

NEIGHBORHOODS

Highlands By Karen Story



Tree decorating

On a happier note, if you drove past the corner of 116th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 87th Street during the holidays, you saw that the new trees were decorated with golden garlands and colorful ornaments. This is entirely thanks to the Keller family (Sue, Kevin, and Liam) and to Liam's friend Darien Nelson-Henry. Luckily, I happened to drive by as they were decorating the trees, and was able to take a picture. Kevin said, "We wanted to surprise the neighborhood." What a nice gift!

Picnic chairperson: Mari Bercaw
KAN representative: Sue Keller
I-405 expansion committee representatives: Sue Keller, Andrea Gerth
Communications chairperson: Karen Story

The board members are volunteers whose goal is to help create a sense of community in our neighborhood, and make it a safer, healthier and more beautiful place to live.

2006 accomplishments

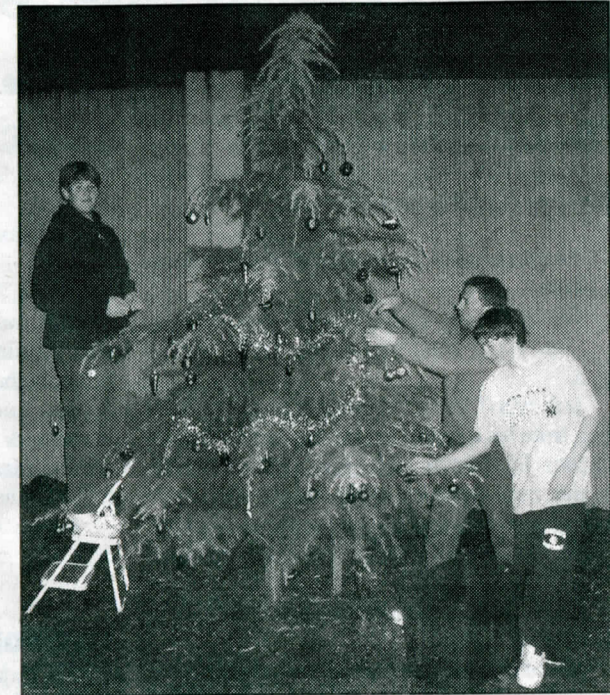
As for 2006 accomplishments, although the 112th Avenue sidewalk isn't completed, the utility work is finally done. The city street crew plans to complete the sidewalk before the end of February, weather permitting. I want to thank the 112th Avenue residents who have had a construction zone in their front yard for the past nine months for their patience and understanding during this frustrating project.

What else did the Highlands neighborhood accomplish in 2006? Here is a partial list:

- New crosswalks at 114th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 87th Street;
- 114th Avenue N.E. gravel walkway extension;
- 114th intersection design modifications;
- 116th walkway upgrades;
- Cedar View Park cleanup and tree planting;
- Fall picnic, spring egg hunt;
- N.E. 87th Street sidewalk planning;
- General cleanup and landscaping; and

Neighborhood gift: Kevin and Liam Keller and Darien Nelson-Henry apply festive decorations to a tree on the corner of 116th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 87th Street.

Photo by Karen Story



• Increasing the number of people on our mailing list.

We logged more than 330 hours of volunteer time this year, which made us eligible for \$5,000 in grant money. The funds were spent on the 112th sidewalk project, neighborhood events and a variety of small projects such as landscaping.

2007 goals and projects

Projects planned for 2007 include landscaping around the entrance sign to our neighborhood, installing a new (taller) backstop at Highlands Park and planting trees. If there is enough money in our budget, we will also asphalt

a portion of the 116th Avenue N.E. walkway, and possibly install a Porta-Potty at Highlands Park. In addition, we'll continue to help maintain and improve our parks and open spaces, and host neighborhood events such as a softball game, spring egg hunt and fall picnic.

In other news

Did you notice the new section of gravel walkway on 114th Avenue N.E., between the Highlands entrance sign and N.E. 86th Street? I'd like say a huge thank you to Mark Berntsen and his Public Works Department street crew. We asked for the extension,

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Elections

A year end review wouldn't be complete without election results. In order to qualify for Kirkland grant money each year, our neighborhood must hold annual elections. Elections are usually held at our November general meeting, but this year we decided to try holding them via e-mail, to allow more people to participate. The results are in, and there were no stunning upsets. All existing board members have agreed to another term, and we still have no secretary.

So please welcome, and say thank you to, your Highlands Neighborhood Association 2007 board members:

Chairperson: Bob Kamuda

Vice chairperson: Steve Hager

Treasurer: John Braun

Secretary: needed (attend five two-hour meetings a year and send simple minutes to communications chairperson)

Board member at large: Jim Jung
Peter Kirk Elementary School liaison: Teresa Muro

Food drive chairperson: Debbie Ohman

Happy New Year to everyone in the Highlands. In this first column of 2007, I want to review the past year, and think about the year to come.

Jan. 18 meeting: preparing for emergencies

One of the biggest local events of 2006 was the Dec. 14 windstorm. It was a tough one, and if Al Gore is right, and I'm pretty sure he is, we can expect to see more like it. How prepared was our neighborhood this time? What can we do better next time?

At our next neighborhood association meeting, on Jan. 18, we'll discuss emergency preparedness in our neighborhood. Bring your ideas for how we can prepare our homes and neighborhood for future emergencies.

Neighborhood association meetings are held every other month at the Maintenance Center at 915 Eighth St. at 7 p.m. They're informal opportunities to meet your neighbors, discuss issues, ask questions and learn about topics of general interest.

Public Works extends needed pedestrian-friendly gravel walkway in Highlands

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and within days they were out there with their equipment. This walkway, besides being an aesthetic improvement, will help reduce the number of times pedestrians have to cross a busy street.

The roads, sidewalks, utilities, trees and playground in the new N.E. 95th Street development have been installed for a while now, but where are the houses?

Tony Leavitt of the Kirkland Planner Department, says, "The project was sold to Steve Jensen Homes, so they will be building the homes. When I talked to their rep, he said they would be in for permits by the end of the year."

You can learn more about the homes

that will be built by going to stevejensenhomes.com.

Who am I?

Last month my North Rose Hill Courier colleague, Jeff Trager, wrote a short bio about himself, and it occurred to me that some of you might be curious about who I am. I'll keep it brief. I'm 47 years old, and have lived in the Highlands for more than seven years. I live on N.E. 90th Street, next door to the big tomato garden, with my partner Grant, my sons Ian, 16, and Colin, 13, and Grant's son Nick, 17. (Grant's daughter, Alex, has grown up and moved out.)

I lived on North Rose Hill from 1988 to 1999. Before that I was in the Peace Corps in West Africa. I was

raised near Bellevue, and went to college in Bellingham and Olympia. I'm a technical writer and work in Totem Lake. My hobbies include gardening, traveling and fixing up my house. I was once an avid hiker and outdoors enthusiast, although I don't find much time for it these days. I love living in the Highlands and look forward to many more years here.

E-mail list

Want to feel more connected to your local community? Want to know what's going on in your neighborhood? Get on the Highlands e-mail list. We keep your address private. To sign up, go to our Web site at www.KirklandHighlands.org