

THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

Spring 2013

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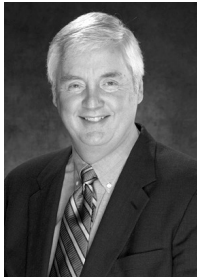


Join us for the Annual City of Mission Hills Keim Street Fair on Saturday, June 1st, at Belinder Circle.

INSIDE

- Frequently Called #s p. 2
- Capital Improvement Projects p. 2
- New Emergency Notification System p. 3
- Crime Prevention Article p. 5

Elections and City Governance



Rick Boeshaar
Mayor

Hopefully, by the time you are reading this, spring has begun and the municipal election is upon us. Mission Hills residents elect its governing body (a Mayor and five City Council members) for four year terms. The elections are staggered every two years in April of odd numbered years, with a primary election in February if needed. The offices elected in the February / April cycle typically are non-partisan elections (mayors and city council, school board members, Johnson County Community College trustees, and water district board members). These elections are separate from the officials elected in the August / November cycle of even numbered years. We typically elect national, state, and county leadership, in that cycle. Unfortunately voter turnout in the municipal elections tends to be lower (25-30% vs. 65-75%) than in the county, state, and national elections. This is probably due to several factors. These April positions tend to be volunteer jobs or ones with minimal compensation. Candidates can typically get their message and position on local issues out via mail, door-to-door discussions with neighbors, and through small local volunteer committees. In February and April, these candidates do not have to compete with higher office candidates for your attention and interest, or for your donations to run expensive media campaigns. Because these elections are non-partisan and are focused on the issues of many small localities, the metropolitan area-wide media have less coverage of individual races which might remind us to go vote. Despite these rationalizations for low voter turnout, I would argue that these elections deserve your interest and attention. They affect the conditions of where you live, where you send your children to school, how you receive and how much you pay for basic services to your homes.

Recently the lower voter turnout in the April cycle elections and the effort to reduce the cost of state government has been the siren song for state legislators to eliminate April elections and combine those races into the November cycle. I have been a voice of resistance because I believe it will be detrimental to our local candidates, making it more difficult and costly to be heard alongside the larger media campaigns of the higher offices. I also believe this effort to consolidate is but a Trojan horse for the political parties to bring partisan politics to local elections.

Four years ago, our City elections were dominated by the issues of residential development. Residents wanted to be heard on how to balance the rights of private property owners to build or add onto their homes vs. the rights of the neighborhood to have new houses fit within the size and character of the neighboring homes. You were heard! The City Council and the Planning Commission spent a great deal of time and effort with a planning firm to find a good balance, creating the Mission Hills Design Guidelines. Over the past

continued on page 2

Mayor's Comments

continued from page 1

year we have been implementing those guidelines, working through the issues of how to review development proposals against those guidelines. The results have been very positive. We still have more to do to make this process work smoothly, but the fact that I and your two council representatives up for election this year are all running unopposed speaks loudly about the way you feel this issue has been handled.

Thank you for participating in our discussions, in our public hearings, on our volunteer committees, and in our elections. PLEASE remember to vote on April 2nd and continue our traditions of excellent city government. ■

Frequently Called Numbers

Animal Control (Prairie Village Police)	913-642-6868
Animal Shelter - Great Plains	913-831-7722
City Hall	913-362-9620
Deffenbaugh Trash & Recycling	913-631-3300
Dig Safe (Kansas)	1-800-344-7233
Driver's Licenses	913-432-2266
Fire Dispatch (non-emergency)	913-432-1383
Hazardous Waste (JoCo Env Department)	913-715-6900
Homes Associations of Kansas City	913-385-2440
Johnson County Appraiser	913-829-9500
Johnson County Automated Mapping	913-715-1600
Johnson County Clerk	913-715-0775
Johnson County Government	913-715-5000
Johnson County Election Office	913-782-3441
Johnson County Records & Tax Admin	913-715-0775
Johnson County Sheriff Dispatch	913-782-0720
Municipal Court - Prairie Village	913-385-4680
Poison Control (KU Med)	913-588-6633
Police Dept Switchboard - Prairie Village	913-642-6868
Police Dispatch - Prairie Village	913-642-5151
Post Office - Prairie Village	913-362-6931
Johnson County Health Department	913-826-1200
Vehicle Tags - Kansas	913-826-1800

LOCAL UTILITIES

AT&T	1-877-722-3755
Johnson County Wastewater	913-715-8500
KCP&L Customer Service	816-471-5275
KCP&L Power Outages	1-888-544-4852
Kansas Gas Service	1-800-794-4780
Time Warner Cable	816-358-8833
Water District No. 1 of Jo Co	913-895-5500

2013 Capital Improvement Projects

61st Terrace

This street is unique in that it was built without a stormwater system. The 2013 project includes a new stormwater system, and replacement of all curbs, drive approaches and street pavement.

E. Mission Drive/Shadow Lane/56th Street and High Drive – 56th to 59th Street

Failing corrugated metal pipes on E. Mission Drive and 56th Street will be replaced with new concrete pipes as well as new catch basins for conveying stormwater. Street work will include new curbs, undercurb drains and driveway approaches, as well as new asphalt on all four streets.

Brookbank

Two failing corrugated metal pipes will be replaced with new concrete pipes to convey stormwater under the roadway. New catch basins, curbs, undercurb drains and driveway approaches will be placed in addition to the new asphalt that will be overlaid onto the street.

Brush Creek Ramp

Located along Mission Drive between Shadow Lane and E. Mission Drive, this maintenance ramp along with the failing wall that extends from the ramp to the E. Mission Drive culvert will be replaced. The new wall will be constructed of stacked stone, in accordance with the City's Open Channel Master Plan.

New Emergency Notification System



NotifyJoCo is a free public notification system, made possible by a partnership of local governments and public utilities in Johnson County, designed to keep Johnson County residents and businesses informed of emergencies. For those residents that register for it, Mission Hills will also use the service to disseminate non-emergency community alerts, such as:

street closures, citywide event reminders, trash reminders, and crime and safety alerts. These community alerts will replace the reminder postcards currently sent, saving your tax dollars.

Using contact information registered by you or your family, public officials will notify you by phone, email, or text of emergencies affecting your preferred location(s). If you do not register for NotifyJoCo, local officials will still attempt to contact you through NotifyJoCo using publicly available contact information when an emergency affects your area. The accuracy of this publicly available data cannot be guaranteed which is why it is important that you register (or “sign-up”) for NotifyJoCo by providing your contact information and customizing your contact preferences.

Sign-up online by following the NotifyJoCo link from the City’s website, www.missionhillsks.gov. If you do not have computer access, call 913-826-5555 for assistance with registration. NotifyJoCo data is secure and private, used only by local public officials for purposes described.

Mission Hills Homes Company to Preserve Nichols’ Vision

Many of Mission Hills’ residents are aware of J.C. Nichols’ grand vision for Mission Hills and its’ beautiful neighborhoods. Nichols envisioned parks, urns, fountains and statuary, many of which he brought back from Europe to be enjoyed by all Mission Hills residents. To continue to preserve the artistic forethought of Nichols, The Mission Hills Homes Company Board (The Board) has budgeted \$50,000 for deferred maintenance projects during 2013-2015.

The Board examined an analysis conducted by an outside company detailing statuary, fountains and park areas in need of improvement and repair. The criteria for prioritizing projects were as follows:

- **Safety** - if there was a safety issue
- **Deterioration** - if the object was on the verge of total failure and would not be able to be restored if allowed to deteriorate
- **Critical Icon** - if the committee felt that the object was essential to the overall appearance to the character of the community

The Board also kept in mind for projects to be geographically dispersed. In addition, it was concluded that some larger projects would be better handled by the Parks Board and the City.

Following is an overview of the proposed projects for the next three years. The actual timing and selection will be finalized after bids are received.

- 56th Street and State Line Road Entryway
- Pembroke Lane Entry
- Stratford and Oakwood Wishing Well Island
- Colonial Court East Sitting Wall Repair
- Mission and Brookbank Island Landscape
- High and Brookbank Island

The Mission Hills Homes Company Board encourages homeowners who have an idea or suggestion to share them with the Board. The Board volunteers typically meet once a month. ■

Out on a Limb: Tree Talk

by George L. Eib, City Arborist



George L. Eib

The recent storm deposited 20-25" of snow (which is equal to 2-3" of water) and caused limb damage to trees, evergreens and shrubs. It is important to prune damaged limbs properly and to make the proper cuts just outside the branch bark ridge, or branch collar, and angle down away from the stem. When pruning small branches, use sharp hand pruners and use a hand saw on larger branches.

As you probably know, the Emerald Ash Borer has made its way into the Kansas City metro area. The Borer kills trees by first flying into the canopy and laying their eggs in the bark crevices. The larvae drill through the bark and chew on the tissue that carries nutrients through the tree, eventually killing the tree.

There are several things you can do to help ward off the Borers for as long as possible.

- Keep good trees well pruned and remove weak trees.
- Drench the ground and trunk at the base of the tree early April to May with treatment lasting up to one year.
- You can also use the injection method that is effective for up to two years but is more expensive.

The City will observe Arbor Day on June 10, 2013 at 6:15 p.m. at City Hall. This will be the 21st year for Mission Hills to be certified a "Tree City USA" by the National Arbor Day Foundation. I encourage you to plant trees for many reasons, one of which is to help maintain the beauty of Mission Hills.

Contact me at City Hall if you have questions regarding your City trees or your private trees. ■

Spring & Summer Checklist

- ✓ Do not neglect watering your spring bulbs you planted last fall. Trees, evergreens and shrubs need about one inch each week, but take care not to overwater.
- ✓ Do not allow vines and ivy to grow up into the interior of plants as this can be damaging to the full development of trees and evergreens.
- ✓ It is best not to cut back ornamental grasses or Liriope until the end of March or April.
- ✓ Keep gutters clear of debris that can cause water to spill or pool which may cause dams. Dams will cause water to backup under shingles resulting in interior leaks.
- ✓ In Spring, spray Crabapples and Hawthorns for rust and scab diseases. This requires two applications starting with the first when leaves begin to emerge (April-May), with an additional application 3-4 weeks later.
- ✓ Do not be alarmed if recently pruned trees begin flowing sap from pruning wounds since this is common this time of year.

The State Line and Tomahawk Traffic Signal

The eastern border of our city is State Line Road and the operation of that road is shared with the City of Kansas City, Missouri. The operation and maintenance is governed by the two cities using common precedents as well as a written agreement covering cost aspects of its operation. Mission Hills pays for snow removal and coordinates street repairs. Both cities share the costs of street repairs. Kansas City, MO has responsibility for the installation and maintenance of traffic signals.

Kansas City's traffic control department began procedures to remove the traffic signal at Tomahawk/63rd Terrace and State Line because the traffic flow is too low to warrant a light. They prefer a two-way stop with State Line traffic passing freely. At the request of Mission Hills, they made the intersection a four-way stop so that east-west traffic can more easily cross or turn from Tomahawk or 63rd Terrace.

The former traffic light was very old and costly to maintain, and it did not meet current codes for traffic signals. In order to lower city budget costs, Kansas City is removing several other traffic signals in their city. Mission Hills is currently negotiating with Kansas City to install a new light that meets current codes, and the cost will be shared between the cities. Check the City's website for future updates. ■

Dangers of Social Networking Sites

by Matt Boggs, Crime Prevention Officer
Prairie Village Police Department

Posting photos on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter is a quick and easy way to show friends and family what you've been up to. Those innocent snapshots, though, could be revealing a lot more about your life than you think, potentially putting your home and family at risk. The first day of school, a big birthday, or a romantic stroll in the park are all memories you want to preserve and share with friends and family, but experts warn there may be a hidden danger contained in some of the photos you're putting online – a geo-tag. A geo-tag contains specific details like the time and date the photo was taken, along with the exact location of where it was taken. The location can be as accurate as one meter. Every smart phone out there now has GPS built into it, so it has become very prevalent to geo-tag photos.

With a geo-tagged photo, someone can find out where you live, where your children go to school, and your daily routine. For example, you post a picture of your nice, brand new 50-inch plasma TV at your house, and you are now sharing the location of that TV. An hour later, you are posting that your plane is delayed or posting a picture of your kids playing at the park. Now someone knows where you live, what TV you have and that you are not home. In addition to burglaries, experts say geo-tagged photos can also lead to stalking and domestic violence.

To protect yourself, ensure the privacy settings on your social networks are set on private or "friends only" and turn off the GPS feature for pictures on your phone (check your phone's instruction manual to determine how to turn off geo-tagging or location services). Do not post your travel plans on Facebook, twitter or any other social media. Know who your "friends" are and who you are allowing to see your posts, photos and other personal information.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Crime Prevention Officer Boggs at mboggs@pvkansas.com, 913-385-4613 or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/PrairieVillagePD. ■

Spring and Summer Reminders



Noise

- Normal construction noise is allowed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Heavy construction equipment is allowed 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Such noise is prohibited on Sunday and on legal holidays.
- Gas-powered lawn care equipment noise is allowed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. any day of the week. Country clubs are permitted to run equipment from sunrise to sunset any day of the week.
- As long as the volume does not annoy or disturb the quiet, comfort or repose of persons inside any dwelling, noise from sound equipment or musical instruments is permitted from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and until 12:30 a.m. Friday, Saturday and legal holidays. This noise is not allowed to be played (at any time) in a manner and volume which annoys or disturbs the quiet and comfort of persons inside any dwelling.
- If you experience noise outside of the established time limit, call the Police Department at 913-642-5151.

Pets

- Dogs are considered "running at large" when found on public property or private property other than that of their owner without being on a leash and under the effective control of a person.
- Dogs are also considered "running at large" when on own property without a leash unless they are in the physical presence of the owner and under the demonstrated voice control of the owner, or they are confined by a fence/wall/electric fence.
- Noisy Dogs: No person shall keep or harbor within the City any dog which by loud, frequent, or habitual barking, yelping or fighting, annoys or disturbs the public peace.
- If you witness a dog running at large or barking habitually, call the Police Department at 913-642-5151.

Lawns

- Please keep your lawn mowed. It is a violation of the nuisance ordinance to have grass taller than 8".



6300 State Line Road
Mission Hills, KS 66208

The Columns is published three times a year for the residents of Mission Hills.

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Tips for Handling Solicitors

Here are a few tips to help you when solicitors come to your door. Remember, you do have options for dealing with solicitors. If someone is at your door and you do not want to talk with them, you do not have to answer the door. You can talk with them through the door, politely decline any of their services and ask them to leave. If they persist in knocking on the door, you can call the police to respond.

Some of these solicitors are professional sales people and their job is to get you to buy whatever they are selling. If that means stretching the truth a bit, or preying on your good nature and kindness, so be it. It is difficult for most people to tell somebody no. If the story seems too rehearsed or unbelievable, do not buy what they are selling. If you feel uncomfortable with the solicitor, do not give them any money. Never let a solicitor inside your home. Even in bad weather, keep the solicitor outside of your home. If you would like to have the door closed, step outside and close the door behind you.

As stated in the Code of Ordinances, Chapter IV, Section 9.15 (c), Mission Hills does not require solicitors to register or obtain a permit from the City before knocking on your door. Solicitors may only solicit between the hours of 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., September through March, and from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. April through August. Solicitors cannot knock on any door displaying a "No Solicitation" decal or sign posted on the door. Decals are available free of charge at City Hall. Solicitors must give you a signed receipt upon your request of purchases or contributions exceeding \$5.00. No solicitor may stay on your property after being asked to leave, and they must solicit at the front door only.

If you see any violations of this ordinance, call the Police Department at 913-642-5151. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail Crime Prevention Officer Matt Boggs at 913-385-4613 or mboggs@pvkansas.com. ■