

The Sherwood Forest News

Fall 2013

Sherwood Forest Citizens' Association Annual Meeting

Monday, October 28, 2013

7:00 - 8:00pm

St. Thomas More Activity Center

Join Sherwood Forest residents and Board members as we discuss the business of Sherwood Forest. Learn the latest about your neighborhood as we discuss current issues and future plans. We look forward to seeing you at STM on Wednesday, October 28.

Eyewatch Committee

Marcia & Richard Empson

The first "Neighborhood Blitz" was held Saturday, May 25. Residents in the area identified as those bordering Sharp Road on the East, Mollylea on the South, Sherwood Forest on the West, and Florida to the North, were visited by those Sherwood Forest neighbors who have volunteered to be Block Captains for the streets where they live. The group of eight volunteers visited 59 homes. The next "Neighborhood Blitz" is scheduled for Sunday, October 20, in the area identified as Little John on the East, Lockhaven on the West, and Mollylea on the South and Florida to the North. There are over 200 homes in this area; therefore, it may take several additional "blitz" schedules to complete.

The SFCA Eyewatch Committee held a short gathering on Sunday, August 25, 2013, at which time Block Captains received packets and identification information for their block area. Block Captains may be visiting your area in the future to introduce themselves to you and to ask you to provide them with information that will allow them to be better "eyes" for your neighborhood. Volunteers for the blitz and those visiting their block neighbors can be identified by the green ribbon and gold medallion hanging around the neck. Please be courteous to these volunteers who are giving of their time to help make our subdivision safer and more secure.

There are still many areas of the subdivision that aren't represented by a Block Captain. Please give serious thought to volunteering. You can do so by calling 272-2372 or by sending an e-mail to msempson@bellsouth.net.

Sherwood Forest Citizens Association Spring Litter Pick Up Saturday May 4th

Ten concerned residents collected litter on Saturday, May 4th. Regina Foret, donated two dozen donuts to fuel the volunteers. The following residents supported the litter pick up; Kirk & Anna Green, James & Jackie Gray, Marcia & Richard Empson, Rickey Shaffer, Kathleen Lobel, John Macus, and Mary Heuchert.



The volunteers covered the areas of Goodwood & Flannery, Sherwood Forest Blvd at Old Hammond, Goodwood at Sharp Road, and Sherwood Forest Blvd at Florida. The volunteers collected a full truck bed of litter, ranging from candy wrappers, plastic bottles, newspaper, cans, car parts, yard sale signs (old signs) clothes, to fast food trash. A Fall Cleanup Day has been scheduled for Saturday, October 12th. Volunteers are needed. Please meet at the St. Thomas More office building. Help us to keep our neighborhood clean.

Welcome to Sherwood Forest-A Special Welcome

When a family moves into a neighborhood they are eager to feel a part of that community. Sherwood Forest is the largest neighborhood in the state with approximately 3200 homes. The Board has tried to welcome each new resident over the years and is excited about our new Hospitality Chairman Mary Lou Heuchert. Mary Lou is requesting interested residents to join her committee to help deliver welcome packets to each new homeowner. The committee's goal is to have each new family receive a special welcome. Thanks Marry Lou for taking on this very important job.

Join your neighbors for Fall Cleanup Day on October 12

All residents are invited to join the members of the SFCA board of directors for a Cleanup Day October 12. Volunteers should meet at 9 a.m. at the STM office building. Please bring gloves and grabbers. Water and trash bags will be supplied. See you there!

From the President's Desk...

Ricky Shaffer, President, Sherwood Forest Citizens' Association

Your SFCA board and committee members have been very busy on a number of issues recently. This newsletter will help to describe some of our many efforts.

Rezoning of Aquatic Club Property

The first issue is the recent sale of the former CYO property (old Aquatic Club) on Mollylea Drive to a developer. Mr. Eugene Ji purchased this five-acre property, currently zoned A-1, with plans to build a multi-unit complex, which would require a zoning change. His initial plan, as presented to the EBR Planning and Zoning Commission staff, called for approximately 96 rental units.

A development with that degree of density within the boundaries of our neighborhood was of great concern to us and also to our neighbors in Broadmoor and Sharpstown subdivisions. Upon hearing this news, we joined forces with the Broadmoor Residents' Association and the Sharpstown Homes Association to attempt to work with Mr. Ji in order to preserve the character of our neighborhood.

We have had several meetings with Mr. Ji and have presented him with options and certain guidelines that we believe would be a better fit. He seemed willing to listen, but only time will tell. As of this writing, we are waiting to see his revised plan before we decide whether to oppose or support any zoning changes. The proposal has been postponed indefinitely. We will continue to update you on the issue.

I would like to thank Metro Councilwoman Donna Collins-Lewis for her support and efforts in this matter. I would also like to thank Terry Lawrence, President of the Broadmoor Residents' Association, and Gary Schafer, Sharpstown's President, for their help and support.

Crime Prevention - The second issue is a proposed Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Improvement District for Sherwood Forest. The SFCA board formed a committee to work on this project. The required legislation passed during this past session. The Sherwood Forest Crime District has been formed and is meeting to prepare the measure to go before the voters for approval this fall. We believe that this action is necessary because of increased crime, lessening participation in the Association and the fact that other neighborhoods on our borders have already passed crime districts. As they increase their security, criminals will turn to easier targets. If we fail to increase our security, we will be inviting the criminals into Sherwood Forest. I would like to thank State Representative Ted James for his help with this issue.

Thank you also to all of our block captains and to board members Marcia and Richard Empson for their hard work organizing the neighborhood volunteers who "keep a lookout" via our Eyewatch program.

Join Your Association! - The 2013 Membership year is almost over. If you haven't paid your dues there is a membership form in this issue. The cost is only \$25 per year. That's less than one movie night for a couple, less than one restaurant meal for a family. While a bargain, the stark reality is that membership dues alone is not adequate enough to fund our security patrols. We must rely on donations to pay for security patrols and unfortunately we see a downward trend. We need as many paid members as possible to continue our efforts on your behalf.

We also need volunteers! We need help on our October 12th trash pickup day (see announcement on Page 2). It's only a few hours to help keep our streets, sidewalks and common areas looking nice. We also need committee volunteers on an ongoing basis.

Roll on 18-wheeler, roll on....down a non-residential street!

We know our neighborhood roads take a beating and many are in need of repair or resurfacing. It doesn't help when large trucks and 18-wheelers illegally travel on them. At each Sherwood Forest Boulevard entrance to the neighborhood (Old Hammond Highway and Florida Boulevard) there is a sign prohibiting trucks with a GVWR (gross vehicle weight ratio) of greater than 7.5 tons from traveling on them yet we regularly see 18-wheelers and large box trucks traveling on them. There is also an ordinance specifically prohibiting 18-wheelers and trucks with a payload capacity of greater than 3,500 pounds from being in an A-1 subdivision. The penalty is an ordinance citation.

In addition to the road destruction, the additional traffic and noise is a further burden for residents, particularly on Sherwood Forest Boulevard. We have received reports from boulevard residents regarding this but having our member-funded patrol deputies sit and wait to spot the violators may not be the most appropriate "route" to take to deal with this problem. Contacting our Metro Council representatives and requesting police enforcement may be more appropriate, especially if the time of day when most violations occur can be ascertained. The three council members responsible for SFB are Donna Collins-Lewis, Scott Wilson, and Ryan Heck. They can be contacted at 389-5170.

If You Build It...Or Alter It...They Will Come

The city-parish inspector and the Architectural Control Committee (the Sherwood Forest Citizens Association is the designee) will need to pay a visit for most building constructions or modifications, so be sure BEFOREHAND that what you are building, renovating, or altering meets the requirements of the city-parish and your filing's deed restrictions. Buildings have had to be removed within our borders in recent years. The cost to remove or change un-approved construction can be significant. Contact the city-parish permit office and the SFCA before beginning work and save everyone a lot of heartache, time, and money.

We all agreed to a set of building rules when we purchased a Sherwood Forest property and we all have an expectation of consistency and harmony in our neighborhood – this is extremely important for maintaining and improving property values. REMEMBER: The one who builds or alters without obtaining the required approvals creates the problem, not the one who discovers it.

Public Works-311

The anticipated completion date for the Sharp Road Bridge is December. This project is part of the ongoing bridge maintenance program throughout the city/parish. There have been several 311 calls have been placed concerning overgrown property, pot holes and illegal signs in the neighborhood. The 311 program is a city/parish service designed to handle issues mentioned. It is a great service but as you can imagine, one that operates on a backlog. If you see signs on the median please pick them up and report the ones attached to poles to 311.

Yards of the Month!



May Winner
Lien Dinh



June Winner
Darlene Smith



July Winner
Leon Dement



August Winner
Nanny Carper

Congratulations to Our Winners

What does it take to be the yard of the month? The answer is curb appeal. Winners of the yard of the month not only have manicured lawns with beautiful seasonal plantings; they also have well-maintained homes with harmonized paint schemes, lighting and character.

Almost 100% of the yards of the month winners are do it yourself enthusiasts. So if you would like to be considered for Yard of the Month just roll up your shirtsleeves. We will be looking for your home soon.

Comments from the SFCA Membership Chairman

James Gray

It all began at the first of January 2013 when I refreshed the membership database of more than 3,000 addresses. After the list was organized, volunteers Louis and Fran Gaudin, Richard and Marcia Empson, Jackie Gray, Dick Bartol, Patty Domingue, Ralph Dupuy, Neissy Graf, Terry Hebert and Jonathan Holloway pitched in to fold 2,900 dues request letters and insert them, along with return envelopes, for mailing to all Sherwood Forest households. THANK YOU to all volunteers!!

A membership list is compiled as dues are received. Property transfers are entered into the membership database to capture the new residents who move into Sherwood Forest. **There you have it:** a brief account of what it takes to mail annual dues letters and maintain and update the database.

Unfortunately, our 2013 membership numbers have fallen below both 2011 and 2012 for the same time period. As of September our total membership is 1,100 out of 2,900 dues letters mailed. The Sherwood Forest Citizens' Association's voluntary \$25 dues request is the lowest of any neighborhood association in East Baton Rouge Parish. If you haven't paid your dues yet, please take a few moments to consider the benefits of membership – our sheriff's security patrol, a network of Eyewatch volunteers, a vacation security check for your home, record of deed restrictions, representation at Planning and Zoning Committee meetings, help with DPW Issues, and seasonal landscaping at major subdivision entrances. The goal of the SFCA is to help maintain your property values and keep Sherwood Forest a desirable neighborhood to live in and raise your family. **What a value for only \$25!!!**

To the 1,100 paid members, thank you for keeping me very busy, and to those who contributed a security donation, an EXTRA thank-you.

To join SFCA, complete the form below and mail your 2013 dues in the enclosed envelope to:
Sherwood Forest Citizens' Association
P.O. Box 45142
Baton Rouge, LA 70895-4142

SHERWOOD FOREST CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION 2013 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Comments: _____

_____ I would like to be an Eyewatch block captain.

----- I would like to volunteer for the following committee(s):

Volunteering for a committee is open to all Sherwood Forest residents. Please consider giving of your time and talent for the betterment of our neighborhood!

2013 Annual Membership Dues (Jan. 1- Dec. 31): **\$25** + Security Donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Security

Gary Smith

After several years of increased Sheriff Patrol hours funded by Sherwood Forest Citizens Association membership dues and additional security donations, reduced membership recently necessitated that the patrol hours be decreased by several hours per week. Membership level directly affects the amount of extra-duty Sheriff Patrol our neighborhood receives, so please encourage your neighbors to join and remain members of the association. A member also receives the added benefit of having the patrol specifically keep an eye on his house while away for extended periods, if desired. The patrol still utilizes marked and unmarked units and the patrol times still vary from day-to-day.

While the patrols certainly deter crime in Sherwood Forest, it is critically important for neighbors to look out for each other and generally keep an eye out for unusual activity. After a recent house burglary, a neighbor was able to notify the police regarding the location of several individuals who were later charged with breaking into the house. While we can all look out for our neighbors at any time, a more formal 'watch' program is being administered through the association. The neighborhood's Eyewatch program has really been given a 'shot in the arm' with the efforts of Richard and Marcia Empson. The Empsons have spent a great deal of time organizing the program and contacting neighborhood residents regarding participation. They have introduced several creative ways to make YOUR neighborhood friendlier and safer. Please read their article in this newsletter and consider becoming a Block Captain for your area.

While not surprising, we believe it is important to mention that in the overwhelming majority, probably over 95%, of the house burglaries that are brought to the attention of the association, the burglarized house has an open carport with no vehicle present at the time of the burglary, and the door used to gain entry is hidden from street view. The door is usually forced open, such as by a kick. The usual items taken are large screen thin-panel televisions, laptop computers, video games, and jewelry. One way to address this, particularly if away for an extended time, would be to have a neighbor park his car in the empty carport while the resident is away. Timer lights, stopping mail and newspaper delivery, arming an alarm system, installing motion-detector lights, etc. all have their place but the empty carport may be the most obvious "giveaway."

Reminders/Warnings/Pleadings: vehicles (including trailers) in our beautiful neighborhood are to be parked in carports, garages, driveways, and church/school PARKING LOTS – not on the front lawn, not on the sidewalk (a valuable neighborhood benefit that homeowners have paid for), not on the city-parish right-of-way (area between the sidewalk and curb), and not on the street. Parking citations are issued for these violations. Please inform your guests/parishioners/members/student's parents, etc. of these ordinances. Let's keep our neighborhood safe AND pretty by parking vehicles where plot plans and designs designated for them to be parked. Let's IMPROVE our neighborhood; not watch it (and our investment) deteriorate. We all WIN if we do this. Problems regarding parking as well as inoperative vehicles can be reported anonymously to security@sfcabr.org or 273-1353. The information will be passed on for enforcement to the Sheriff's deputies providing the extra-duty patrol. Another option is to contact the city police impound department at 389-3819. STAY SAFE

Louisiana Nursery-A Special Thank You

A special thank you to Louisiana Nursery who has supported our neighborhood for many years by donating hundreds of dollars in gift certificates. With the closing of the Florida Blvd. Location they will continue to donate gift certificates for yards of the month and our Christmas decorations contest. They will be greatly missed at the Florida location but the Coursey store is nearby and has a large selection of plants and gift items.

Again, Sherwood Forest appreciates your continued support.

Neissy Graf-Board Member

The Sherwood Forest Citizens Association Board mourns the loss of Neissy Graf and her husband, Rod. They were killed in an automobile accident in North Carolina on August 10.

Neissy had been a member of the Board since 2009 and was the editor of the Sherwood Forest News. She was passionate about her work and was always striving to have an all-inclusive, perfect publication, sharing the most with the residents of Sherwood Forest. In 2011 the Sherwood Forest News was given the Gold Level Award, the highest newsletter award given by the Neighborhood USA Organization.

We miss her!!

**See the New and improved SFCA Web Page
Be sure to check it out at
<http://www.sfcabr.org>**

The Sherwood Forest News
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P.O. Box 46142
Baton Rouge, LA 70895-4142
225-273-1353
<http://www.sfcabr.org>

EBR Extension for Sewer Rehab Work

Public Works
Patty Domingue

The following report is taken from article in the Advocate on July 6, 2013 by Rebekah Allen

East Baton Rouge Parish officials have received a 4 year extension to finish the \$1.5 billion sewer rehabilitation program that has been underway since 2002. The original deadline for the federally mandated parish sewer work was Dec. 31, 2014. The extension approved by the EPA and signed by a federal judge moves the deadline to Dec. 31, 2018. This project, known as the Sanitary Sewer Overflow plan (SSO plan) is supposed to stop the problem of sewage overflowing back into homes or into streets by way of manholes, ultimately contaminating Baton Rouge waterways.

David Guillory, director of the Department of Public Works, said the projects that increase capacity for sewer lines and pump stations will not be delayed. According to the new timetable, \$260 million worth of projects are now slated for completion in 2018. The original plan was to build 60 miles of deep tunnels beneath the sewer lines that would hold the sewage and storm water until it could be processed at the plants. In 2006, Mayor-President Kip Holden's administration changed course and decided to fix the existing pipe system. The officials said that the change in plans, in addition to natural disasters over the years, cost the city-parish valuable time.

The additional funding provided by the extension allows the city-parish to add additional projects, including improvements to the North Waste Water Treatment Plant, generators for pump stations and technology upgrades. The extension does not change the working price tag, Guillory states, of the sewer project, which is estimated at \$1.5 billion, because the city had already budgeted the additional projects. The extension also frees up funding for the sewer's rehabilitation and maintenance which is financed with bonds, sales taxes and sewer fees. So an extension means more time for money to accumulate.

For those of us who have constant sewer issues with sewage backup problems when we have any kind of rain event, this extension is disheartening. We implore the city to complete the project as expeditiously as possible.

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Call the right number to get information for assistance

Virtually everyone knows to phone **911** in an emergency. However, there are other numbers you can use to register complaints or seek action to solve a vexing problem.

Use the **City-Parish Call Center (311)** to report suspected zoning violations (deviations from A-1 code), public safety hazards like potholes and fallen tree limbs, nuisances such as stray pets or barking dogs, egregious or repetitive parking violations, junked cars, unsightly carports and many more. **REMEMBER: YOU MAY REMAIN ANONYMOUS WHEN USING THIS SERVICE!**

The number for Baton Rouge City Police is **389-2000**. To report suspicious situations that are not time-sensitive call the Sherwood Forest Citizens' Association Security Line, **273-1353**. Leave a call-back message, and include your email for online communication.

Specific questions about streets, drainage and sewerage, construction and building codes or the environment should be directed to the EBR Department of Public Works (DPW) at **389-3090, 380-2070**, or online at <http://brgov.com/DEPT/dpw/>.

To receive **up-to-date information** about your subdivision, **PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS** on your membership form, or call a member of the board of directors. Names and contact numbers are listed below.

2013 SFCA Board of Directors and Committees

Sherwood Forest Citizens' Association Security Number — 273-1353

(Note: All officers, directors and committee members are volunteers.)

OFFICERS:

President: Ricky Shaffer, 11006 Sheraton Drive (218-4284), roostert80@cox.net
Vice President: Gary Smith, 11950 Parkwood Drive (273-1353), security@sfcabr.org
Treasurer: Ralph Dupuy, 11930 Parkwood Drive (275-8778), ralphdupuy@gmail.com
Secretary: Kathleen Lobell, 11006 Sheraton Drive (218-4284), klobell@cox.net
DIRECTORS: Marcia Empson, Richard Empson, Gary Domingue, Patty Domingue, Jackie Gray, James Gray, Gary Patureau and Emmeline Ross.

COMMITTEES:

Architectural Control: Terry Hebert, 12606 Fairhaven Drive (272-1771), terryvh@cox.net; Gary Smith
Beautification: Jackie Gray, 11530 Manorwood Drive (273-2930), jrjhgray@cox.net;
Emmeline Ross, 12459 E. Millburn Ave. (272-0588), eross55@cox.net
Eyewatch: Marcia and Richard Empson, 1045 S. Burgess Drive (272-2372), msempson@bellsouth.net
Federation: Gary Patureau, 10721 Sandringham Avenue (262-2315), gary@lasie.org;
Hospitality: Mary Lou Heuchart
Membership: James Gray, jrjhgray@cox.net; Advisor: Dick Bartol
Newsletter: Gary Patureau, gary@lasie.org
Public Works: Jackie Gray, Gary Smith, Emmeline Ross,
Patty Domingue, 535 Little John Drive (272-2955), pattydno@bellsouth.net;
Security: Gary Smith, security@sfcabr.org
Zoning: Gary Patureau, gary@lasie.org

SFCA board of directors meetings are at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, except October and December, in Room 5 of the St. Thomas More Activity Center. Get in touch with Ricky Shaffer at least four days in advance of the meeting if you would like to present an item to the board.