



The Official Newsletter of the Kensington Downs Community Association

December 2015

# Kensington Downs Courier

P.O. Box 15431 • Fort Wayne, Indiana 46885-5431

[www.kensingtondowns.com](http://www.kensingtondowns.com)

## President's Desk

By Carol A. Griffin, President

It's the most wonderful time of the year, when cooks around the country take to their kitchens to bake cookies galore. Whether you prefer gingerbread men, crisp springerle or crunchy biscotti, chances are you'll enjoy some fresh baked Christmas cookies this holiday season. Like many Christmas traditions, the origin of this delicious custom lies ages ago, in solstice rituals conducted long before Christmas became the huge commercial holiday it is today.

Winter solstice festivals have been held for eons, across the world. From Norway to West Africa, Ireland to India, groups of people gathered to celebrate the changing of the seasons. Celebrations revolved around food; after all, you had to feast before the famine of the winter. Solstice often meant the arrival of the first frost, so animals could be killed and kept safely to eat through the winter, and fermented beverages like beer and wine that had been brewed in the spring were finally ready to drink. As any modern host knows, a hearty roast and a stiff drink need just one thing to complete the party: dessert.

By the Middle Ages, the Christmas holiday had overtaken solstice rituals throughout much of present-

day Europe. However, the old feast traditions remained. And while the roast and drink recipes were probably quite similar to what earlier Europeans had enjoyed, the pastry world was experiencing some amazing changes. Spices like nutmeg, cinnamon and black pepper were just starting to be widely used, and dried exotic fruits like citron, apricots and dates added sweetness and texture to the dessert tray. These items, along with ingredients like sugar, lard and butter, would have been prized as expensive delicacies by medieval cooks. Only on the most important holiday could families afford treats like these, which led to a baking bonanza to prepare for Christmas. And unlike pies or cakes,

cookies could be easily shared and given to friends and neighbors. Our modern Christmas cookies date back to these medieval gifts.

Though cookies have come a long way since medieval times, some things haven't changed. Many Christmas cookies are still heavily spiced. We think of "traditional" Christmas flavors like cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger, and those are exactly the same spices medieval cooks would have used in their cookies ages ago. Gingerbread is a classic Christmas cookie, and yet it's also a cookie that would have tasted strikingly similar back in the Middle Ages. Ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg and mace combine to make a snappy, spicy taste, just like they would have back then. And gingerbread uses molasses as a sweetener, something that medieval cooks would appreciate as refined sugar was so expensive. These cooks would not have made gingerbread men, however. The first person to try that was none other than Queen Elizabeth I of England, who had the cookie molded into the shapes of her favorite courtiers.

(Source: History.com)



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## Snow Removal

By KDCA Board of Directors

The KDCA Board has authorized our vendor, Hoosier Land Care (HLC) to begin plowing the community roads when snowfall reaches 3 to 3.5 inches. Start time for plowing will also depend on when the snowfall begins and the length of time predicted for the storm to move through the area. Our vendor's goal is to always make the KD streets at least "passable" for people going to work in the morning.

HLC will begin by making a double-pass on all KD streets to clear a path wide enough for two (2) cars to pass, in all locations where cars are not parked on the street. Then, HLC will proceed to make multiple visits to KD during the entire length of the snowstorm. **Please Note: If the HLC truck(s) have left KD and it is still snowing and/or all areas are not completely cleaned yet, they will be coming back again to clean off the streets.** Also, it takes more time to clean the cul-de-sacs correctly from edge-to-edge; and cars parked here often end up blocking an area that could be used to pile snow.

**Please keep these facts in mind and exercise patience.** Remember, HLC has other customers besides Kensington Downs, so it could take a couple of hours before a truck can get back through to make another pass and/or do cleanup. Typically, HLC will do the "final cleanup" and inspection either overnight (following a storm that ends during the day) or throughout the next day for a storm that ends overnight. As always, the homeowner is responsible for clearing any snow left at the end of their driveway after the HLC snowplow or City of Fort Wayne truck makes additional passes on the KD streets.

### Other ways that homeowners can help our community during snow storms:

- Move your vehicle(s) off the street, so the snowplow can clear all snow from roadways.
- If snowfall is predicted, park vehicles in your garage or move them to your driveway.
- When shoveling or "blowing" the snow from your driveway, do not pile it in the street.
- Please help by shoveling the snow from mailbox pads, so the U.S.P.S. personnel can deliver the mail to KD residents.
- If there is a sidewalk adjacent to your property (in front and/or on the side), it is the homeowner's responsibility to keep that public sidewalk clear of all snow at all times. This is a City ordinance and a fine can be imposed.
- PLEASE do not harass the snowplow drivers! If you have a concern, leave a message by calling 749-5308.

On November 27th, Board members (Cary Baron and Tom Eggold) placed snow stakes to mark all of the fire hydrants (25) and storm drains (48) in Kensington Downs. **Please help to keep the storm drains free of leaves, other debris and snow.** If the streets are snowy/icy and there is a thaw, it is important that the storm drains be opened so the water can drain off and not "re-freeze" causing hazardous streets. **Also, the Fire Department needs your help to keep the fire hydrants visible and accessible, and free of snow piles.**

The KDCA Board made the decision again this year to forego distributing salt barrels throughout our subdivision. We have had problems with moisture causing the salt to cake into a solid block (i.e., salt was not useable). **KD homeowners should call 3-1-1 and request that the City apply salt to any "problem areas" on our subdivision roads this winter.**

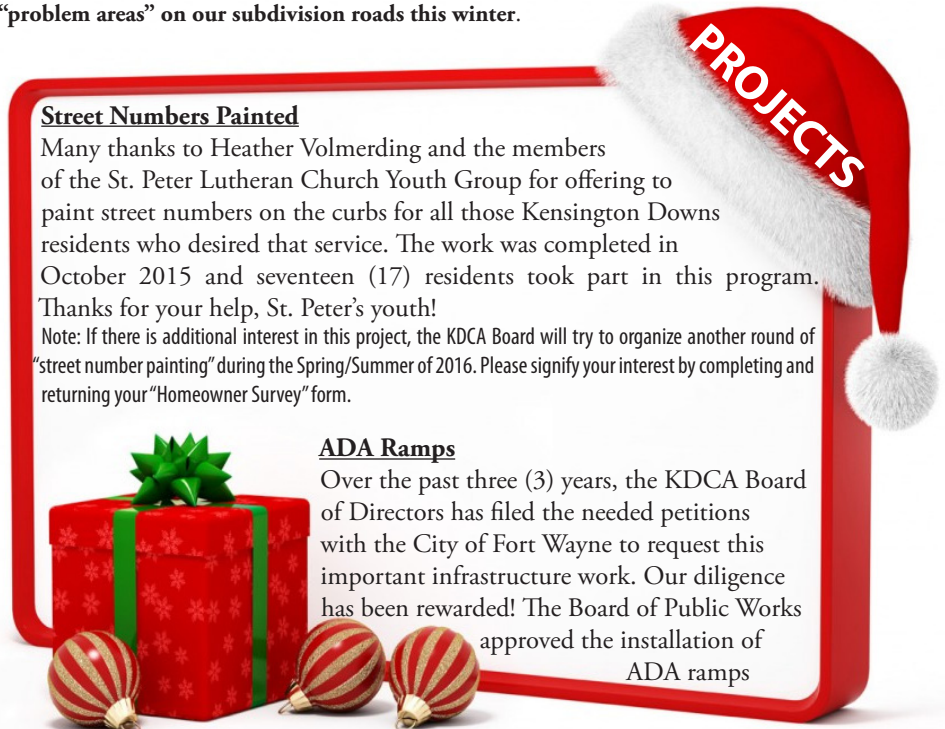
### Street Numbers Painted

Many thanks to Heather Volmerding and the members of the St. Peter Lutheran Church Youth Group for offering to paint street numbers on the curbs for all those Kensington Downs residents who desired that service. The work was completed in October 2015 and seventeen (17) residents took part in this program. Thanks for your help, St. Peter's youth!

Note: If there is additional interest in this project, the KDCA Board will try to organize another round of "street number painting" during the Spring/Summer of 2016. Please signify your interest by completing and returning your "Homeowner Survey" form.

### ADA Ramps

Over the past three (3) years, the KDCA Board of Directors has filed the needed petitions with the City of Fort Wayne to request this important infrastructure work. Our diligence has been rewarded! The Board of Public Works approved the installation of ADA ramps





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## Villa News & Information

**Tom Eggold, Villas President**

The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Kensington Downs Villaminiums Association was held on Saturday, October 24. Directors and Officers were elected - see list to the immediate left for the names of individuals who have agreed to serve on the Villas Board for 2016.

Please note that the Grounds Committee responsibilities for each person are also listed. In addition, Tom Eggold, Lyn Schlegel and Tom Watt serve on the KDCA Board of Directors as the District 2 (The Villas) representatives.

Many thanks to Villa resident Larry Porter, and to KDCA Board member Cary Baron for their excellent work on the sprinkler system this past year. Both Larry and Cary have agreed to work with Pfister Sprinkler Systems (vendor) during the 2016 season.

Snow removal from the driveways, sidewalks and streets in the Villas will be handled by Martin Lawn again this winter. The same arrangement that was in place last winter will be continued - KDCA will offer The Villas a subsidy payment to offset the costs incurred for Derby Lane and Preakness Cove snow removal that is performed by Martin Lawn. For any questions or service concerns regarding all snow removal matters in the Villas, please contact Dick Dirrim or Tom Eggold.



SAVE THE DATE	
Board Meeting	Jan 13, Georgetown Library
Board Meeting	Feb 24, Georgetown Library
Board Meeting	Apr 6, Georgetown Library
Garage Sale	May 5, 6, 7
Board Meeting	May 11, TBD
Board Meeting	Jun 8, TBD
Board Meeting	Aug 10, TBD
Board Meeting	Sep 14, TBD
Garage Sale	Oct TBD
Board Meeting	Oct 12, TBD
Annual Meeting	Nov 9, Georgetown Library
Board Meeting	Nov 30, TBD

### PROJECTS

- in six (6) locations within Kensington Downs in 2016:
- Welshire Blvd. and Bent Willow Drive intersection
  - Scarlet Court at the corner of Algate Lane
  - Kerrigan's Way and Red Clover Lane intersection
  - Preakness Cove at the common area sidewalk
  - Derby Lane in the cul-de-sac (near lot 59)
  - Derby Lane at the common area sidewalk

#### Bridge Repairs & Detours

Allen County will have the Maysville Road bridge repairs completed by June 17, 2016.

Their next project will include repairs to the bridge on State Blvd. located just to the west of St. Peter Lutheran Church. Looks like KD residents will be using those detour routes to Georgetown for some time to come!



#### ATTENTION Kensington Downs Residents This Winter, IF YOU SEE ....

- a KD street that could use another snowplow pass
- a pothole that needs to be filled
- a slippery community road or intersection that needs salting
- a broken street light (note the number plate on the pole)
- cars parked on the street for extended periods of time

PLEASE CALL 3-1-1  
Report it to the City of Fort Wayne  
Kensington Downs is part of the City.  
Let your tax dollars work for us!

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# Cleaning Bullerman Ditch

Allison Corron, Board Member

No doubt you are familiar with the bridge work currently being done by Allen County, closing off the portion of Maysville Road just north of the Kensington Downs entrance. This bridge spans the Bullerman Drain, which flows west to east in the flood plain along the north edge of Kensington Downs before eventually emptying into the Maumee River.

Concern has been raised over the condition of the Bullerman Drain (Ditch) and we are looking for ways to improve its condition. The Allen County Surveyor is responsible for maintaining Bullerman Ditch, and your property taxes partially fund this maintenance.

During a huge rainstorm this past June, some of our homeowners were affected when a tree located on the Ditch bank was dislodged by the excessive water volume and flow in the Bullerman Drain. The tree fell onto the electric lines and caused a power outage which lasted for several hours. In looking at the condition of the ditch, it has become apparent to the KDCA Board of Directors that the County may not be placing as much importance on clearing this area as KDCA desires. So, we need to "encourage" the County to do their part to maintain this important piece of our community infrastructure.

That's why, in Spring 2016, we would like to ask all KDCA members to assist in a letter writing campaign directed at the responsible County officials. We will ask that they clean the Bullerman Ditch in the area that runs along the northern border of Kensington Downs. The KDCA Board will even provide a sample letter for you to use and the contact information necessary to ensure that your letter gets to the proper individuals.

Please watch the Kensington Downs Newsletter in April 2016 for more information, and thank you in advance for helping us in this "grassroots" (pun intended) endeavor to improve our community.

## Annual Meeting Highlights

Karen Casey, Secretary

The KDCA Annual Meeting was held on (Wednesday) November 11, 2015 at the Georgetown Library.

There were 15 homeowners in attendance. Prior to this meeting, all KDCA homeowners were mailed the meeting agenda, an official ballot, and a current financial report which included the proposed budget for 2016.

A total of 82 ballots were received. The KDCA membership approved the 2016 budget totaling \$23,216 and elected each of the following candidates to serve a 3-year term on the KDCA Board of Directors: Thomas Eggold (lot 58), Lyn Schlegel (lot 53), and Thomas Watt (lot 78) as District 2 representatives and Allison Corron (lot 112) as a District 3 representative.

The KDCA Board of Directors has voted to establish the 2016 dues at \$100 per lot. This was judged to be reasonable given that our total annual expenditures have come in well under-budget during each of the last few years. Also, the Directors believe that KDCA has enough funds in reserve to cover any unforeseen expenses that might occur in 2016.

The meeting continued with Board members reporting on some of the projects that were accomplished in 2015. Three (3) newsletters were produced, and a revised Homeowner Directory was distributed to all KD residents in April. Two (2) street trees were planted and the utility boxes at the pond were given a fresh coat of paint. The

annual financial audit was conducted for the ninth straight year. We held two (2) garage sales (May and October) in conjunction with Kensington Downs East - both were quite successful and will continue in 2016. In addition, Directors were very busy with the ongoing maintenance needs of our subdivision (e.g., lawn care, snow removal, pond and fountain, irrigation system) as well as the hiring and managing of the vendors involved.

The annual meeting concluded with a discussion of the "Bullerman ditch" problem. Please see the related article in this newsletter. KDCA President Carol Griffin thanked the Board members for their service and also the homeowners for attending, and then the meeting was adjourned.

### THANK YOU

Once again, Todd and Amy Kabisch volunteered to decorate the Kensington Downs entrance for Christmas and we really appreciate it. They did a great job!

Members of the KDCA Annual Audit Committee (Dick Shively, Joseph Khamalah and Arlene Klapes) have completed the audit of the FY-2014 financials. Their diligent efforts are gratefully acknowledged. A table summarizing the committee's findings has been posted to the KD website (you must have "member access" to view this document).

We appreciate all of the homeowners who have volunteered to serve on the 2016 KDCA Board of Directors and we thank them for their service to our community. We are grateful to the following board members for agreeing to serve (again) as Officers: Carol Griffin (President), Arlene Klapes (Vice President), Karen Casey (Secretary) and Carl Wheeler (Treasurer).

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

All homeowners are encouraged to attend any of the KDCA Board of Directors meetings. We welcome your participation. Please feel free to contact any Director with your comments, concerns and suggestions.

Please sign-up for KD website access, so you can see all of the information posted there. Only registered website members can view the "private postings" such as the KDCA financial audit results and board meeting minutes. Registration is easy - just go to [www.kensingtondowns.com](http://www.kensingtondowns.com) and follow the directions.

We encourage homeowners to get involved with the Kensington Downs community by volunteering to help with a specific project or serve on a committee. Members of the KDCA Board of Directors are homeowners just like you and they need your help. Please consider serving with us, because KDCA does not "run" all by itself.

KDCA has been assigned a new Neighborhood Liaison Officer (NLO) - her name is Officer Sarah Haber-Schmieman. The Fort Wayne Police Department's NLO is available to help with any concerns in our subdivision, and KD residents should feel free to contact our NLO directly ([Sarah.Haber@cityoffortwayne.org](mailto:Sarah.Haber@cityoffortwayne.org)).

Please be sure to see the Homeowner Survey that was enclosed with your annual dues statement. We ask that you consider volunteering to serve Kensington Downs in some capacity. Let's all pull together to keep up our standards and improve our community!

### CONDOLENCES

We extend our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Debbie Johnston, who passed away on October 13, 2015.