOLUNTEERS: This first year the plants will need water to get their roots established. I need a lot of volunteers to sign-up to water, dead-head flowers and/or weed occasionally throughout the summer. Please, email or call me.

GOOD HOPE FARMS GORGEOUS GARDEN AWARD: I had discussed the possibility of starting this award. A yard would be chosen and a sign would be displayed in the yard for a period of time. Joe Rishty from Meadowbrook is a wonderful sign maker and has offered to make this sign for the neighborhood. This is such a gracious offer. If you see him out by his gorgeous stone wall or lovely ornamental trees, tell him, “thank you.”

I have had some great emails from some of you. I love getting to know more of my neighbors, and I thank you for your positive feedback. My favorite email so far was one that inquired about the people who removed the bushes. This person wondered if these “landscapers” were from the neighborhood, because he wanted to hire them. Dave and John, you might have a paying job after all.

Introduce yourself when you see me walking my curly brown and white dogs, Johanna Brown

Email: davejohanna@comcast.net Phone: 635-8158

PS: If it doesn't get warm soon, I am moving south, and you will have to find some other garden wacko.

PSS: Funny, I want to save my back this year, so I had my home's mulch delivered. However, I go and shovel a truckload of mulch for the neighborhood. This saved us \$75. I am writing you this, so you know I will be frugal when it comes to your donations.