

WESTWOOD PARK HOMES ASSOCIATION

December 29, 2006

Dear Neighbors,

As we welcome 2007 here in Westwood Park, let me thank you for your role in making this another great year in our neighborhood. Once again nearly 200 of us participated in neighborhood activities, attended events or volunteered time to make ours a very special community.

I made an interesting discovery the other day, one that sheds some light on the strength of our neighborhood and its association. While going through a box of old documents left by a previous owner of my house, I found two bills that are now 50 years old. One was the real estate tax bill for my house for the year 1956, which showed total taxes of \$267.30. Nearby, on my desk, sits my 2006 tax bill for the same property, in the same location, a house that hasn't been significantly altered since the 1930s. The current tax bill for the property is over \$5800, *over 20 times* what it was in 1956.

Also in the pile of old documents was the annual bill from the Westwood Park Homes Association, known then as the Westwood Homes Association. For the year beginning January 1, 1957, the homes association dues for my house were \$29.34. This year my total homes association dues are \$77.12, *about two and a half times* what they were fifty years ago.

During those fifty years, the city's role in preserving our neighborhood has diminished and our association has stepped in to fill the gap. The city no longer maintains our traffic islands; our association now seeds, mows and plants those islands. The city didn't build our park on 50th street nor does the City of Fountains maintain our fountain. Our association created that park; built and maintains that fountain; seeds, waters and mows that grass; installed and operates the lights; and plants and trims the trees and flowerbeds. The city didn't install our entry markers or plant those flowers; our neighborhood association does.

Of course, the outside costs for running our association have risen in the past fifty years. Postage is up from three cents per letter to thirty-nine cents. It costs us more for mowing, printing, utilities, flower bulbs, food for picnics and everything else we buy.

But there's one cost that hasn't changed in all these years. Your neighborhood board members today are paid exactly what their predecessors fifty years ago were paid. Like those who came before, your board members donate their time month after month, evenings, afternoons and weekends to make Westwood even nicer today than it was fifty years ago – or eighty years ago when the association was founded. For those of us who like some charm and authenticity in our surroundings, those decades – and all those hours of effort on the part of our neighborhood volunteers – have added to the value of Westwood.

Once again, we thank all who make this such a genuinely caring community and all who work to enhance the views from our sidewalks. It is a pleasure to live among you, walk our sidewalks and enjoy your friendship.

Sincerely,

The Boards of Directors
Kirby Upjohn, President
Ann Schleih, Secretary
Dave Hardin, Treasurer
Ann Nixon
Glennis Walker
Chuck Stewart
Lindsay Wood
Susan Hard

WPHA Expenses

Total 2006 Expenses - \$15,538

