



SEPTEMBER 2019 - NEWSLETTER

President's Letter

I hope everyone has managed to stay reasonably comfortable during what has been a summer of record heat. At my house both the A/C and fans have been getting a solid work out.

As the summer comes to an end – and hopefully the heat with it – you may have noticed that it has been quieter than usual in Homeplace III. One reason is that we were in a temporary pause in our roofing process due to our roofer retiring. The other reason is our finances dictate that we contract only a few buildings at a time, when we have funds in place. The good news is that we have reviewed proposals and our finances, and the 21 Roofing Group is scheduled to replace the roofs of 2 more buildings (weather permitting):

- Building #83 is scheduled for Thursday September 5th
- Building #99 is scheduled for Friday September 6th

Each building will take approximately 1 day to complete. Work will begin each day between 7:00 - 7:30 a.m. and finish up between 6:00p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Please see the email from Grandchester Meadows sent on August 26th.

To ensure this roof replacement work is safe and smooth-running for all, we ask that you park away from buildings being re-roofed during their scheduled replacement as indicated above (between 7:00am-7:00pm). This will allow the contractors the space they need for their vehicles, materials and dumpsters. Contractors will try to limit the amount of parking spaces used during this process, but please be patient, as this is temporary.

The board is committed to have everyone's roof completed as close to the end of our special assessment period (Dec. 2020) as possible. Unfortunately, the building boom in our area that has increased all our home values substantially in the last year has put a high demand on roofers and we are facing a price increase for the remaining roofs that we must replace. **Be assured that this does not mean an increase in dues or a request for additional assessment. But it will likely mean a delay in starting our painting program that we hoped to get underway this year.**

On August 3rd we had the first outdoor community picnic event at our picnic tables thanks to the efforts of our social committee. The picnic tables located in the grassy area along the main road near buildings 88-91 are there for everyone's use and enjoyment. Feel free to get together with your family and neighbors.

Fall will come!

David Newman, President

Update from the Lawncare Service Working Group:

In response to a number of concerns received from community members regarding the current pattern of chemical spraying employed around our property, and its long term effect on our lawn and environment's health as well as the health of our community's children and pets, a small working group composed of community members (two of whom are also Board members) recently formed to research alternatives to the current practices. This Lawncare Service group is a focused and time limited sub-group of our Landscape Committee. The group has gathered enough information at this time to provide the Board of Directors and the community at large with a few different approaches to consider, and we anticipate that this topic will be discussed in more detail at our next Board Community meeting in September on Thursday, September 19th. In the interim, JBH Landscaping has received a "No Spray" instruction.

Update from the Landscape Committee:

This spring several homeowners expressed concern to the BOD that evergreens planted in front of the Homeplace III entry sign had grown large enough to block drivers' view of pedestrians and oncoming traffic on Fortunes Ridge Drive. JBH landscaping removed these bushes, in response to our community's concerns, to improve the safety of the intersection and enhance the visibility of the entrance to our community from the parkway. The landscape committee is considering additional improvements to the sign planting bed that might include low, native, grasses and ground cover as well as the possibility of lighting the sign.

Please watch for announcements regarding when and where trees are being removed and gutters being cleaned. We have increased the number of gutter cleanings from 3 to 4 per year in response to demand – or more correctly, more pine needles falling out of ever-bigger trees. This year's group of trees scheduled for removal were prioritized based on their condition and risk they pose to nearby structures. As you all know, we have many, many trees!

Suggestions and ideas are welcome.

Contact Bill Gardner
wngardner@juno.com

Update From Treasurer:

We've now moved well into the second half of our 2019 budget year. On the income side, from our regular and special assessments, our actual year to date income exceeds our projected year to date income by a nearly \$25K margin. Some homeowners are ahead on paying assessments, while others are currently behind on payments. On the expense side in our regular operating budget, a couple areas to highlight include our building maintenance costs and our tree maintenance costs thus far this year, both of which exceed that budgeted for. At this point of the year, the actual total expense of our operating budget remains below the total expense budgeted for. And as a reminder, monthly financial statements are available for review on the Grandchester Meadows website. And lastly, we are still awaiting the results of the Reserve Study currently underway, to assist with the community's financial budgeting into the future.

Please visit the Homeplace III website to view all financial reports.

15 MPH – THE COMMUNITY SPEED LIMIT

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE SPEED LIMIT THROUGH OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IS 15 MILES PER HOUR.
THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN, NEIGHBORS AND PETS DEPEND ON IT!**

About Your Neighborhood School – Southwest Elementary

Address: 2320 Cook Rd, Durham, NC 27713

Phone: (919) 560-3972

Hello neighbors. I am not only a board member, I'm a parent of a school-aged child. I want to begin this item by encouraging all HOA members who don't already do so to start paying close attention to the public discourse, in the news, radio, blogs, Nextdoor, etc. about public schools. I'm talking mostly to parents like me, but even if you don't have school aged children, the quality of the schools impacts the value of your home to prospective buyers, it's in your interest to pay attention.

When you do start paying attention, I want you to put a nickel in a jar for every time you hear the words: accountability, testing, failing, curriculum, rigor, and standards. Then take yourself off on a 3 day all luxury cruise with the money you just collected. You're welcome.

The conversation around Durham Public Schools is fraught, often negative, and controversial. From a real DPS parent, I want to share with you the words that most frequently represents what happens at Southwest Elementary on a day-to-day basis: Growth. Love. Caring. For all students – meeting them where they are when they come in the door and making sure that they grow in all ways. A community environment where EVERYONE is invested in your child's academic, social, and physical wellbeing. An environment so welcoming that several Southwest parents I know personally have left their jobs to become teachers at Southwest. Some of Southwest's highlights include:

- 1) A kindergarten – 5th grade 2-way Spanish immersion program comprised of 50% native English speakers and 50% native Spanish speakers. This teacher created program is so innovative that parents are choosing to live in the school's district just for the chance to participate.
- 2) A Community Schools grant program which allows additional funding for innovative wrap around programming and community engagement. As a parent, you want to be in a school that wants you there. This is absolutely the place.
- 3) An administration and teachers totally committed to being “the village” in “it takes a village to raise a child.”
- 4) A beautiful, short 15-minute walk to school with your little one(s) every morning, or, for those extra challenging mornings (of which there will be many) a 2-minute drive!

The only real way to see what the school has to offer is to participate in a personal tour, usually in January or February, or ask me.

Contact: Sara Bausch

Email: sbausch@gmail.com

Update from the Social Committee:

The Social Committee organized a summer potluck gathering on Saturday August 3rd, held outdoors at the community's picnic table area. Approximately a dozen community members attended, and both enjoyed the time socializing with neighbors as well as some tasty summer treats. And luckily, Mother Nature cooperated and provided a sunny, rather mild NC August day. Please keep an eye out for the next Social Committee gathering sometime in the fall, and plan to come out and meet some of your neighbors.

Free Local Events:

- September 7 – Brazilian Day NC Festival – 2PM – Durham Central Park
- September 7 – Oktoberfest – 2-10PM @ Bull McCabe's Irish Pub – 427 W. Main St
- September 8 – Taste of Soul NC Seafood Edition – 4-8PM @ 501 Foster Street; Free Admission
- September 14 – S'More Stories: Live Storytelling– Family Friendly 5:30-8:30PM @ Eno Amphitheater
- September 21 – Jerk Fest – 11:30AM -7:30PM @ Eno Amphitheater, 5101 N Roxboro Rd.
- September 21 – Third Friday Concert Series – 8-10PM @ Hi-Wire Brewing, 800 Taylor Street
- October 26 – Barktoberfest - dog friendly event from 3 PM to 6 PM at Durham Central