



Whispers

WHISPERING HEIGHTS / COLLINGWOOD

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2008, VOLUME 17, ISSUE 1

WWW.WHCCA.ORG

4957 LAKEMONT BLVD SE, PMB 342, BELLEVUE WA 98006

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Mail theft again, and locking mailboxes

Over the past few years there have been occasional reports of mail theft in our neighborhood. Recently another such episode occurred. So we are re-visiting the topic of locking mailboxes and precautions you can take to reduce the risks of stolen mail and identity theft. Here is the story of one neighbor:

"We began to suspect that we had been the victims of mail theft around the first week of January when a USPS tracking number noted that a small package (one that would

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Entrance Signs: Call for new Whispers graphic

As you can clearly see above, our *Whispers* masthead is very out of date after the terrific re-landscaping project which was completed this past Fall. Submissions of proposed new graphics are welcome from any resident. If several options look good, we'll put them up for a vote in the next *Whispers*.

The Hot Sheet! For more information,

Egg Hunt, Mar 22nd (Sat, 11am)

The ever popular annual Egg Hunt for kids will take place on Saturday morning, March 22nd at Lattawood Park.

As usual, massive quantities of plastic eggs, painstakingly loaded with treats by WHCCA volunteers will be "hidden" early on Saturday morning.

Heather McCrone has volunteered to manage this event, and will have a drop-in "egg stuffing party" at her house between noon and 5pm on Saturday, March 15th. Helpers are also requested for both stuffing and hiding eggs on the morning of March 22nd.

This time of year it is likely to be a little drizzly but the event will go forward no matter what the weather (okay, a big snow storm might cause a problem but it isn't too likely...)

If you want to help stuff or hide eggs, please contact Heather by email (hansli@juno.com).

Note to dog owners: Please be especially considerate about picking up after your pet at Lattawood park (even in the bushes!) as kids will be scouring the park for treats on March 22nd.

Spring cleanup, April 19th (Sat 9-12)

It's that time of year again! The Annual Spring Clean-Up is coming April 19th! All residents big enough to pull a weed are called upon to help "spiff-up" the neighborhood. It is always a good way to kick-off the spring, a great way to meet your neighbors and have some fun! Even if you just have an hour to spare, come to one of the project sites (listed below) between 9am and noon to help out.

The traveling 'Goody Wagon' will provide hot and cold beverages and Krispy Krème doughnuts to all the dedicated workers at each of the sites. Thanks to Starbucks Coffee for their continued support.

The Clean-Up will be held rain or shine. Weather is not an excuse! Wear your best work clothes and bring a rake, shovel, or weeding tools if you can (wheelbarrows are also welcome!).

If you have questions, please contact Rob or Michelle Cash (425) 401-8517. If leaving a message, please be sure to leave your name and phone number. See details online at whcca.org. Cleanup project sites this year include:

- Collingwood Park
- Gravel trailhead (located on SE 47th Place)
- The ravine on 46th Way
- The Heights trailhead Lower (located at 3-way stop on 46th Way)
- The Heights trailhead upper (located at top of lower trailhead on SE 47th Pl.).

Coffee social, April 16 (Wed 7-9pm)

The WHCCA board is hosting the second annual "coffee social" for residents on Wednesday evening at the Lewis Creek Park Visitors Center (see whcca.org for map). In addition to meeting your neighbors and enjoying some great coffee and treats, there will be information and very brief presentations about the block watch program and emergency preparedness.

If you have questions or are interested in helping, contact board member Sharon Afforde (see back page) for the latest status.

Rants and raves! Selected compliments and complaints from the 'hood

By Howdy Neighbor

Bellevue Reporter

Thank you to the *Whispers* newsletter for publicizing information on how to stop delivery of the Bellevue Reporter!!! This is something I've been wanting to pursue for months - you made it extremely easy for me! I hope that my request succeeds. THANK YOU!

Neighbor for saving paper

Cats roaming the neighborhood

Why is it rude to not pick up after your dog, but it's ok to let your cat roam the neighborhood and use other neighbors' flowerbeds for their toilets?? It is more than rude; it is also dangerous to the cats for the obvious reasons - cars and coyotes. Cats often don't have collars with ID tags and are usually not licensed, so if they end up at the Humane Society because they roamed too far and were injured, it's a sad, avoidable situation.

So be a considerate neighbor and keep your cats inside.

JT, Collingwood

Love the new entrance signs

I really enjoyed, as always, the latest edition of the *Whispers*, and the article on the entrance upgrades. Kudos to all the hard workers! it is so appreciated by us all. the work is beautiful and really makes a difference each time we pass by them. The engraved rocks are very handsome and fit in with our neighborhoods. Thanks to everyone who had any part in this project.

CS, Collingwood

Problem dog off leash

A few months ago my husband and I were walking our lab on her leash. We noticed a dog that was off leash - it saw us as well and seemed interested. I kept our dog on a short leash and my husband was walking right behind me but the other dog came from behind and attacked our dog, injuring it before we could scare the aggressor away. Our dog was not being defensive or showing any aggression yet the other dog viciously went after her.

We found the owners of the attacking dog with the help of a neighbor that heard the commotion. They were apologetic, said their dog was always nice around them, and they did pay our vet bill.

But when I went to their house to pick up a check, a child opened the door and the dog went right out! When I told the parents that the dog was out again, they were unaware.

Please be considerate and safe and don't let your dog run loose! And if you have an aggressive dog that will attack other dogs without provocation, how certain are you that it would never attack a child? If you have such a dog and also small children, you should consider seriously the risk and liability of keeping that dog at all.

Thanks for all that you and the other members of the board do to make this a great neighborhood.

Dog Lover for Safe Dog Walking

Submitting future Rants or Raves

*If you see something in the neighborhood that warrants a Rant or a Rave, mail a **brief** note to our WHCCA mail box, Attn: Howdy Neighbor Rants and Raves, PMB 342, 4957 Lakemont Blvd SE, Bellevue, WA 98006. Or email it to the Whispers editor. We will do our best to publish all comments (at least those which don't get censored!) in the next Whispers.*

Yours truly, Howdy Neighbor

Staying in touch. How to always know what's happening in your city

Email alerts for all city activities, events, and services.

Since last August, Bellevue has provided a new service to help residents stay informed about everything from events to emergencies. The press release describing this program is available on the web at http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/GovDelivery_intro_news_release.htm.

To sign up, provide your email address at http://service.govdelivery.com/service/multi_subscribe.html?code=WABELLE.

Crime web alert

A related alert system which may require separate registration is the new "CrimeWeb" system. The following description was provided by the Bellevue Police Department.

CrimeWeb.net is a free service which will assist in communicating crime and community issues in a fast and efficient manner. CrimeWeb.net delivers information using the Internet to provide increased two-way communication between Officers and the citizens they serve.

Providing citizens and business owners with timely community and crime information creates a shared partnership and a proactive approach against criminal activity. This information, cou-

pled with the basic principles of a neighborhood watch, can help citizens take an active role in reducing the overall crime rate in their neighborhoods and improve their quality of life.

CrimeWeb.net has the ability to map the location of an incident and features a built-in Spanish translation link.

To become a member, citizens only need to visit www.crimeweb.net and provide an email address, password, and a zip code. Registration is free of charge and once registered, citizens can begin receiving notifications and alerts by email and text messaging. You do not need to live in the City of Bellevue to get this service. The Bellevue Police Department can issue the following community alerts and events:

- Crime alerts and wanted persons
- Crime prevention tips
- Missing persons
- Crime and scam tips for businesses
- Obtaining anonymous tips on specific crimes
- Reporting registered sex offenders
- Financial crimes and illegal scams
- Crime Watch information and meetings
- Report recently resolved crimes
- Community information alerts
- Upcoming Police and safety programs
- Homeland Security alerts

About CrimeWeb.net:

CrimeWeb.net is a patented, centralized clearinghouse used by public safety agencies across the nation to distribute information to the communities they serve. CrimeWeb.net is a product of Citizen Notification Service.

CrimeWeb.net can also be accessed from the Bellevue Police Department Web page www.bellevuewa.police_home.htm. Just click on "Daily Recaps and CrimeWeb.net Alerts"

For more information about CrimeWeb.net call Detective Richard Chinn at 425-452-6915

Thanks.

Detective Richard Chinn
Crime Prevention
Bellevue Police Department
425-452-6915
425-452-2812(fax)
rchinn@bellevuewa.gov

(Continued from page 1, Mailboxes)

fit into our mailbox) was delivered to our house on 12/26, but we never received it. We then noticed from our account online that two Netflix DVDs were delivered on 12/24, but again, we never received them.

I then recalled that back in November, around Thanksgiving, I had received a letter noting the pin number for a new credit card. Since I never received the credit card, I called our financial advisor. He confirmed with the credit card company that somebody had tried to activate the credit card, but failed.

On January 4 I visited the post office to report the mail theft. I spoke with a manager, who then talked with the delivery person for our neighborhood. The delivery person was not aware of any other cases of mail theft recently, but he recommended that we install a locking mailbox.”

WHCCA discounted locking mailbox

The WHCCA recommends a specific locking mailbox that works with our shelters

(Pinnacle #1022, Davis Tool, Hillsboro OR, \$115, call 877-968-4827, ask for WHCCA discount). They should fit four to a shelter if there's no center post. Some shelters in the neighborhood have the center post and some don't. If a center post exists, then it has to be cut out in order to support four locking mailboxes.

The inside measurement of the shelter itself is 44 inches, after the center post has been removed. The locking mailbox measures 10.5 inches in width, so technically they should all fit (see adjacent photo showing one locking box and digital mockup showing four locking boxes).

Postal drop boxes

The board has inquired in the past with the US Postal Service about getting a mail drop box in our neighborhood. However, current USPS policy limits collection boxes to public places such as shopping centers or business parks, due to security and theft concerns.

The closest drop boxes are at Lakemont Shopping Center (in front of the UPS store) and in the Eastgate Plaza near Albertsons (in front of the Savings & Loan).

Mail box shelter with one locking box and no center post.



Same mail box shelter with digital "cloning" to show four locking boxes



Odds & Ends (but important ones!)

Moles!

My neighbor and I share a common fence, tall trees that shade both our properties, as well as something we'd rather not be sharing...moles! These evasive little creatures are creating circular mounds of dirt throughout my front yard, making my lawn look a bit like a minefield instead of the putting green look I was going for. Due to their burrowing, the moles remove earth which should be supporting the grass, making the lawn quite soft in places. They're equal opportunity burrowers as they traverse to my neighbor's yard with no regard to property lines, making this a communal problem.

I'm not trying to make a mountain out of a mole hill, but I am curious how other WHCCA neighbors may have dealt with these creatures and this problem in the past. If you have remedies, solutions, or advice on how you've dealt with mole or other creature problems in the past, please submit your suggestions to any board member, and we will provide a summary in the next newsletter!

Merrick Van Dongen

Free emergency home alarm idea

If your car has an electronic key fob with a panic button, it probably works quite a distance from your car. So why not use it as a home panic alert?

Consider putting your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to break in, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies.

A wife suggested that her husband carry his car keys with him if he is working outside, on the roof for example. If he fell and were hurt, he could activate the car alarm and she would know there was a problem.

If you decide to use this "free alarm system," be sure to test it (briefly!) to find out if it works everywhere in your house.

Calling All Women Golfers

Would you like to play golf with other women? Would you like to learn the rules of the game? Would you like to maintain a handicap?

Here is your chance! Snoqualmie Falls Ladies Golf Club has openings for new members. We play every Tuesday, March through October. Play starts between 8:00 and 9:00am depending on the season at Snoqualmie Falls Golf Course in Fall City.

Dues are \$55.00 and include membership in the Washington State Golf Association which maintains players' handicaps.

For more information, contact Membership Chair, Sally Brunette, 425-562-2670, sally-bru@comcast.net.

WHCCA 2008 Annual calendar

- Egg hunt, Mar 22nd (Sat)
- Coffee social, Apr 16th (Wed)
- Spring cleanup, Apr 19th (Sat)
- Bike parade, Jul 4th (Fri)
- Garage sale, Jul ? (Sat, date TBD)
- Picnic, Aug 16th (Sat)
- Annual meeting, Nov 10th (Mon)

2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers —

President: Merrick Van Dongen
vandongen@earthlink.net, 425-644-7676,
4660 159th Ave SE

Vice Presidents: Jeremy & Keri Kiefer
Keri.kiefer@comcast.net, Jeremy@
brightonjones.com, 425-747-2447, 16208
SE 46th Way

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GretchanL@hotmail.com, 425-644-4580
15422 SE 47th Street

Treasurer: Bob Blaisdell
rgblaisdell@att.net, 425-746-3346, 15911
SE 47th Court

Board Members at large —

Mark & Sharon Afforde
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forde@yahoo.com, 425-641-3478, 4685
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Mike & Cathy Halliday
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4631 161st Avenue SE

Scott & Danielle Winter
Dswinter66@msn.com, 425-746-3346,
15723 SE 46th Way

**Meet new WHCCA board member and
President Merrick Van Dongen**

Last Spring I moved to Whispering
Heights with my wife Shauna and two
daughters, Carly (10) and Sophie (7).
We're happy to be
here and are en-
joying the
neighborhood
immensely. Here
is a little back-
ground about me
and my family:



I am originally
from the East
Coast and went to the U.S. Naval Acad-
emy in Maryland and the University of
Twente in the Netherlands. I am a former
U.S. Navy submarine officer and I've
worked in the education/training field for
over 17 years, currently working for Mi-
crosoft. My family and I moved out to
Washington state from the East Coast
three years ago, and we have also lived
and worked in Canada and the Nether-
lands.

We have a lot of new blood on the
WHCCA Board this year, including me.
We are looking forward to hosting our
regular events, but we are also looking
for ways to build on the improvements
made by past boards. If you have ques-
tions, concerns, or suggestions for en-
hancing the neighborhood., let me know.
Or come to one of our monthly board
meetings!

Merrick Van Dongen

WHCCA ADJUNCT FUNCTIONS

Communication: Al Patterson,
allenp@cryptosafe.com, 425-643-
1905

Emergency planning, blockwatch:
currently unassigned (any volun-
teers?)

Landscape liason: Mike Halliday,
halliday.m@comcast.net, 425-614-
3520

Residents database: Steve Sanford,
steve.sanford@comcast.net, 425-
649-9042

Web site: Will Hargreaves,
willhargr@aol.com, 425-643-0549

Whispers distribution: Lin Sanford,
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Whispers editor: Will Hargreaves,
willhargr@aol.com, 425-643-0549

Vorley's also join WHCCA board!

Natasha and Wade Vorley also recently
joined the WHCCA board of directors.
We will be sharing information about
them in the next issue of Whispers. In the
mean time, welcome to the board and
thank you for contributing some of your
valuable time towards making this
neighborhood a better place to live!

Volunteers needed! The WHCCA
depends on YOUR participation! We al-
ways need volunteers on the Board of
Directors. Please call or email any board
member to today, or use the dues sub-
mission form below to indicate your will-
ingness to help out.



Please send your dues today! The suggested amount is \$30 per household...

COMPLETE & MAIL this form with check payable to "WHCCA". Send to:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS FOR OCCASIONAL WHCCA MAIL _____ (NOT SHARED OUTSIDE WHCCA)

Dues enclosed \$ _____ (\$30 suggested) I am also enclosing an additional donation of \$ _____

WHCCA Treasurer, PMB 342
4957 Lakemont Blvd. SE
Bellevue WA 98006

I'd like to help on these neighborhood activities: WHCCA Board of Directors __, Annual Picnic __, Egg Hunt __, Newsletter editing or distribution __, July 4th Bike Parade __, Emergency Planning __, City liaison __, Block Watch __, Garage Sale __, Spring Clean-Up __, Membership Drive __, Other interest/expertise (please describe) _____

So that we may realistically assess the role our website (www.whcca.org) can play in helping keep you informed, please tell us:

Do you have internet access at home? YES __, NO __. How often do you use the internet at home? DAILY __, WEEKLY __, OTHER __?