



LAHA NEWS



AMHURST, A VILLAGE IN THE CITY

Lohman's Amhurst Homeowners' Association, St. Louis Park, Minnesota

SPRING 2017

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**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Amhurst's SummerFest
and National Night Out
Tuesday, August 1st.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT AMHURST

GINA SOUCHERAY, BOARD SECRETARY

Lots of good things are going on as Amhurst gears up for its "busy" time of year. We have a new Property Manager, Jim Kraus, who makes his daily rounds in "the cart". Say "hi" to him and introduce yourself if you haven't met. Jim may be reached at 952-933-9747. While he doesn't live at Amhurst, he is here every day during the week and monitors his phone for emergencies at night and on weekends. If it isn't an emergency, he will get back to you on the next business day. Additionally, Board members are always willing to take calls of concern. Find their contact information on the Amhurst website at Amhurst.org.

We have some new sidewalks along Independence at Gettysburg, courtesy of the City of St. Louis Park. What was a scary root bound sidewalk crack is now smoothed over and much more inviting for a stroll.

We are seeing increased foot traffic with more pets, more strollers and more youngsters! What fun! All that unbounded enthusiastic energy means we all need to be conscious of how fast we are driving through Amhurst. I saw a sign in a yard on Blake Road last week. It read, "Drive Like Your Kids Live Here". At the same time, we need to caution parents to instruct kids about the blacktop trails around the ponds and pool area. These blacktop paths have lots of neat curves, but they are also "blind spots" that could result in walkers being run over by individuals on bikes, roller skates or skate boards. Please help adventure seekers find another spot to rock and roll so we don't have a lot of injuries.

The Tree Trust trees were planted recently with the help of Kathy Leighton and her cadre of shovel handlers. We have lost a few trees over the last year due to lightning, root disruption at the boulder wall, or general nuisance due to overgrowth in certain locations. We surveyed the area and received input from our tree specialist before choosing locations for this year's plantings. Thanks to those who are willing to help water and keep these babies growing. Continuing to plant new trees means we are helping keep the air clean and the area more climate controlled - "and that's a good thing". In addition, plantings are showing up around the pool area and in private gardens. Thanks to all for their "pride of ownership". Amhurst is a gem due to your efforts.

The pool will have opened by the time you read this. Please



The Annual
Homeowners Meeting!
Historically held in
December, we are
moving the annual
meeting to November
14th in hopes that we
can have more folks in
attendance - less
interference with bad
weather and hopefully
more people "in town".
Still at Hopkins Center
for the Arts - watch for
more information as the
date nears.

(Continued on page 8)



Lawn mowing will now be done on Wednesdays, rather than Thursdays.

Lohman's Amhurst Pool Safety Rules – Pool Use for Amhurst Residents and Their Guests

WARNING – NO LIFEGUARD ON DUTY

CHILDREN (Under 12 years of age) MUST HAVE AN ADULT (AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE) SUPERVISING AND ACCEPTING FULL RESPONSIBILITY.

Emergency Phone 911. Nearest Public Phone at Target. Directions: Go East on 36th St. Make a Right Turn at First Stop Light to Target

- No person with or suspected of having a communicable disease which could be transmitted through use of the pool shall work at or use the pool.
- A person with any considerable area of exposed sub-epidermal tissue, open blisters, or cuts must be warned that these may become infected and should be advised not to use the pool.
- A person who is incontinent, whether one or 91, must wear swim diapers when in the pool.
- Any person using a the pool must take a cleansing shower using warm water and soap, and thoroughly rinse off all soap before entering the pool enclosure. A user leaving the pool to use the toilet must take a second cleansing shower before returning to the pool enclosure. A person who exercises, applies lotion, or uses a sauna or steam room must shower before using the pool.
- Spitting, spouting water from the mouth, and blowing the nose in the pool is prohibited.
- No running, or boisterous or rough play, except supervised water sports, is permitted.
- Glassware and similar material with a tendency to shatter on impact is not allowed in the pool enclosure area.
- Diving is not permitted.
- Pets are not permitted in the pool or the pool enclosure.
- For safety reasons, management may limit the number of floats.

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WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT OF AMHURST MONTHLY ASSOCIATION DUES

LINDA DINGBAUM, ACTING PRESIDENT

ACH – This is an electronic option where Sharper debits the homeowner's designated bank account for the amount of the monthly dues every month. This method is most encouraged by the board and management of Amhurst because it is the easiest and most accurate method. Once a homeowner sets up a monthly ACH transaction with Sharper, Sharper will debit the homeowners designated bank account for the amount of the dues on the 1st of every month. If the dues change, Sharper is responsible for changing the debit amount. The advantage of this method is that Sharper initiates the payments and, once set up, the homeowner should not have to do anything further. If you would like to set up ACH, please contact Sharper using the information below.

Sharper Portal – The other electronic option is to use the Sharper Portal to set up one-time or recurring payments. The advantage of this method is that the homeowner can choose which day the payment is scheduled. To use this payment method, homeowners will need their Sharper login information. If you no longer have this information, please contact Sharper using the information below. Note that you should choose the 1st of the month as the payment date. If you choose a different date, please make sure it is no later than the 5th of the month in order to avoid late fees.

Check – Another option is to pay by personal check or a check sent from your bank using your bank's bill pay system. The board and management of Amhurst strongly discourages this method because of the time it takes to mail and process payments. If a homeowner uses this method, the check should be mailed at least 7 days prior to the 1st of the month in order to avoid late fees. Also, make sure your Sharper Management Account Number is on the check.

If you have any questions about Amhurst dues payments, please contact Sharper, Amhurst Manager Jim Kraus, or any board member.

Amhurst's Sharper Management contact is Sarah Suparat, who can be reached at: 952-698-7740 or sarah@sharpermanagement.com. Sharper Management's general contact information is: 952-224-4777 or sharpermanagement.com



DAISY DUCK

We're expecting elevenuplets! What? Yes, Daisy is sitting on eleven eggs (I could only find 9 = nonuplets). It's been a miserable brooding time – rain, cold, etc. But she chose a good spot under the eaves. By the time you read this, the ducklings will have hatched and, hopefully, will all survive the waddle down to the pond!

Advertise Your Business In LAHA News!

Residents: Submit your business card for **FREE** advertising in your Association's Newsletter. Are you a freelancer, insurance agent or realtor, sell Tupperware, want to do handy man work? Here is a great opportunity to promote your business. Your business card will be reprinted in future newsletters, depending on space availability. **For larger space ads**, (and non-residents):

Business Card: \$ 15.00 (Free to Residents)

1/4 page: \$ 35.00

1/2 page: \$ 50.00

Full Page: \$ 70.00

Back Cover: \$ 85.00

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TIPS FOR CLOSING ON TIME

RITA BROOKS, FORMER BOARD MEMBER

When it comes to a successful home-buying experience, there are many pieces to the puzzle, and they often are dependent on each other. Ensuring that a loan closing occurs on time is crucial, because it's the final piece of the puzzle. Here are some tips to help closings happen on time:

Work with a mortgage company you know and trust. It's a great idea for buyers to ask around and find out who has a good reputation. Look for a lender that is local, always does right by the customer, and is someone who will be available to answer questions and help throughout the entire process. There are always going to be quick, do-it-yourself possibilities on the Internet and other attractive options that promise to save money, but in the end, buyers need a team that is going to treat them with respect and build a relationship based on responsibility and integrity. A good resource, when looking for a reliable lender, is a title company. Buyers should not hesitate to call and ask for a reference.

Set clear expectations right away. Communication between sellers, realtors, buyers and loan officers is crucial. If buyers know right away that they are (really, truly) approved for the loan and what is expected of them, the process will go very smoothly. It's when unexpected surprises arise that things become stressful and have potential to fall apart. Buyers should choose a loan officer who will pay close attention to detail and will be available throughout the process to answer any questions about approval, processing or underwriting.

Be organized and use a checklist. Because a closing relies on many people – the realtor, lender, buyer and seller – it is important that when the required people show up for the closing everything is ready to go. Buyers must have everything they need at the closing, and the best way to accomplish this is to have a checklist of what they need to make the closing go smoothly. Sometimes missing a piece can cause enough of an issue that the closing may not move forward as planned. Have a checklist and review it prior to close.

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ARE YOU COVERED?**LINDA DINGBAUM, ACTING PRESIDENT**

Have you updated your HO-6 Insurance policy to cover the deductible on Amhurst's insurance policy of \$25,000? If you answered no to this question, you are NOT covered and you should do the following immediately:

- Contact your insurance agent and increase your HO-6 loss assessment coverage to \$25,000
- Request that a Certificate of Insurance for your HO-6 policy be sent to Amhurst

If you don't have an HO-6 policy with adequate coverage, you could lose your home, unless you can obtain the cash to pay the deductible (up to \$25,000). If there is a loss in your unit or building and you cannot pay your portion of the deductible (up to \$25,000), Amhurst would be forced to foreclose on your townhome in order to obtain the insurance proceeds to repair the damage.

Also, you must provide a Certificate of Insurance to Amhurst as proof that you have adequate insurance coverage with a current annual date, as it renews each year. If you haven't done this yet, please submit a Certificate of Insurance to Amhurst as soon as possible. You may drop it in the drop box located in the mailbox pod located in Rockwell Court, or send it care of Amhurst at 3680 Independence Ave. So., 55426

The cost of insurance has increased significantly. Through much research and many conversations with Amhurst's attorney and professionals in both the property management and insurance industries, the best solution to keep insurance costs reasonable was to increase the deductible.

Your fellow homeowners, Board of Directors, and Manager appreciate your prompt attention to this process, since we are all collectively responsible for protecting our investment in Amhurst. If you have any questions, there is additional information at amhurst.org, or feel free to contact Property Manager Jim Kraus, any Board member, or your

Real Estate News for Amhurst

Since May 1 of 2016 there have been 13 sales in Amhurst. Sales prices ranged from \$146,500 to \$210,000. Why the significant range in sales prices? Some factors:

- 1) Condition of home**
- 2) Upgrades such as newer furnace/air, kitchens and baths updated**
- 3) Attached vs. detached garage**
- 4) One level vs. two level**
- 5) Location within the complex**

Amhurst continues to be a desirable neighborhood. Its proximity to shopping, banking, restaurants, regional trail and highway access contributes to its desirability. The property itself provides a park like setting because it continues to be so well-maintained.

I have sold over 70 homes in Amhurst. Please call me if you are considering selling or if you would like to talk about how to improve your home to prepare for selling.



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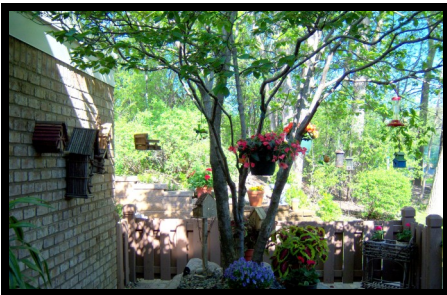
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**TOWN HOMES ARE A VERY ATTRACTIVE
ALTERNATIVE TO SINGLE FAMILY HOMES.**

JOHN HEMANN, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

What's driving this increase of interest in the townhome market? Part of the reason for this increased interest is the lower cost associated with building new townhomes. Due to the higher cost of land in urban areas, townhomes can be built at a lower cost than a single family home for two reasons: 1) there is less individual plot size (land) needed for each townhome and 2) adjoining structures with shared walls reduce the overall expense to build. Where a single family home will have four separate exterior walls, a townhome may have one or up to three shared walls reducing the material cost to build each unit. Townhome ownership is an affordable solution to an otherwise more expensive single family home ownership. In the current market, townhomes on average are approximately 12% lower in cost than the average single family home.



Why else are townhome developments attractive to home owners? One reason is that sense of community. Developers tend to build to the interior wants and needs of the specific home owner, but to the exterior needs of the community as a whole. For example, within the development you may find a separate community building available for home owners to reserve for larger social or family gatherings, a pool, tennis courts, walking paths and landscaping for privacy.

Let's not forget the reduced amount of exterior building and yard maintenance for the home owner. Many sin-

gle family home owners sell and downsize to townhomes for that reason alone.

Townhomes also appeal to many home owners as the location is usually in trendier and convenient neighborhoods. Many of these developments are in close walkable proximity to the area businesses, restaurants and entertainment establishments. Access to public transportation, local parks, schools and other walking/biking trails make townhomes an attractive option too.

It's a Seller's market out there. Inventory continues to be low throughout the greater Twin Cities area. Here at Lohman's Amhurst we have had 10 recorded sales and/or pending transactions since January 1st of this year. That's way ahead of last year's timeframe of 5 sales in May and already exceeds last year's 8 total sales.

Why the increased activity in Lohman's Amhurst? As the old saying goes, "Location, Location, Location"! We are located in a secluded pocket with easy access to two major highways and we are in close proximity to the ever evolving Knollwood Mall. We are an established community since the 1980's with mature trees, beautiful landscaping, wooded areas, two ponds and the wildlife and plant life it supports. Even with the appreciation of property values brought on by the low supply and high demand in this current real estate market, we are attractively priced for first time home buyers, downsizing home buyers and retirees.

The Association has done a great job of managing the financial and physical health of the overall property with foresight to budget for future expenditures. I speak from experience as I

write this. These are very important variables of consideration for Lenders, Appraisers and Underwriters as they complete their analysis and approve loans on properties. Because of Lohman's Amhurst's strengths, both Sellers and Buyers are experiencing a smooth transaction process with a low probability of challenges to disrupt the closing date (the date of ownership transfer).



If you are considering selling your property, what can you do to make your property more salable and more attractive over the competition? To start with, de-clutter and depersonalize. A Buyer wants to be able to walk into a home and picture themselves living in that home. You can assist a Buyer in so doing by removing clutter and personal items such as family photos. Paint provides a fresh clean look. Make sure nonworking light bulbs have been replaced and counter tops have limited items to show ample working space. Dress up the exterior entrance and patio with a few plants and outdoor table with chairs. And beyond this, there are always more major renovations to flooring, kitchens and bathrooms that can increase value and salability.

Whether you're a seasoned owner or a new home owner at Lohman's Amhurst, you are part of a unique, attractive and high demand townhome location within the greater Twin Cities area.

LAHA NEWS



HOW TO TURN YOUR OUTSIDE WATER ON

Start by checking the condition of the brass bleeder valve near the inside water shutoff valve. This is usually located in the front hall or interior utility closet.

Replace (if your water system is equipped with one) the brass bleeder valve cap. Make sure the small, rubber gasket is seated correctly inside the brass cap. If this is missing or has deteriorated, a replacement cap is available at hardware and home improvement stores. Take the old cap with you for correct sizing.



Once this cap is tightly replaced with the rubber gasket seated correctly, turn on (counter clock-wise) the inside water valve.

If the brass cap leaks, call the Association for a replacement or a hardware store.

Make sure the outside water valve is shut-off when you turn on the inside valve. Water is now available to the outside faucet. Run water from the outside faucet checking for any leaks around the inside valve, the copper water line and the outside faucet.

If there is a split in the line due to winter freeze, this split is usually directly inside your home from the outside faucet.

Following these procedures in the fall and spring does not guarantee that pipes will not freeze during the winter months.

These shut-off and turn-on steps lessen your risk to damage and flooding.



NEIGHBORS CHIP IN TO KEEP AMHURST GREEN

Many thanks to Michael Cherrier, Marshall Penk-Smith, Kathy and Kevin Leighton, Kathy Schafer and Princess Elsa. Judy Hammel and Oliver Lewis not shown.



UTILITY ROOM FLOOR DRAIN

Make sure this drain works. Homeowners have had plumbing leaks with water heaters or softeners with subsequent flooding occurring in their home because the floor drain was not functioning.

(Continued from page 1)

review the pool rules that are reprinted elsewhere herein. We have been blessed to experience accident free summers for many years and wish to continue that. Please be watchful of those in your care, respect the others who are in the pool area, don't take glass of any kind beyond the entry gate, and share chairs, space and kindness. Have fun and don't get a sun burn!

2016 saw the installation of the west perimeter fence. Big projects for this year include painting of all buildings, as well as parking lot protective seal coating and striping. As the season progresses, we will keep all informed of any disruption of service you might encounter at your front door or in your parking area.

Dates we know about!

Tuesday, August 1 – Summer Fest at Amhurst Pool! Gather with your neighbors for good food, fun events and laughs. Stand by for details (and YOUR potluck assignment!).

Tuesday, November 14 – The Annual Homeowners Meeting! Historically held in December, we are moving the annual meeting to November in hopes that we can have more folks in attendance – less interference with bad weather and hopefully more people “in town”. Still at Hopkins Center for the Arts – watch for more information as the date nears.

How do you feel about an Amhurst Home Tours weekend just for Amhurst owners? Many owners have made wonderful improvements to their units and others are trying to figure out what to do with their investment. Contact Gina Soucheray at 651-270-3763 or ginsouch@msn.com if you are interested in making your home available for a “tour”. We'll figure out when and what something like this looks like once we know how much interest there is.

Remain patient with all the road construction going on around us. Know that your Village in the City is waiting for you here in “St. Louis Park, Minnesota’s Sweet Spot”!

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**THOUGHTS FROM MEREDYTHE
GINA SOUCHERARY, BOARD SECRETARY**

make her life here so enjoyable. And she is missed by many - from swimming pool buddies to gardening friends to board members. Meredythe is a "lady" who understands how a community comes together to work for the common good and benefit of all. Here are some of her thoughts.

One of our long time owners recently moved from Amhurst. While she is settling in to her new home she does miss the people at Amhurst who helped



Amhurst - to move into the future, we must agree on two basic principles:

- 1) We must be honest with each other as we work together.
- 2) We must realize that the Amhurst board is the critical unit of this complex. What each homeowner does to strengthen and sustain Amhurst affects the entire complex. Only the homeowners can make anything better.

The board, managing the demands of 276 homeowners, sharing in the goals for community betterment, is subject to the provisions of the MN Non-Profit Corporations Act. "to provide for the maintenance, preservation, architectural control, operation & management of the property ... For the health, safety and welfare of the owners ... The preservation of the value and architectural character of the units and common elements..." Think of your Association board as a good neighbor giving concern for the welfare of our membership over the lifespan of Amhurst. The Amhurst board honors our past and aims to secure its future in as democratic a way as possible.

Meredythe - thank you for that wise and insightful call to action as we all work for the betterment of Amhurst and all who call it "home".



ITS SO CONFUSING

GINA SOUCHERAY, BOARD SECRETARY

Once again, a Minnesota spring lasts two days, goes to summer, and reverts to winter, all in the span of a week! We know that cycle will end, so this is when Spring Cleaning comes to mind.

Inside and out, we want our homes to reflect the pride we take in our “village”. With that, here are some reminders and references to the Residents Guide which will help us all continue to make Amhurst such a wonderful place to live (and invest).

Dog Clean-up and Street Trash – Many thanks to those pet owners and exercisers who use the green doggie drops and beige garbage containers to dispose of dog poo and general litter. The beige containers used to be the only trash system we had. Then we added the green doggie drops. Both may be used for dog droppings as they are all maintained by the same doggie poop pick-up vendor. You are helping keep Amhurst healthy when you pick up after your dog and dispose properly. We have seen a wonderful increase in youngsters and walkers, so keeping the grass clear of “surprises” is more important than ever.

Trash Cans – the easiest and most obvious is to ensure trash cans are being stored in garages and not on patios or decks. We all know there are coyotes and stray cats and dogs running around – along with other “critters” (chipmunks and squirrels and raccoons). For safety and health reasons, trash cans need to be kept away from our own and our neighbor’s doors. If you have a problem transporting your garbage and recycling to the garage, please talk to a neighbor about assisting you. I’m sure they’d be happy to help.

Deck and Patio Maintenance and Clutter – It is the responsibility of the Association to keep areas clear of leaves and other blowing debris. But, it becomes difficult to do that if the decks and areas are blocked with “stuff”. This is particularly true around air conditioning units. Please ensure your areas are organized so that work may be accomplished around the rest of your “outdoor room”.

Noise Pollution – As the beautiful starlit nights arrive, please be aware of the proximity of neighbors as you have your evenings on the patio/deck. Voices carry very easily across the short spaces and over fences – do you really want your neighbors privy to your cell phone conversations or face to face “discussions”? As a courtesy to your neighbors, please abide by the St. Louis Park ordinance which specifies that 10:00PM is the appropriate time for noise abatement.

Debris Discard – With Spring Cleaning comes the opportunity to dispose of a lot of “stuff”, whether it is yard waste or things found in the house/garage you no longer need. This year’s neighborhood Garage Sale is scheduled for Saturday, June 3. This is a great chance to clean out, meet new people (whether neighbors or yard sale hounds), and maybe make some extra cash. After the sale, take the working, unsold goods to Goodwill (just a mile away) where someone will find a good home for the things that are just cluttering up your space. “Free” stuff should not be placed in the parking lots, but you can sign up on Nextdoor.com/Amhurst and let 15 communities around us know that you have something valuable to give away, saving you the hassle of transporting the item. Yard waste like leaves and last year’s plants may be placed in compostable bags and taken to the pool shed. Hazardous waste like paints, solvents, etc. should not be put in the garbage. Watch for the annual hazardous waste days in St. Louis Park, Minnetonka, and Hopkins.

Nextdoor.com – as mentioned above, Amhurst residents have a very valuable resource in this online “bulletin board”. It is like Craigslist, but much more neighborhood specific. If you haven’t had a chance to sign up, talk to one of the 150 Amhurst residents who are on the system. It is a great resource for City news, road closures, and sharing of neighborhood activities.. Looking for a book club or want to start one? Look there first!

Amhurst.org website - In the meantime, the Amhurst website is the place to go to learn about Amhurst specific documents and Board activities. The Resident Guide is there, too, so you can reference all the fascinating items just posted above!

I hope to see you around – helping with gardening of common areas, etc. Thank you to those who already help make this such a beautiful place to live. Have a great and joyful Spring season.

SPRING 2017



**Inquisitive
neighbors and one
gorgeous garden.**



**Spring flooding and
the south pond prior
to annual treatments.**



**IS YOUR CERTIFICATE
UP TO DATE?**

**LINDA DINGBAUM,
BOARD VICE
PRESIDENT**

AMHURST NEEDS YOUR CURRENT CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

Did you update your HO-6 Insurance policy to cover the new \$25,000 deductible last year? If you did, THANK YOU for protecting yourself and Amhurst. When you updated your policy, you probably also sent a certificate of insurance to Amhurst. Again, THANK YOU!

However, the certificate is only good for the term of the policy, so you need to submit a new certificate of insurance to Amhurst every year, right after your policy renews. We know it can be a pain, but it is similar to the proof of insurance on your car. If you are stopped by a police officer, you must produce up-to-date evidence of insurance. The officer will not accept a certificate for a policy that expired two months ago. It is the same way with your HO6 policy. Please provide a current certificate of insurance to Amhurst now, if your policy renewed after you submitted your certificate last year.

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www.AmhurstHomes.com

“Location, Location, Location!”

It's one of the many reasons Lohman's Amhurst has seen an uptick in sales in the real estate market this year. It's also been a “Seller's” market with low inventory, equating to Amhurst Owners and Sellers experiencing significant appreciation in their property's value.

I own and live at Amhurst, which means I have vested interest in the well-being of our community. I've represented Sellers and Buyers for over 10 years at Amhurst. If you are considering selling, please contact me as I'd love to help you with information on how to best prepare and present your home for sale.



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