



THE TRAILS Newsletter



Summer
2010

THE TRAILS BOARD REPORT

Annual Property Walk - It was a beautiful day for a walk on the morning that five board directors set out to assess the condition of our community and talk to the homeowners along the way.

Overall, The Trails has never looked better. Our homeowner's have spruced up, planted gardens, installed new decks and fences, and given their property charming, personal touches.

When you look a little deeper there are some problems: unfinished business and left over problems from the siding project, and on-going gutter and downspout issues.

Gutters & Downspouts - Time and settlement of the buildings, ice damage, and the process of removing and reinstalling the gutters has taken a toll on them. In most cases they are the original equipment installed during the construction of The Trails almost 40 years ago.

While the gutters are cleaned regularly, many of the downspouts are heavily clogged with organic material shed from our trees, preventing rain water from flowing out of the gutters and away from the building.

Storm drainage problems have consistently been at the top of the list of homeowner complaints for the past several years, and it will be The Trails' next big undertaking

Earlier this spring, Curry Association Management and a team of home construction experts began inspecting gutters and downspouts, studying roof spans, and observing water flow, gutter capacity and storm water drainage patterns throughout The Trails. The experts interviewed homeowners and photographed the many ways drainage problems have impacted basements, foundations, patios, garage floors, sidewalks, courtyards, driveways, chimneys, roofs, ceilings, drywall, and soil erosion.

Continued on page 2



IT'S TIME TO GET SERIOUS

For most of us in The Trails a large portion of our wealth is held in the value of our home. We've all felt the pain of watching the value of our property diminish over the past 18 months with the implosion of the economy and the Great Recession.

It doesn't matter how much work or money we put into our property maintaining or upgrading, when homes in The Trails go into foreclosure, people walk away from their mortgage, or sell at distressingly low prices. As the value of our home lowers, it can take years to recover.

Tough times are a call to action; to do whatever we can individually and collectively to stop any more of the value of our homes from washing down the drain.

Home value is measured in assets and liabilities. Besides those above, here's a few more:

Location - The Trails has a great location in a quiet community, on leafy streets, with easy access in every direction to all the region has to offer. The City of Gladstone is a well governed, caring community. And together we own an uncommonly beautiful piece of property.

A Homes Association - In quality communities, buyers want the assurance of a homes association overseeing and managing the collective interests of the community.

HOA Dues in Arrears - The number of owners letting their neighbors pay for their share of the maintenance and service costs.

Rentals to Owner Occupied Property - Renters have no vested interest in the property they occupy. Frequent rental turn-over can be a problem.

Appearance of Property - There's no such thing as shabby chic. It's critical that we maintain lawns, sidewalks, driveways and facilities, and eliminate visible clutter, bad roofs, run-down fences and decks, vehicles parked in the street, litter, dogs barking and running loose, vacant property, and weeds.

Trails homeowner's are shareholders, each having an investment and interest in keeping The Trails in shape physically and fiscally.

THE TRAILS BOARD REPORT

Continued from page 1

Siding Installation - A handful of homeowners continue to work out problems and unfinished business with Custom Windows and Siding since the installation of their vinyl siding.

If you have an unresolved siding problem, please report it in the survey you received. If you have already reported a problem, please give a history of what has transpired, and update us on where the situation now stands.

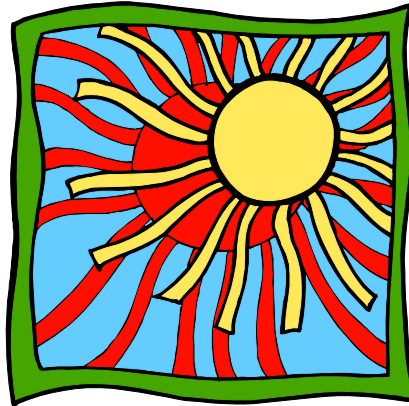
When we have compiled a list it will be presented to the contractor for corrective action, and followed up until a satisfactory outcome is reached.

Problems & Concerns Survey - To get a better understanding of the problems and concerns homeowner's are experiencing, Curry and the board are taking a community wide survey. The surveys will be reviewed individually, sorted, categorized and prioritized. Each homeowner will be contacted about their situation. We may need to contact you for more information.

Survey Outcome Meeting - A special homeowner's meeting will be announced to report the overall results of the survey, and to discuss the concerns of the community moving forward.

Curry and the board hope to identify the key issues that are widely felt throughout the community, and to spot any situations that are not on the radar.

Trails Directory of Owners - The Trails Directory is out of date. You are urged to complete and return the Trails Directory of Owners sheet included with the survey. Every owner's name and Trails address will appear in the directory. Beyond that, you decide if you want your phone number(s) or e-mail address printed. Your information will be kept private and on file in case you, or a person you designate, needs to be contacted in an emergency. See Page 4, *Contacting You In An Emergency*.



GLADSTONE SET TO VOTE AUG 3RD

\$7 M ROADS, WATER & SEWER LINES

The following text is printed with permission from the Gladstone Digital News-July 2010 at www.gladstone.mo.us.

CITY WORKS TO IMPROVE ROADS, WATER & SEWER LINES

On August 3, 2010, Gladstone voters will be asked to go to the polls and support the issuance of bonds for road and water/sewer improvements. These bond issues do not require a rate or tax increase to pay for the projects. Approval of these two bond issues will allow the City to make much needed improvements to roads and to water and sanitary sewer lines without an increase in cost for Gladstone residents. The proposed bonds are \$2 million for roads and \$5 million for water and sewer improvements.

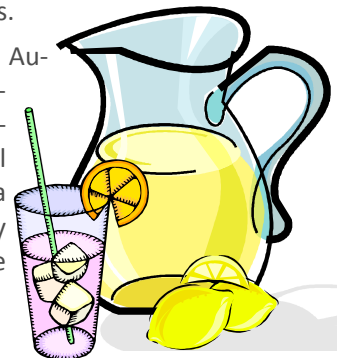
The \$2.6 million water bond will provide necessary improvements and upgrades for the water treatment plant and storage facility. These improvements are essential in order to maintain a quality water supply in Gladstone. The \$2.4 million sewer bond will upgrade the sanitary sewer system in Gladstone.

Although Gladstone owns and operates its own water treatment plant, it contracts with Kansas City for sewage treatment. Due to recent EPA mandates that Kansas City must follow, it is expected that Kansas City will dramatically increase its charges to Gladstone for sewage treatment services.

The sewer bonds will allow Gladstone to reduce the amount of sewage that flows into Kansas City's system by controlling the amount of storm water and groundwater that leak into Gladstone's sanitary sewer system. Reducing leakage, known as infiltration and inflow, will lessen the flow through the sewer lines that Kansas City charges Gladstone residents to treat. These steps will help minimize the financial impact of Kansas City's rate increases on Gladstone residents and business owners.

One of the best ways to reduce the inflow and infiltration problem is to line the existing sanitary sewers with cured in place pipe (C.I.P.P.), which is a process that allows the deteriorating pipe to be relined and sealed. The process reduces leaks (inflow and infiltration) and can be done without replacing the pipe or digging up yards or streets.

Both bond questions on the August 3rd ballot are no-rate-increase and no-tax-increase proposals. Gladstone residents will not pay an additional tax or see a rate increase from the City by authorizing issuance of these bonds.



Now Online
THE TRAILS NEWSLETTER
City of Gladstone Website
www.gladstone.mo.us
Click on Neighborhoods/Homes Associations



H²O

OUR MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE

For weeks, our attention has been riveted on the BP Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and the greatest environmental threat to our nation. Yet, another environmental concern exists right on our own street.

Storm drains and grates built into our yards and street curbs collect rain water, snow melt, and the water we use on our lawns. This run-off is directed into nearby creeks that feed into streams that feed into the river. From there the water travels a circuitous path all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Water washing into storm drains pickup oil from the street, lawn and agricultural chemicals, and other pollutants. As the water from storm drains moves into streams and rivers, it then picks up industrial waste and manufacturing compounds. This polluting of our nation's waterways is killing natural organisms, harming wildlife, and causing strange mutations in some species. It's the reason we can no longer safely eat certain fish from our oceans.

Storm drains and sanitary sewer systems are not the same. The water from your shower, toilet, dishwasher and washing machine flows to a waste water treatment plant where it's treated, purified and returned to you as clean water. The concern is that recent studies indicate all those detergents and cleaners we use, and body washes and products we slather on and wash off, plus the excess pharmaceuticals, drugs and supplements our bodies excrete as waste are challenging the capacity of our water treatment facilities to purify the water supply.

America has some of the safest drinking water in the world. And every year more "green" cleaners and personal products hit the store shelves. Yet as pharmaceutical companies produce more and more drugs, and people consume them, awareness of the concern is growing.

You may want to consider purchasing a filter for your drinking water. Filters won't remove bacteria, but they will filter out a lot of stuff you don't need, including elements like mercury. What's more, filtered water tastes better.

The most basic and simple water filter is a countertop pitcher system, like a Brita, or an attachment for your faucet. Plan on purchasing replacement filters.

You can help by reducing lawn chemicals and insecticides and toxic cleaners. Never pour anything into a storm drain, and don't discard medicines and drugs in the toilet or sink.

Water: it's essential for life and good health.



REBUILDING TOGETHER CLAY COUNTY NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

In April, Alan Napoli, Building Official for the City of Gladstone sent an e-mail to area neighborhoods and homes associations introducing a program called Rebuilding Together Clay County (RTCC), a volunteer-driven nonprofit organization that strives to provide a safe and healthy home for every Clay County resident by installing home safety modifications.

Rebuilding Together is a national nonprofit with more than 200 network affiliates working to preserve affordable homeownership and revitalize communities.

In 2001, Liberty, Missouri launched its own Rebuilding

Together affiliate, and has been successful in providing home repairs and safety modifications at no or low cost for low-income homeowners. Leveraging the value of donated labor, discounted materials, money raised through fundraising events and donations, in 2009 RTCC worked on 37 homes and 3 nonprofit facilities. An impressive 433 volunteers provided \$158,000 in home improvements.

Napoli's introduction to Gladstone neighborhoods and homes associations included a letter written by Rebuilding Together Clay County Executive Director, Clay McQuerry, announcing the expansion of the Liberty affiliate to all of Clay County due to a grant received from Clay Country Senior Services.

McQuerry's letter discusses the Safe at Home Program, and includes an appeal for "handy volunteers who love to help others." He wrote, "Our Safe at Home program creates safer living environments by installing grab bars, handrails, bathroom adaptive devices, and smoke detectors. We also have volunteer crews who build wheelchair ramps and modify steps. RTCC provides the necessary training, and we pay for the cost of the materials."

If you would like to offer your building skills and time to become a Safe at Home Volunteer, Clay McQuerry would like to hear from you. Call him at: 781-8985, or email: rtclaycountry@att.net.

For more information about Rebuilding Together Clay County, visit rebuildingtogetherclaycounty.org.

"Twenty-one deaths in Clay County were directly attributed to injuries from a fall. Our hope is that we can reduce the risk of these falls from ever happening." —Clay McQuerry.

TRAILS FITNESS WALKERS

TAKE FIRST PLACE!

The Trails captured first place in the City of Gladstone's Fitness Walk-Homes Association Division. Al and Connie Moore, Pam Cook, and Daniel Boyd took-on the challenge of logging as many minutes of walking as they could in 30 days during May, easily outpacing competing teams. Participants in the walk also agreed to record their daily intake of fruits and vegetables as part of the competition. Congratulations Team Trails!

NEED A NEW POOL KEY?

Pool keys and season tags for The Trails pool can be picked up at Curry Association Management's office, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ask for Alicia Crawford or her assistant, Zarina Cedar.

The first pool key and pass per household is free. If your pool key is lost, a replacement key and pass is \$25.00.

If your work schedule makes it difficult to arrive at the Curry office in time to pick up a key, contact Alicia or Zarina to make other arrangements. *See box below.*

TERMITE INSPECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT!

You are urged to periodically have your home professionally inspected for termites. Termites are wood destroying insects that can be difficult to eradicate once an infestation sets in. The damage is not covered by homeowners insurance.

An inspector should spend at least 30 to 45 minutes inspecting the exterior and interior, basement, sub-floor and crawl spaces, looking for the evidence of termite damage before making a report and recommending treatment.



THE TRAILS CALENDAR—2010

July 27
HOA Meeting

August 24
HOA Meeting

September 6
Labor Day
Pool Closes

September 28
HOA Meeting

October 26
HOA Meeting
Budget Meeting

THE TRAILS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pam Cook
President

Al Moore
Vice President

Daniel Boyd
Finances

Joan Johnson
Secretary

Christine Lies
Member at Large



GETTING IN TOUCH

WITH YOU IN AN EMERGENCY

The Trails Homes Association is updating its directory of homeowners and adding cell phones, e-mail addresses, work phones and emergency contact information to the files we keep stored in Curry's offices.

The plan is to have at least two methods of contacting you in an emergency or someone you designate as a contact when you are out of town, or cannot be reached.

Until a few years ago, the only information we kept on file for contacting homeowners in The Trails was an address and a home phone number. Today, that seems inadequate when many of us also communicate by e-mail and cell phones.

Many of our neighbors in The Trails are people living independently. Director, Pam Cook said, "I'm concerned for our older neighbors. We need to be sure we can contact them if there's a problem, warning, or a disaster."

Each of us can rest easier knowing that if a disaster or an emergency occurs, whether you are at home or away, someone on The Trails board or with Curry could get in touch with you, or contact someone you know.

Recently, you received a Directory of Owners information sheet. Please complete the information and return it to Curry Association Management, attention Alicia Crawford, Property Manager. *See box below.*

We will continue to print a paper directory for homeowners, and you can choose which contact information you want to appear in it. Everyone will be listed with at least their name and Trails address. All other information will be kept confidential and on file in Curry's office. Your information will not be distributed to outside sources or within the management company.

CURRY ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

Main Office Number: 816-414-5300

After hours, on weekends and holidays, call the Main Office number and leave a message. The manager-on-duty will call you back.

To contact Alicia Crawford, Property Manager:
Direct Line: 414-5323, e-mail: acrawford@curryre.com

Alicia is frequently out of the office managing a portfolio of homes associations. For faster results call Zarina:

Zarina Cedar, Administrative Assistant
Phone: 414-5304, e-Mail: zcedar@curryre.com

The Trails Newsletter is a neighborhood publication for the information and enjoyment of the homeowners and residents of The Trails. Editor: Joan Johnson, Distribution: Connie Moore, Email: thetrails1@live.com.