



CITY OF NORTH COLLEGE HILL MAYOR'S NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2004



We're back! Yes, THE NEWSLETTER is back. We wanted to have three this year but the first one was pretty big so we had to go with two again. I'll be good next year and keep each one brief. Well, I'll try anyway! Lots of "stuff" to talk about so let's get to it. Grab a cold something, settle back and enjoy.

POLICE: Lots of activity here...and it is all good. Listen to this. We received commendation letters from two citizens that said our officers helped defuse potentially dangerous domestic situations. If your Police Department is doing their job, they prevent things before they happen and nobody hears about it. That is being good at what you do. Thanks to Officers Maus, Lasonczyk, Kelly, Fritz, Jones, and Roos.

The Ohio State Fire Commission awarded Police Officer Henn, and former Officer Woods, the 2003 Ohio Fire Service Citizens Award for their bravery in their attempted rescue of the victim in a fatal fire in 2003. CONGRATULATIONS! We are all very proud.

Our Safety Enforcement Program (STEP) is working very well. There were about 90 citations written in July alone. We are very aware of the importance of visibility of our officers on the streets. Thanks to the earnings tax increase, in addition to the above-mentioned program, we will be adding another fulltime officer before the end of 2004 and a second fulltime officer in the first quarter of 2005. Thanks to you, we are able to add these needed officers.

We have had many questions regarding the Bike Patrol. Simply, they haven't been very active due to staffing levels. That will change. Our drug enforcement campaign is continuing. This is a big problem in our society and we must stop it. That's our plan and our program. We will not back off this issue. Remember, you can help by being vigilant. If you see something, call 521-7171, or fill out a "Hot Spot" card at the new Municipal Building. You may remain completely anonymous. It is every citizen's job!

Last, but not least, hats off to our Citizen Police Academy Alumni. We received a very nice letter from the Hamilton County Fair organizers thanking them for their help at this year's Fair. This is great, positive exposure for our City. Speaking of Citizen's Police Alumni, there is always opportunity for more involvement in our Citizens on Patrol. If interested call Tracy at 521-7413.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Once again, thanks to all of you, our fire department is on the job 24 hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. It's a nice feeling to be assured of emergency assistance whenever we need it. However, we aren't sitting still. We are looking into ways to extend both the expertise and services available to our citizens such as preventative action programs to avoid injury and protect property. We are also looking at administrative changes. You may be surprised to know that while the Fire Department is our largest department, it is the only one with NO fulltime supervision. I have recommended to Council to seriously consider this situation and have offered ways to pay for it without impacting the income from the general fund. It is time we start planning for the future. To borrow a phrase, the future is now!

How busy is our Fire Department? Well, since May they have had 336 EMS runs and 116 fire runs. Two of our fire trucks are basically worn out. We are considering replacing one and selling the other. Specifications are being written. We have a plan that may not require as much equipment if we have the right equipment. You know the old saying, "work smarter, not harder". The equipment will be paid for from the separate equipment fund. Again, no impact to the general fund.

PUBLIC WORKS: As always, a HUGE hats off to our crew, especially this year. While they have kept up their usually great job on our streets, I asked them to put on another hat and perform a task that nearly everyone thought impossible. I asked them to remodel the former Huntington Bank building into the City Administrative

offices. Oh yeah, for less than \$5,000. Guess what? THEY DID IT! It's not completely finished, but we are in and operating. Never underestimate our Public Works crew. Thanks to: John Knuf, Ben Collins, Roger Heckenmueller, Steve Meyman, Tony Poll, and Don Zureick. Also, thanks to our part-time recreation crew for helping: John Knuf Jr., Ryan Gardner, and Brandon Majors. The part-timers moved a lot of boxes, cabinets, and furniture for us. I must also thank Jungle Jim, yes THE Jungle Jim, for his generous "donations" of materials for our new facilities. It saved us a ton of money. As a side note, welcome back to Ben Collins. He was on sick leave for a while, but has recuperated and back with a smile!

RECREATION: The pool report is not good. 2004 marked the 3rd straight year that we have had a decline in attendance. This year was the worst. It may be due to our buddies, the cicadas, lousy weather, or both, but this trend is not good. We need your input. The Recreation Commission would like to know what needs to be done to bring you back to the pool. Be blunt. If it is staff, management, equipment, price, whatever. Decisions need to be made quickly. We are looking at a possible \$80,000 repair job & we don't want to invest if residents aren't coming to the pool, or aren't interested in swim lessons for their children. This new liner would be warranted for 10-15 years. Again, if there isn't enough interest, why have a pool? We need your input so PLEASE take just a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey. On the positive side, our other programs are going strong. The Fishing Derby in June was lots of fun. The weather cooperated and our kids from NCH got their picture in the paper!

TAX DEPARTMENT: Speaking of finance, we are doing OK. Are we in debt? Yes. Can we pay it off? Yes. As I've said before, it is like remodeling your house. In order to improve and/or grow, you need to make changes. That costs money. Unless you won the lottery, you go in debt. Same thing applies to the City. We just need to make sure we can pay it off. So far, so good. Our tax collections are up (thank you very much) and so is our General Fund income.

Council was presented with a financial plan for the future (5 years) and it is being studied. We are blessed with very talented Council members and I have confidence they will do the right thing for all of us. In the meantime, I'll keep throwing out ideas even though some may seem to be a little crazy. Other good news; our estimated tax income this year will be approximately \$1,900,000. The bad news is our expenditures will be nearly the same. Sounds like our finances at home!

STREETS & HIGHWAYS: The MSD project on Goodman Avenue between Galbraith & Hamilton is finally complete. I think this project belongs to "Ripley's Believe It Or Not"! Work continues on the residential end of Goodman. As part of the MSD project, MSD will pave the streets torn up as part of the construction.

Attention all those residents on Meis and West Belmar: your fun will begin this spring, if not sooner! Preliminary work is being done now but the serious stuff won't start till spring. This is a major reconstruction project, which means things will get very hectic and inconvenient for some time. Please have patience; the finished product will be great! Thanks to all those who "survived" the Richard/Marvin/Telford project. We hope you enjoy your new street.

The sidewalk repair program (remember that?) is still awaiting proper legislation in order to proceed. Shakespeare once said something about this type of procedure but I can't print it here, this is a *family* newsletter. With a little luck, we will proceed in the spring.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT: The "One Block at a Time" project has begun. The 1800 block of Catalpa was chosen as the first block. This is a neighbor-to-neighbor program with people helping one another to make their block better. On September 25th & October 2nd the 1800 block was transformed. All it took was a lot of mutual respect. It was amazing, at the initial "block party", some neighbors actually met each other for the first time. What a joy to see. We hope this is just the beginning! In the coming winter months, we will be having seminars, free to the public, on such subjects as basic budgeting, home maintenance, "how to" tips for around the house, remodeling, and finance. US Bank, Bank One, Lowes, and Home Depot have agreed to take part. More subjects and instructors will be added as we go. Watch for schedules in the Hilltop.

There is activity involving possible new businesses at Hamilton and Galbraith. Both corners are in very sensitive negotiations right now so I really cannot say too much except both involve major players. Keep your fingers crossed. We also want to welcome a new business to town. The "Grab-n-Go Market" opened up at the corner of Bake and Galbraith. We wish them well.

If you go to City Hall & want to go to the Post Office, no we didn't close; we are just across the street at 1704 W. Galbraith. Stop in and you can see the latest chapter in the building of pride in our City. N.C.H. is finally operating out of offices fit for human habitation. Other offices that have moved include: Safety- Service Director, Administrative Assistant, Public Works Director, Tax Department, Building Department, and Property Maintenance. They all have newly renovated, larger quarters from which to work. And yes, after over 20 years, I actually have my own office. We didn't want to rush into anything. If you missed reading the Public Works section, read it again to find out how we did it. This is just the first phase. Our goal for 2005 is to move the Treasurer, Auditor, Council Chambers, & a new, large community room into the new Municipal Building. The rest of the good news is that by moving there, we fill a building that was not only vacant but also contaminated (which is being fixed thanks to Jerry Thamann's efforts in getting a grant). Then we can finally expand the Police facilities in such a way that we immediately relieve the horrid conditions in which our people have worked for years. Except for a few doors, we can make the changes at a minimal cost. Security will be increased as well as efficiency. Please feel free to visit your new Municipal Building. After all, it belongs to all of us.

BITS & PIECES:

- Mark your calendars! Halloween is October 31st from 6:00-8:00 PM.
- Election day is Tuesday, November 2nd. It is our right and obligation to vote. Too many citizens take this privilege for granted. I would love to see 100% turnout to show others that we here in N.C.H. value our American heritage. We have voter information brochures available at the Municipal Building.
- Did you notice N.C.H. schools are continuing to move up in scholastic ratings? Keep up the good work. We should all be proud of ALL our students, teachers, and administrators. To all those who make it happen, thank you! I don't think you hear it often enough.

Congratulations to our **Yard of the Month** winners:

~Nancy Harris	~ Rick Brookbank & Carol Dane	~Dan & Judy Asmann
~Mark & Rita Wietmarschen	~Dean Hasson	~Mary Ann Schroer
~William Frey & Toby Schuler	~Barbara Anderson	

We appreciate all your efforts in making N.C.H. a more beautiful city!

- Our sports teams are another source of pride for our City. Be it football, basketball, baseball, soccer, or swimming, young men and women who wear our name on their jerseys are our representatives. They do us proud, win or lose, in the way they conduct themselves. JoAnn & I attend as many events as time allows and we have yet to be anything but bursting with pride. Make plans to attend not only the athletic contests, but also the plays, concerts, and all other events that go on at school. We need to show our youth we support their efforts and achievements.
- Speaking of achievement! Congratulations to Raushee Warren! He is one of our young residents who went to the Olympics as a member of the U.S. Boxing Team. What a source of pride for N.C.H.!
- The N.C.H. Dolphin swim team made their presence felt this year. Individuals on the team won medals in many events and others were awarded ribbons at the NSSL Championships this year. The swimmers were recognized equally as most valuable members during the recent awards ceremony. This is yet another reason to support our swimming pool!
- The N.C.H. Business Association has reformed and is actively adding new members. They have had several meetings and an event at the N.C.H. football game on September 10th and they are currently planning many more great things for our City! The 1st annual NCH Business Association Golf Outing will be on October 18th at the Clovernook Country Club. We urge any business owner or City affiliate

to come, join the Association, and find out the great things they are doing for our City! If you would like more information, please call Michele at Chuck Vonderhaar's CPA office (522-5897).

- Crime Prevention Officer Apro has procured a limited supply of gunlocks. One gunlock per resident family may be picked up at the Police Department. They will be available Monday-Friday from 9:00am-4:00 pm. Proof of residency must be shown. This offer is only available to residents of N.C.H. while supplies last. Please help keep our children safe.
- This year's Leaf Program Saturday dates are: November 6, 13, 20, and December 4. Leaves must be placed in cans or cardboard boxes or bagged in paper bags and placed curbside by 6:00 AM on the day of pick-up. No plastic bags will be accepted! Also, let's keep in mind that our elderly and/or disabled neighbors may need help with leaves.
- Looking ahead- Christmas tree pick-up will be January 10th-14th. Place your tree curbside on your regular garbage pick-up day. Again, please do not place trees in plastic bags.
- The next newsletter will not be until February 2005 so have a great holiday season!

You know, there are times when you wonder if all the effort is worth it. One wonders if the challenges are just too great. I must admit, there have been times over the years I have had my doubts. But, you know what? In the last 9 months, I have met some new citizens and have been privileged to associate with some of the younger citizens of our community and I am happy to tell you our future looks bright. I see new energy beginning to bubble in the neighborhoods. I am speaking to new business investors about moving to N.C.H., and I see a new commitment to making our City be as good as it can be. We have a rich heritage in North College Hill and our future is solid. With your help, we will succeed. As always, it is an honor to be part of it. Thanks.

JUST A THOUGHT: Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead
US Anthropologist and Writer