

Spring 2024

TREVI NEWS

trevigardenshoa.org

TGHOA

Board Members

President:

Kathy Seketa

Phone 217-741-3599

Vice President:

Steve Sandstrom

Phone 217-529-5203

Treasurer:

Randy Armstrong

Phone 217-341-9680

Secretary:

Steve McCaffrey

Phone 217-679-2525

At Large:

Collins Pieper

Phone 217-741-5406

At Large +

5th Addition rep:

Tom Gatschenberger

Phone 217-381-0704

At Large:

Scott Fields

Phone 217-971-8989

Questions? Concerns?

Email us at

trevigardenshomeowners

@gmail.com



Sprucing things up for spring

Hello Trevi Garden Homeowners Association members.

The Trevi HOA Board held its first board meeting of 2024 on January 16 at the Southern View Chapel. We were glad that a few residents were in attendance to share their thoughts on the latest neighborhood topics. These included:

The ever-expanding swale growth. The annual budget allocates money for cattail removal in the central drainage ditch, but it's rarely used. Doing an end-to-end swale clearing has been discussed periodically for the past two years. At the meeting, the board was able to finalize and approve a plan for clearing the ditch and limiting future growth. The project will enhance the appearance of a large section of the neighborhood. More details are inside and can also be found in the board minutes on our website. Notices will be posted prior to the actual start of the work, if/when Mother Nature permits.

Trevi's new bookkeeper was introduced at the meeting. The HOA had been in need of a new assistant (the company owner's death prompted the job opening). Trevi Treasurer Randy Armstrong has helped the new bookkeeper acclimate to our unique structure. Bills for the annual HOA assessment dues were sent out, and as of April 5, 88% have been paid. If you are part of the 12%, please contribute ASAP to avoid additional late fees.

Cutting Edge Yard Service's three-year contract was approved. They are familiar with the areas to be cut within the neighborhood and have been very reliable in the past. Still, they sometimes have new people doing the work. As mowing resumes, please send an email to the HOA Board if you notice a common area that's missed and we will follow up on it.

Trevi Gardens' **Spring Cleaning Day** is right around the corner! With the winds and storms we've experienced, there's always trash to pick up. Read the inside article for more information and be a volunteer. It's fresh air, great exercise and an easy way to quickly improve the look of your neighborhood!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Trevi Gardens

Homeowners Association

P.O. Box 9238, Springfield, IL, 62791
Trevigardenshoa.org

President's letter *cont.*

Lastly, we want to make sure everyone is aware of the **new HOA Covenant language** that was approved at the Annual Board meeting in November. The new amendments included restrictions on future purchases of homes within Trevi Gardens for rental usage, and more specific language for the types of yard signage that are allowed.

Details are included in this issue, so please take a few minutes to thumb through it.

We'd love to see you at the next Trevi HOA Board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on April 15 at the Southern View Chapel!

Katherine Seketa, HOA President



Volunteers needed for Spring Cleaning Day

Join us on Saturday, April 20, at the front entrance to celebrate Earth Day!

It's your opportunity to help make Trevi Gardens a more attractive place to live.

Volunteers will spread out, walk the subdivision and pick up trash and debris that has gathered in the ditches, swale and common areas. We will supply trash bags but please bring your own gloves.

This is a great time to meet some of your neighbors, initiate friendships and spruce up your surroundings. It also makes the subdivision look nicer for guests who are visiting or for any potential homebuyers.

If it's pouring rain that morning, the make-up date will be the following Saturday, April 27, same time and location.

Any questions or suggestions, please contact **Steve Sandstrom** via the Trevi email account (trevigardenshomeowners@gmail.com).

TREVI GARDENS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 15	QUARTERLY HOA MEETING 5:30 pm, Southern View Chapel
April 20	SPRING CLEANING DAY
May 5	CINCO de MAYO
May 12	MOTHER'S DAY
May 27	MEMORIAL DAY
June 16	FATHER'S DAY

Treasury notes

Hello to all my Trevi Gardens neighbors and friends. Briefly, I would like to discuss and summarize the overall fiscal health of the Trevi Gardens community.

The neighborhood's financial health is sound and improving yearly. Over the last few years your Trevi Gardens HOA has cut expenses and steadily began to grow the Trevi Gardens Savings and Reserve Fund.

The Reserve Fund, a Trevi account created and first funded three years ago, is growing. The Reserve Fund, as you may know, will be used in the future to make major repairs and maintenance to the Trevi Gardens infrastructure. A properly funded Reserve Fund will provide for future repairs and make it less likely special assessments will be needed where residents are billed for those major repairs.

The Trevi Board has also found numerous ways to save on costs and reduce spending. For example, bookkeeping costs have been reduced by 70% since 2020. We always look for ways to pinch pennies on expenditures. Board members hand-deliver the



2024 Trevi Board of Trustees—front row: Steve McCaffrey, Kathy Seketa, Tom Gatschenberger. Back row: Steve Sandstrom, Scott Fields, Randy Armstrong, Collins Pieper

newsletter twice a year and deliver other information door-to-door, saving a substantial amount on postage.

We have been investing our assets into CDs to earn additional interest. This year we expect to earn close to \$4,000 in interest, which will help us lessen the need for future dues increases.

Our budgets are available on the Trevi Gardens website. Take a look, and share your thoughts and suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you at a future meeting or through email.

Randy Armstrong, Treasurer

October 31, 2023: No tricks — just treats

Last Halloween was chilling in every sense of the word! Trevi Gardens neighbors who went out trick or treating found some delicious options and fun trinkets at the southwest corner of Lily Lane and 123 Sherry Drive. Goodies included hot dogs and hot apple cider to warm spirits. (photos by Carol Squibb)



Annual Meeting vote caps Trevi rental units

The 2023 Annual Meeting was held on November 6 at Southern View Chapel.

It drew a healthy crowd, with 53 residents present and 75 owners represented by proxy. Because some of those owned multiple properties, a total of 164 properties were represented at the annual meeting. This was a phenomenal turnout for our annual HOA meeting.

President Kathy Seketa introduced the board members. She explained that the purpose of the annual board meeting is to conduct the official business for the homeowners association, which would include votes on the 2024 budget, the Board seats, and on the two proposed HOA covenant changes.

The covenant changes were a result of the quarterly public Board meetings held throughout 2023, with final language from the HOA's attorney, Brad Wilson. Clarification questions were answered and several opinions were expressed during those meetings.

Amendment discussions

Treasurer Randy Armstrong went over the proposed budget for 2024. Copies were included in the annual mailing that preceded the meeting as well as at the event. The audience asked no questions regarding the budget.

Printed copies of both amendments were also provided to the attendees. The Signs Amendment generated some discussion, most involving the need for exceptions. Kathy reminded the audience that a 'no' vote for the new sign language maintained the status quo, as the original by-laws do not allow signs at all.

The rental property amendment resulted in the most robust discussion of the evening, with multiple residents voicing concerns, opinions and experiences.

The primary cause for the amendment has been outlined in the 2023 newsletters and was restated for the members in the room: Trevi Gardens has had a major increase in the percentage of rental properties in the last two years. At the same time, the board has been fielding many complaints about the maintenance of rental units. Secretary Steve McCaffrey stated that 91% of all violation warning letters and/or fines in 2023 were issued to rental property addresses. Property values were also a consideration, as research indicates an excess of rental properties can stagnate or lower property values over time.

The rental property amendment caps the number of rental properties at the current level. It grandfathers-in all of the existing rental owners. Future home purchases in Trevi cannot be flipped to rental units, and subsequent sales of a rental unit cannot be resold as rental properties. Randy explained that if the amendment passes, an owner's fine can be as high as \$30,000 if the property is rented in violation of the by-law. (See complete details on the HOA website.)

A number of rental property owners asked questions. A single-family resident proposed a situation that might lead them to shift ownership and become a landlord, to see how the new rule change would apply. After a lengthy discussion, Kathy closed the floor debate and moved to the next order of business.

There was an open position on the Board of Trustees. Former Trevi Board President Scott Fields was nominated and accepted the nomination. The remaining board members have agreed to serve another term.

Steve explained the design of the ballots distributed at check-in and asked the audience to vote on the 2024 budget, the board slate and the pair of amendments.

With the business meeting concluded, Kathy thanked everyone for attending. Votes were collected as people exited. Some residents remained to observe the vote tabulation.

Once the votes were tallied, the outcome was announced to the remaining audience. The results were also posted to the Trevi Gardens Community Facebook page later that evening.

For the 2024 Budget proposal, the totals were: Yes - 142 | No - 2 | Abstain - 8

Scott Fields was overwhelmingly approved for the board seat.

For the Amendment regarding signs in Trevi Gardens: Yes - 146 | No - 9 | Abstain - 1

For the Amendment regarding rental properties in Trevi Gardens: Yes - 104 | No - 50 | Abstain - 2

Noteworthy

Approximately 60% of all landlords voted and 58% of the single-family property owners voted. Of those, 94% of the latter residents voted for the amendment, and 90% of the landlords voted against it.

Swale clearing on spring to-do list

For the past year two years, the board has discussed the logistics of getting the central drainage ditch cleared of brush, cattails and weeds. It used to be cut back to ground level periodically, but this huge task hasn't been done in more than a decade. As a result, the cattails gain a little bit more of a foothold each year, moving into the grass and up the embankments. Once the weeds are too tall to cut, our mowers trim around them. It dies back in the winter, then roars back in the spring.

The swale was originally designed to be one of the primary drainage channels for the subdivision. The developers of Trevi Gardens built 13 of its 16 cul-de-sac streets and private drives **with no storm drains**. They were graded so rainwater would run off the surface and into the swale, the Second Street ditch or the grassy common areas. Only three cul de sacs in Trevi have built-in storm drains. An older resident who knew the developers once stated that this feature was no accident: "They thought the water that fell in Trevi should stay in Trevi."

Dealing with these old, longstanding shortcuts always falls upon the board.

At some point the swale will need to be regraded and/or re-engineered. When the City of Springfield last did it for us 20 years ago, their surveyor gauged the drop from the pond to the Sherry/Trevi corner at 11 inches. This is too shallow to move large volumes of water, even if its path is unimpeded. With a ditch full of weeds and cattails, it's less likely to occur.

There are pros and cons to cutting the ditch vegetation down to the ground.

PROS:

- For a time the central waterway through the subdivision will look as smooth as the Second Street corner drainage after the Public Works Department repaired it for us in December 2022. It will open up longer sightlines.
- Clearing out the vegetation is not likely to streamline the flow, but it will make any problem areas more easily discernible. Sections that don't



drain well or need fixing will be apparent as the board considers next steps.

- Standing water can be more easily treated to keep the mosquito population in check.
- In late summer, the high cattails at the southwest Sherry / Trevi curve can impede visibility and create a driving hazard. That goes away.
- Less refuge for critters that crawl and slither.

CONS:

- It's expensive, and will need to be maintained or it's money wasted.
- Some residents prefer the green border along the central sidewalk trail, and the natural cover it provides. More refuge for critters is a good thing. They live outdoors. We live indoors. Let them have some habitat.
- It's putting lipstick on a pig. The problem with the drainage is still going to be there.

It's a matter of weighing the relative costs of taking action (a.) sooner rather than (b.) later, or (c.) not at all. The board understands all three perspectives.

Gathering cost information would help with subsequent decision-making, so last fall three different

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Planning a big landscaping project?

Reach out to the Architectural Committee

My name is Collins Pieper and I have been a resident in Trevi Gardens for 30 years. I have served on this board multiple times and have volunteered for many different neighborhood projects. I am the point person for the Architectural Standards Committee, comprised of four members. This committee is especially important if you are tackling a big outside project or home renovations. Before getting too deep into your planning, it could prove useful to contact us.

Please be aware that the role of the Architectural Standards Committee is set forth in the By-laws and Covenants that were established in 1978. The HOA board must follow those guidelines closely.

The excerpted information can be found in greater detail on page 18, Article IX:

No building, structure, fence, construction of any kind, addition, change, or exterior alteration shall be made unless and until the plans and specifications showing the nature, kind, shape, size, height, materials, location, and finish grade of the Lot and floor elevation of the structure and proposed exterior appearance of the residence shall have been submitted to and approved as to harmony of external design and location IN WRITING to the Architectural Standards Committee. This committee shall be the sole arbiter of such plans and may withhold approval for any reason and is empowered to stop construction in violation of these restrictions. In addition, the committee has the right to enter and inspect the lot, resident, structure or building site to be sure the covenants and submitted plans are being followed without being guilty of trespass.

Each Lot owner shall submit to the Architectural Standards Committee and obtain written approval of a landscape plan.

If you plan on placing a new structure on your property, adding a fence, changing the size, placement or



material of the existing fence, or making a significant change in landscaping, you must submit a plan in writing to the Architectural Standards Committee.

After receiving these plans, the committee members will discuss the proposal and contact the homeowner with a written approval letter or to further go over the plans.

If you are adding a new deck, a fence or an addition onto the home, you are also required to get a permit from the city. To obtain a permit from the city, you will need the written approval from the Architectural Standards Committee.

We're here to help you advance your own home improvement project in the smoothest manner possible. It may seem like extra red tape, but the goal is to have some consistency across the neighborhood. A new addition that isn't permitted by us or the city may become work that is done and then has to be 'undone.'

Swale clearing *cont.*

landscape company managers walked the swale with board members. It let everyone know of the assorted challenges: sections with standing water, marshy terrain and sharp angles requiring caution.

Each then submitted bids for tackling the project. The two highest were approximately \$40K and \$48K. The lowest bid – \$16,500 – came from All American Land Management in Petersburg.

Their plan includes cutting all the vegetation in the ditch from the pond drainpipe the full length south down to 2nd Street. They will then rake the debris and haul it away from the site. They also promised to grind any remaining vegetation into mulch to not impede drainage and reseed any areas damaged by their heavy equipment.

After a healthy debate at the January board meeting, a vote was taken to accept the lowest bid and contract with All American.

Once their work is completed, a herbicide called Clearcast will be applied in the spring and summer to help control the cattails and aquatic weed growth. The spray is safe for use in waterways and does not harm animals. A second company, Archer Creek, will do the spraying for \$5,436.

When the contract was signed this winter, the plan was for All American to do the work after the ground froze solid. This would protect the terrain from ruts. One problem: It never got cold enough to freeze it.

The challenge now is for there to be a long enough dry stretch to allow the work to get done without damaging the surroundings. If that window closes this spring because it stays wet and the growing season kicks in, the project may have to be put on hold. It could potentially carry over into the fall or winter.

We will keep everyone apprised of the ditch work via the website and Facebook.

Be a part of Trevi's new Neighborhood Watch



Trevi's Neighborhood Watch Program needs to be rebooted. What's required? A few caring volunteer-residents who want to make the neighborhood safer, working together with our local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve our quality of life.

The program also empowers citizens to become active in emergency preparedness for community disasters. If another tornado or blizzard affects Trevi, the Neighborhood Watchers will have a network in place.

Contact **Kathy Seketa** at 217-741-3599 if you'd like to be a part of this critical safety group.



SOUTHERN VIEW CHAPEL

learning truth, living truth

Join us on Sunday mornings at 9 AM for fellowship, singing, and studying God's Word. Sunday School classes follow the service at 10:30 AM. We strive to teach the Bible verse by verse and chapter by chapter. Our multi-generational church is eager to welcome you. During the service and Sunday School, there are ministries for babies, toddlers, and children.

217.529.1876
4500 S 2nd St.,
Springfield, IL 62703
svchapel@svchapel.org
<https://svchapel.org/>

Your Community Bank!

United Community Bank is dedicated to our customers and our communities. Since 1973, we have been growing for you and with you, your families, your businesses, and our communities. We would love to show you why we're known as the Leader of Community Banking and repeatedly recognized as Best Bank in many of the communities we serve. We look forward to the opportunity to be Your Community Bank and hope to see you soon!



A \$50 Gift Card is Waiting for You!

Earn points for purchases you make every day & receive a Visa gift card!³ Sign up for a free UCB Everyday Points Visa Debit Card to get started. To earn points and receive a \$50 gift card, simply enroll in and use the following services: Direct Deposit, Online Banking, Bill Pay, E-Statements, & Everyday Points Registration. See us for details.

Contact us to learn more and start banking with UCB today!



Kirsten Holler
VP | Branch Manager
700 Stevenson Dr.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-529-3000

We offer great accounts with the latest and most convenient digital¹ banking services:

- Online & Mobile Banking
- Mobile Deposit
- Bill Pay with Zelle®
- UCB Controls & More
- Beacon Real-Time Banking Alerts

Our experienced professionals are ready to help you with all of your personal, family, and business banking & financing² needs including:

- Personal, Auto, and Home Financing
- Business Banking and Commercial Financing
- Agri-Business & Equipment Financing

Think Inside the Bank for ALL your financial needs:

- Wealth Management Services from United Wealth
- Insurance Services from United Financial Services

NONDEPOSIT INVESTMENT AND INSURANCE PRODUCTS:
NOT FDIC-INSURED | NO BANK GUARANTEE | MAY LOSE VALUE

UCBbank.com

NMLS# 571147



Member
FDIC

1. Your cellular provider's data and text messaging rates may apply. 2. All loans subject to credit approval. 3. \$50.00 gift card offer is valid for NEW checking accounts only. \$100.00 minimum deposit required to open a Rewards Checking account. Upon activation of required products and services, customer will receive bonus points redeemable for a \$50.00 gift card. The rewards points will be reported to the IRS as interest income. An active debit card is required to earn points. E-Statement use is required to redeem points. Points are earned on qualifying signature-based transactions and are dependent upon merchant discretion. Timeframe for points to be credited to point bank may vary. For more information regarding the Everyday Points Rewards Program, please visit ucbbank.com/everydaypoints or your nearest UCB location.



UNITED COMMUNITY BANK
The Leader of Community Banking