

The HPOA way - "Neighbors Helping Neighbors"

Happy New Year to our Neighbors!

Welcome to our annual Harmon Property Owners Association year end newsletter.

Neighborhood News: We continue to have new neighbor activity with the addition of Brad and Lauri Gustafson who bought Jenson's house on Sargent Loop. Greg and Jan Luft on Harmon Ave have finished their new home and will become full time residents this next year. Mike and Kelly Reid on Sargent Loop are in the final stages of completing their new home. Larry and Leeanna Schuessler on Sargent Loop have their footings poured for their new house. Lacy Thomas purchased the empty lot (Harmon Addition #3) on Sargent Loop. Let's welcome them all and say hi when you see them on the roads and on the beach and docks.

A Year End Review of our HPOA Neighborhood

Water: Our new Green Well, along with the older Orange Well for backup, continues to provide us with fresh, clean, water to our neighborhood. The Green Well pumps approximately 100 gallons per minute compared to the Orange well's 35 gallon per minute. The system includes our service building, (required by Idaho regulations), where the two wells are controlled and water can be tested. The HPOA water fund is continuing to pay back money borrowed from the Dock Fund with interest and from annual water fee receipts. Five members chose the 5 year payment plan for the Water Fund Special Assessment which was originally \$950. There are two years left on the payment plan with the next installment due in February, 2023.

All of us as the property owners in our neighborhood, own and operate the water system. That includes the two wells, two reservoirs, and distribution pipes. As property owners, our annual water system operation fee, new hook-up fees pay for the operation and maintenance of this valuable resource.

We again extend a hearty thank you to our neighbors that volunteer to maintain the water system. We are a better neighborhood because of you!

Roads: The paved roads in our neighborhood are owned by all of the lot owners in the neighborhood. They are “privately-owned, public roadways.” We, as owners, are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the pavement and adjacent ditches and slopes. The homeowner’s association, (that’s all of us) owns the paved roadway and the road “right-of-way” out to the property line of each lot. The goal is to keep the roads and adjacent areas safe, in good repair, and keep the roadway surface and structure intact to protect your investment. To do so, your Board contracts with snow-removal and vegetation-control contractors, and works with your neighbors on road approach and shoulder design and construction. You might also see a few of your neighbors out sealing asphalt cracks, blowing away fir/pine needles, trimming branches and cutting fallen trees.

Speaking of roads, please note that the speed limit on our narrow roads is 20 mph. In the busy summer months, a 15-mph speed limit is recommended. The roads can get busy with kids on bikes, scooters, golf carts, 4-wheelers, bicycles, joggers, and walkers, plus there are a number of blind corners and intersections. We know that the nice smooth pavement can be tempting, but please, for safety’s sake, keep speeds down. Also, because our roads are fairly narrow, parking vehicles or trailers along the roadway is not a good idea. Keeping the roads, and especially the cul-de-sacs open for emergency vehicles is very important. The cul-de-sacs on High Side have the minimum allowable design radius required for a fire truck U-turn.

As this newsletter is being written, our neighborhood is experiencing a cold winter. About 43 inches of snow has fallen so far and this is only the beginning of the new year! Our snow contractor, Idaho Earthworks and crew has plowed the neighborhood roads a number of times already. They will also do individual driveways. Call them at 208-967-5810 for a quote on how much they would charge you. Please be advised, this is rural north Idaho, not a big city. Yes, it snows. Yes, the roads can get icy and slippery. There may be an accumulation of several inches of snow before it’s plowed. We don’t usually call in the plows until the snow storm stops, (to save money). The goal is to bring the neighborhood roads to a passable condition within a reasonable time for properly equipped personal and emergency vehicles. How can you help? Please ensure that your vehicle is suitable for winter driving. Winter snow tires are essential and a 4-wheel drive is probably a good investment.

Beach and Docks: The crown jewel of our neighborhood is certainly our waterfront. The deeded access to the lake and the boat slip assigned to each lot are features that add thousands of dollars in value to our individual properties. As we mentioned last year, the current marina dock sets were built in 2002 and 2004 and are showing their age. Your neighbor volunteers have been replacing rotted surface boards as needed and adding flotation under the fingers and walkways during the past few years to extend the dock life as long as possible. With that in mind, please check with the Board if you want to make any changes in your slip, especially if it will add any weight to the docks. The supporting logs are becoming more water-logged as time goes on and can't support more weight without additional flotation. It is in everyone's best interest to keep these docks floating as long as possible. Coming up this spring, HDB Marine will be replacing five rotted wood pilings with steel pilings. We have temporarily removed the electrical from three of those to facilitate this work. Those circuits will be out of service until our electrician can remount them to the new pilings. Also, the walkway to C Dock will be replaced. As always, if you see something that needs addressed, please let us know.

Last summer we completed the replacement of the old swim ladders at the end of the docks with new aluminum ladders. They seem to be working well. Also new last summer we started the policy of leaving these dock ladders in the water, (instead of pulling them up at the end of the day). It was determined that leaving the ladders in the water would enhance safety, in case someone fell into the lake. It was not possible for a distressed swimmer to pull the ladders back into the water. While this is good for safety, there is a down side. The ladder steps can, and do, attract algae. They need to be wiped occasionally to keep that growth at a minimum. Just a quick wipe with your hand or foot can do the trick and keep the ladder rungs from getting too slippery.

With more of our residents using the waterfront and docks, we need to talk about parking. Conkling Park Drive is owned by the Worley Highway District. HPOA does not have control of the parking along the road. It would really help if residents would carpool, use smaller vehicles like golf carts, 4-wheelers, and scooters, and park at angles so more folks can squeeze in. Angle parking is highly encouraged. And make sure that there's room for emergency vehicles to get through.

Please be courteous of your fellow neighbors in the beach area, as well and make room for others that want to gather with their families. And, remember our liability insurance requires that the beach and docks are for use by owners, their families, and personal guests. A member of the owner's immediate family must be present when your guests are on the waterfront. Our beach and docks cannot be used by, or rented to, non-owners.

New HPOA Shed: Until now, HPOA equipment, supplies and chemicals have been stored in members' private garages and sheds. This last summer your board approved the purchase of a new 10' by 12" shed and placed it on our newly acquired land on the east side of Parkside. It will be used to store HPOA equipment and supplies.

Fire: Wildfires are a huge concern. Our neighborhood seems to be getting drier in the summer and the weather trends seem to be hotter over longer periods.

September 2020 was punctuated by a big windstorm and fire on Labor Day Monday. Wind gusts up to 60 miles per hour were too much for a couple of trees along Belle Vista Road a couple hundred yards uphill from the Parkside intersection. They toppled across the KEC power lines, lighting up the low-lying brush on the slope above the road. The flames continued to burn in the bushes, weeds and small trees climbing up the hill on the breezy day. The fire was quickly spotted from the roadway and the fire department was called. The Worley District crew was already assisting with a fire inside Heyburn State Park when they were called to the scene.

Many of your neighbors sprang to action, knocking on doors to alert our residents, texting, and posting on Facebook. The equipment that the Association has on the fire trailer came into use as several residents began helping the responding crews by digging fire lines around the blaze and moving hose lines. The crew contained the slow-burning fire in about a day. It burned several acres and came to within 60 feet of the High Side Road upper lot property lines. Crews were on site for another week, digging out hot spots. All in all, the wind direction played a major role, with the southwest breeze slowing the progress of the fire. Had the winds been from the east, this story would have a much different ending.

Speaking of fire equipment, HPOA now has a fire response trailer. It's equipped with 400 feet of hose, nozzles, Pulaski's, shovels, tools, and a commercial grade fire extinguisher. The trailer has a hitch that fits a 2-inch ball. In the summer, it resides in Hal Thompson's driveway for immediate use by anyone in the neighborhood. During the winter, the fire extinguisher resides at Hal Thompson's house and the fire trailer is in our new HPOA shed on Parkside Ave.

Please be aware of any fire restrictions, keep all campfires small and well contained with a nearby water supply. Campfire sparks can travel, land, and smolder — perhaps growing to a dangerous fire a few hours or days later.

In Memoriam: Long time resident and board member, Bob Gardner passed away from an extended illness this past summer. We will miss him as a board member and his expertise on weed and brush control. He also has long involvement in the history of our neighborhood. Our sympathy goes out to Darlene Gardner.

New Board Director: In accordance with the HPOA by-laws (go to harmonysaddition.com to view current copies of all of our HPOA legal documents) your board approved the addition of Kim Kerr as a director until the next election. Kim is a full time resident of our neighborhood. She is looking forward to providing input that will build on the success of our neighborhood.

Finally, please remember that we are all neighbors. Some of us live here full-time, others come for a weekend (or longer) to get away from home. Please be courteous to your neighbors, paying attention to things like excessive late-night noise, campfire smoke settling into a neighbor's home, dogs barking, or excessive speed on the roads. Plus, any and all fireworks are prohibited in our neighborhood under Kootenai County Zoning regulations.

We are all part of the HPOA neighborhood and our homeowner's Association. Please continue to be neighborly and courteous and our neighborhood will continue to be a great place to live.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to family members that visit your property so that they will be fully informed about the neighborhood.