



North Holiday & Lake Hills Neighborhood Association

Spring 2024 Newsletter and Dues Statement

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Welcome to Spring in NHH!



Dear Neighbors, welcome to a new season, to our newsletter's new look (thanks to a handy Google Docs template), and to our new neighborhood association board members Justin Drooger and Gary Kucharski! They join existing board members Bob Mol, NHH Board President (replacing Steve Wilcox, who recently retired from the board – thank you, Steve, for your years of service!); Kristi Drooger, NHH New Neighbors Welcome Committee Lead; Hank Christiansen, NHH Board Secretary; and Molly Klimas, NHH Newsletter Editor.

At a February 2024 board meeting, the current members unanimously approved Justin and Gary to the board. Justin will assume the role of NHH Treasurer (thank you to Margaret

Shay, who stepped down from this role after many years of service!). Gary will assume the role of NHH Vice President.

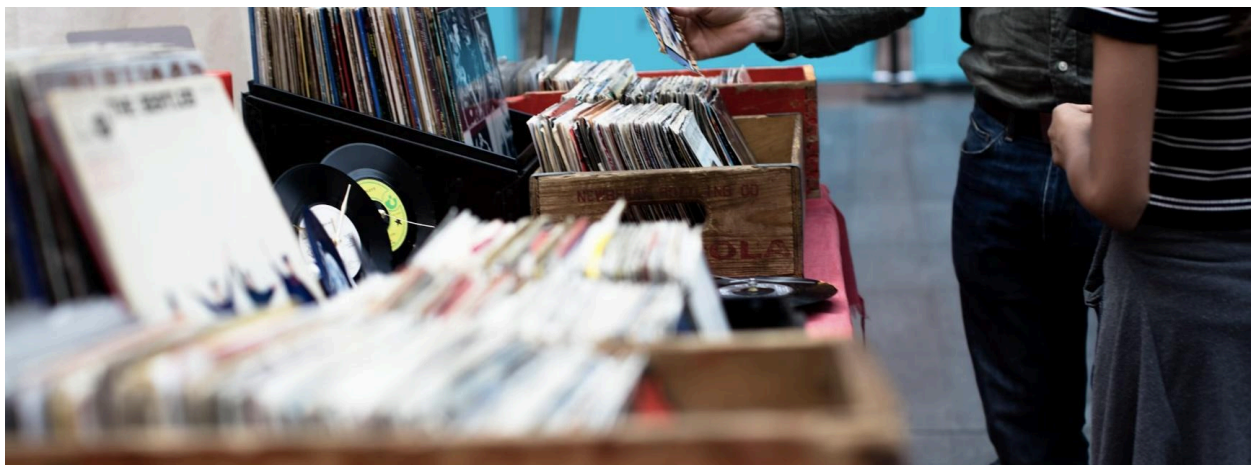
At the February 2024 board meeting, the members unanimously approved the minutes from the Oct. 28, 2023, NHH Annual Meeting.

The board also discussed ways of getting to know our neighbors, including the possibility of holding a neighborhood gathering/block party with a food truck and other fun. If you have ideas for this possibility and would like to volunteer, or help our neighborhood in other ways, then please contact Bob Mol at robertmol213@gmail.com. See also “The more the merrier” article in this newsletter for additional ways to get involved.

IMPORTANT! In this newsletter, you’ll also find the NHH annual dues invoice.

Sincerely, Your NHH Association Board

TOP STORIES



Date set for the neighborhood garage sale

The North Holiday Hills Neighborhood Association’s annual garage sale will be held Saturday, May 18 (the same weekend as in years past). This popular event will be promoted online and with signage at the entrance to our neighborhood.

Mark your calendar for annual meeting

The North Holiday Hills Neighborhood Association’s annual meeting will be held on Saturday, Oct. 12 (time and location to be announced later). Please make a note to attend!

Thank you to the neighbors who attended the 2023 meeting. Minutes are posted on our NHH website at <https://www.northholidayhills.com>.

Spring Lake Township “burn days” announced

Burning of brush in Spring Lake Township is limited to certain Saturdays each year. The remaining 2024 Burn Days are May 18, July 20, Sept. 21, and Nov. 16. Only brush may be burned. No burning within 1,400 feet of Ferrysburg or the Village of Spring Lake. A \$10 permit (for the calendar year) from the Township is required. Find out more at <https://springlaketwp.org/burn-day/>.

ALERT! Invasive plants are in our neighborhood

by **Bob Mol**, North Holiday Hills Neighborhood Association President

At least two invasive plants have been found in our subdivision: the Oriental Bittersweet Vine and Garlic Mustard Plant. Oriental Bittersweet climbs and overtakes native trees and shrubs. Twining vines can girdle trunks and branches. Dense vines add weight to tree canopies, leading to breakage. Plants spread from roots and seeds that are widely dispersed by birds and wildlife. Bittersweet has been observed along Zuni Drive, Tomahawk Drive, and Sioux Drive. It is also the large clump of vines on the street sign and electrical pole at the southwest corner of the Hickory Road and 174th Avenue intersection. For more information, see:

<https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/id-report/plants/vines/oriental-bittersweet>. Here are pictures of this vine to aid in your identification of this invasive species:



The other invasive plant is Garlic Mustard, which is a threat to the biodiversity of many native ecosystems. This plant spreads its seeds in the wind and gains a foothold in fields and forests by emerging earlier in spring than many native plants. By the time native species are ready to grow, garlic mustard has blocked their sunlight and outcompeted them for moisture and vital nutrients. It is recommended that Garlic Mustard plants are pulled in

the spring before they seed and are then burned or disposed of in the garbage. They should not be composted. For more information, see:

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/indiana/stories-in-indiana/garlic-mustard>.

Here are photos of Garlic Mustard plants to aid in your identification of this invasive species:



Finally, a good app that will help you identify these invasive plants, as well as many other plants in the park or elsewhere, is the phone app Seek by iNaturalist. It's a free app available for both iPhones and Android phones.

Save the trees from disease!

We can't say it enough: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. In recent years, diseases and pests that attack various tree species have made their way into our neighborhood and into the nearby forested dunes, killing trees. The result is terrible, and expensive! So prevention is the goal, which starts by knowing what to look for, how to treat and when, and how to prevent further spread. Local certified arborists are excellent resources. Also, check out these websites:

- Oak wilt: <https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/id-report/disease/oak-wilt>
- Beech bark:
<https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/id-report/disease/beech-bark-disease>
- Woolly adelgid:
<https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/id-report/insects/hemlock-woolly-adelgid>

The more the merrier!

Board service - We have openings on the NHH board. Contact Bob Mol at robertmol213@gmail.com if interested in learning more. ... **Beautification** - If you would like

to volunteer-assist in keeping our North Holiday Hills entrance looking good, contact Bob Mol at robertmol213@gmail.com. While our neighborhood association does have a landscape company under contract to mow and generally maintain the entrance, the addition of flowers and other periodic work is a volunteer-supported activity. ...

Shutterbugs - If you like taking photos of our neighborhood and the beautiful nature and creatures that surround us, send your photos for possible inclusion on our neighborhood website to pae49503@gmail.com.

Friendly reminders ...

Slow down - Please watch your speed in the neighborhood every day and especially as warm weather returns and more people are out and about walking dogs, jogging, bicycling, etc. ... **Leash up and clean up** - When walking dogs in the neighborhood, please remember to keep them on a leash no longer than 6 feet and to clean up after them. ... **Cut back** - If your shrubs or trees block road or street signs, please prune them back. ... **Not allowed** - Spring Lake Township ordinances do not allow short-term rentals in residential areas such as our neighborhood. Also, advertising signs of various kinds at the entrance area are not allowed. ... **Be safe** - We live in a great area, but it's always wise to lock your car and home. If you have a concern or something or someone doesn't seem right (like a strange solicitor at your door), it's OK to call 911. Or, email the Ottawa County Sheriff's Deputy assigned to our neighborhood, Travis Schippers, at tschippers@miottawa.org.

SPECIAL SECTION

In this newsletter, we begin a column featuring our North Holiday Hills neighbors. We hope these articles help people to get to know each other more, which will make an already wonderful neighborhood even better. If you'd like to be interviewed for a future article or nominate someone, please let Molly Klimas (NHH board member/newsletter editor) know at klimasmolly@gmail.com. Also, if you would like to write the article yourself, that's a possibility too! We're especially looking for stories about people with unusual hobbies, commitments to various nonpolitical/noncontroversial local causes, and entertaining tales to tell about life in the neighborhood, nearby dunes, and lake (no, not gossip! - but interesting tidbits about this glorious corner of our planet). In this edition of our typically twice-annual newsletter, we feature the Stork family of Shawnee Drive.

Meet the Storks, who keep about 80,000 pets – well, pet honeybees!

by **Molly Klimas**, North Holiday Hills Neighborhood Association Newsletter Editor

Not to worry, neighbors. These bees are the “bee's knees,” and these buzzy busybodies produce pots and pots of delectable Stork's Backyard Honey each summer – sometimes as

much as 100 pounds! The honey ultimately helps two local charitable causes and is gifted to family and friends. We'll delve into those details in a moment.

But first, a bit about the architects of this operation, our neighbors Brian and Marisol Stork of 18520 Shawnee Drive. The Storks moved here about 22 years ago after work brought them to West Michigan. Brian is a urologist in Muskegon. Marisol, a social worker by training, is a coordinator for READ Ottawa, a local adult literacy program.



Together in their lovely circa 1960s colonial home, they raised two children, Jack and Marin, and a couple of family pets through the years. Their son

Jack is now 22 and studying in Arizona to be a pilot. Their daughter Marin is now 19 and is finishing up her freshman year at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Penny, an 8-year-old rescue pup adopted three years ago, keep empty-nesters Brian and Marisol company.

I asked why the couple decided to move to North Holiday Hills.

“This neighborhood and home checked all the boxes for us when we were looking to settle in the area,” Marisol told me. Two decades later, they love living here as much as when they first moved in.

Brian said the home was one of the first three in the neighborhood. It was built by Charles Rycenga, a notable home builder in the community, and he even lived in it for a while with his family.

“[The former owner] liked to keep horses at a barn that used to be tucked at the corner where Hickory Street meets Palm Drive, and there was a hitching post in front of this house to tie up the horses!” Brian said.

Another nod to the home’s storied past is the Storks’ room addition. When they decided to re-side their home several years ago, they also added a four-season sunroom and repurposed the home’s original American Redwood siding for the room’s ceiling and an interior wall. The effect reminds me of a lodge up north – it’s rustic and warm and just beautiful. (I didn’t know much about redwood siding, so I asked ChatGPT about it and learned this: During the mid-20th century and earlier, redwood was widely used for various construction purposes, including siding, decking, and fencing. However, as construction practices and materials evolved, and concerns about cost, maintenance, availability, and environmental impact emerged, the popularity of redwood siding gradually declined.)

Through the room addition, the Storks led me to their backyard, pointing to a spot where the bees live (and work) during the warm-weather months. The bees produce honey in hives – in this case, wooden boxes that contain frames where the bees build their honeycombs and store honey. They fly to flowers in search of nectar and bring the nectar back to their hives.

Brian then showed me their prettily painted backyard shed, headquarters for the Storks' bee operation, which contains various supplies needed for beekeeping and processing honey. In recent years, fewer and fewer bees have survived the winter months. Brian told me that many beekeepers nowadays need to buy new bees each spring. Having not yet produced the waxy structure needed as part of the process, these new bees take more time to get "established," and harvesting time, which in years past might have occurred in early summer (and maybe even a second harvest later), is often pushed to the end of summer. Yields are reduced. As to why bees aren't making it through winter like they used to and are producing less, theories range from climate change to varroa mites to common pesticides and a variety of other human-related factors. Brian said even professional beekeepers are having a harder time these days.



I asked the Storks how they got into beekeeping. Brian said he was familiar with the practice through an uncle in Iowa, and a neighbor across Shawnee Drive (who has since moved) also kept bees and encouraged the Storks to give it a try.

"I was really just fascinated with the lifecycle and the pollination, and of course, the honey is great," Brian said.

He told me their thousands of "furry friends" are generally docile – "they really just want to go about the business of making honey." However, protective gear is worn when working with the bees.

To learn more about what's involved in setting up a basic honeybee operation, local associations can help advise on beekeeping and current methods. One such organization is the Holland Area Beekeepers Association:

<https://www.hollandbees.org/>.

Brian and Marisol have been beekeeping and producing honey for about 10 years. They donate most of it to Patricia's Chocolates in downtown Grand Haven; the confectionery then uses the honey to make specialty chocolates. A portion of the proceeds goes to READ Ottawa from the READ macaroon, and to Step Up from the Dr. Stork Honey Hive collection.

Step Up is a transitional housing program in Muskegon for young adults aging out of the foster care system. Thanks to the Storks' honey and the additional generosity of Patricia's Chocolates and its customers, more than \$10,000 has been donated so far to these programs. The remainder of the Storks' honey is gifted to friends and family, and for personal consumption.

I'd like to thank the Storks for giving me a bottle of their fabulous honey – it's wonderful. I haven't yet been to Patricia's Chocolates and didn't know about the good causes the business supports, so I plan to visit the shop soon. Thank you, also, to the Storks for sharing your story with our neighbors!



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Invoice North Holiday and Lake Hills Association LLC Dues

Dues cover association registration fees, insurance for the neighborhood common areas, and any legal fees that may be needed. The dues also help keep our neighborhood looking good. They cover water/sprinkling and lawn maintenance for the entrance, power for the entrance lights, newsletter printing and distribution, holiday decorations, and garage sale advertising and signage. Thank you for your prompt payment.

North Holiday and Lake Hills LLC Association Dues for 2024: \$50

Please make checks payable to: North Holiday and Lake Hills Association LLC

Please mail checks to: 18439 Iroquois Drive, Spring Lake, MI 49456

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<https://www.northholidayhills.com/>