

Top of Hiller

Hiller Highlands Four Association Newsletter

Winter
2010-2011



In this issue:

Three-dot Journalism	1
CORE & Neighborhood Watch	2
Landscaping	4
Volunteering	5
Architectural Control	6
Treasurer Report	8
Neighborhood Notes	9
Streets & Lights	9
The Back Page	10

For all the latest information, visit our website:
www.hhiv.org

THREE-DOT JOURNALISM

by Cheryl Brodsky



In homage to San Francisco icon Herb Caen, I have used his beloved three-dot journalism.

More On Crime...

The rumor is that the Oakland Police Department has reversed its recently announced policy of not taking burglary reports in person. If you have been burglarized, you can again report it to the OPD by telephone and if you're lucky, a police officer will come out to take your report. Strange deJim says that you shouldn't do what "Mickey," a resident of another Hiller association allegedly did.

Mickey was on his way to bed when he remembered that he'd left the outside light on. When he opened the door to turn off the light, he saw that there were people stealing things from his garage. He phoned the police who asked, "Is someone in your house?" "No," he said, "but people have broken into my garage and are stealing from me. "The police dispatcher said, "All

patrols are busy. You should lock your doors and an officer will be along when one is available." "Okay," said Mickey. He hung up the phone, counted to 30 and called back. "Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago because there were people stealing things from my garage. Well, you don't have to worry about them now because I just shot them," he said, and hung up. Within five minutes, 6 police cars, a SWAT team, a helicopter, 2 fire trucks, a paramedic and an ambulance showed up at Mickey's door and caught the burglars red-handed. One of the policemen said to Mickey, "I thought you said that you shot them?" Mickey answered, "I thought you said there was no one available."



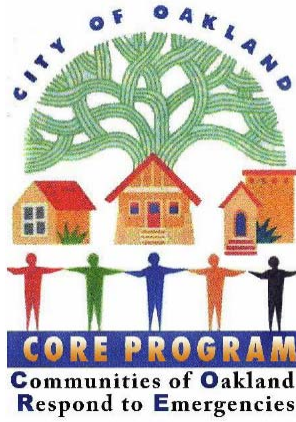
Seriously, if the OPD refuses to come out to take your report and you are instructed to report a crime on line, keep your calm and don't be discouraged. Keep reporting all incidents of crime, even if it is on line. The number of police officers assigned to each neighborhood depends on the reported crime rate. If people don't report crimes, the crime statistics will go down, along with the number of officers assigned to our beat.

Continued on page 3...

CORE

Communities of Oakland Respond to Emergencies

by Tom & Pauly Langguth



Congratulations to the eight members of HH Four who committed to and completed CORE III: Rosemary Paterson, Bob Kuzma, Bill Hunt, Shek Yu, Jean Martin, Lionel and Lorraine Chan, and Pauly Langguth. CORE III involved three evening trainings and one Saturday training that lasted the better part of the day. Four of our eight were present at a November 17 graduation ceremony, to receive their vest, hardhat, Certificate of Completion, and official ID card (complete with a photo that is just as wonderful as any passport or driver’s license photo.)



Recent CORE graduates: Lorraine Chan, Rosemary Patterson, and Pauly Langguth.

While it is true that we learned a great deal from CORE I, II, and III, we were also made aware of how much we don’t know and aren’t prepared for. With that in mind, our future plans include forming small groups of HH Four residents to discuss and review the different aspects of emergency/disaster preparedness. There will be information on first

aid, search and rescue, damage assessment, and communications. We will also be making plans to set up Command Centers within our Association to use when needed. Please plan to get involved, on some level, when asked to do so.

CORE will continue to offer refresher courses and new trainings during 2011. We will do our best to keep you informed of classes; however, you might want to consult the main CORE website, <http://www.oaklandcore.org>. Our thanks to those of you who attended any of the CORE trainings in 2010. The more residents who are trained, the better we will be able to handle whatever comes our way. Special thanks to Rosemary Paterson for all the work she did for CORE and Neighborhood Watch. It’s not true that she is moving away because we overworked her!

Neighborhood Watch

(For Rosemary Paterson)



Hiller Four sponsored a presentation by Brenda Ivy, from the City of Oakland’s Neighborhood Watch Program, on October 27, at the Highlands Country Club. We hope that those of you who attended, approximately thirty, felt your time was well used. With eighty homes in our Association, averaging two people per home, the turnout was a little disappointing. We were given very comprehensive written materials and Brenda discussed many ways to protect ourselves and our homes from criminals. We have reproduced and included two of the handouts we received. Next steps involve dividing our neighborhood into smaller, more manageable groups and recruiting our “Block Captains”. We will also be installing street signs showing that our neighborhood is part of the Neighborhood Watch Program. One of these signs was just installed on Charing Cross thanks to the efforts of the residents in that area – check it out. Please remember that the most important part of this program is to know who your neighbors are and to pay attention to what is happening on your streets. Wishing you all a very happy and safe New Year.

...continued from page 1

No Solicitors Allowed Here...



If you have read the signs at the entrances to HHIV, you know that we have a “No Solicitation” policy. In spite of this, a week doesn’t go by that my doorbell doesn’t ring when I am getting out of the shower, and I huff and puff and drip up the stairs positive that it must be the UPS man delivering that great bargain that I purchased on EBay. Nope. It’s another solicitor. I may be a meany but I don’t let the people state what they are selling or what endangered species they are saving. I politely but firmly tell them that solicitation is not permitted in HHIV and I ask them to please leave the complex. These people may be soliciting for a really good cause but they may also be casing the neighborhood to determine who is home and who is ripe for robbing. Our policy is only effective if everyone supports the policy and refuses to sign the petition or donate to the cause of strangers who solicit door to door. In some neighborhoods the residents are asked to call the police if the solicitors fail to leave the neighborhood. That’s your call, but for the safety of the entire neighborhood, please let solicitors know that they are not welcome here.

We Have a Responsibility Toward Our Renters...



Having a large number of renters in a neighborhood could change the character of the neighborhood. The general wisdom, rightly or wrongly, is that property values are better maintained and a sense of community is easier to foster when you have fewer renters. With that said, HHIV is a community made up of renters as well as owners and we can all do things to live in harmony with one another.

If you are contemplating renting your home, please be considerate of HHIV residents and select your renters with care. Make sure that prospective renters fully understand that they are renting in a planned unit development that is governed by CC&R’s and that in a high-density development noise is a concern. If they like to have parties until the wee hours of the morning, blast their stereos, hold band practice in their garage, then

HHIV may not be a good fit for them (or us). If the renters you are considering consist of several adults, each with their own cars, make sure that they understand the parking rules and that no vehicles, whether owned by renters or guests, can be parked on an HHIV street overnight. If prospective renters have pets, ensure that they understand that dogs cannot be left unattended on a balcony nor are they permitted to be unleashed on our streets. Please provide your prospective renters with a copy of the CC&R’s before they sign a rental agreement so that they understand the expectations. The CC&R’s are binding on renters as well as on non-resident owners and if there is noncompliance, the renters as well as their landlords can be fined.

If you are a resident owner, the responsibility of helping renters become an asset to HHIV falls on you too. Every HHIV resident should help renters feel wanted and welcome here. Practically speaking, it is much easier to solicit the cooperation and support of renters, should problems arise, if they feel a part of our community. Please go out of your way to introduce yourself to renters and to be neighborly. Encourage renters to join us at HHIV social functions. With everyone doing their part there is no reason that we can’t all thrive together as a community.



One Perfect Day...

There are so many wonderful things to do in the Bay Area. Michael and I recently had a perfect day that I’d like to share with you. It was a balmy fall day, perfect for celebrating Michael’s birthday and I planned to surprise him with the day’s activities. It soon became evident to Michael that we were heading to the Napa Valley and he was convinced that I was taking him to the French Laundry for lunch, a place he has lusted after since it got its third Michelin star. I told him truthfully that we weren’t going there. He should know by now that I have never been organized enough to call exactly two months to the day before his birthday and then redial about two-thousand times hoping to get one of the few treasured reservations.

Our destination was a little known gem, the di Rosa Art Preserve in Napa. In 1960, at a time when the Napa Valley was not yet a world class wine region and land

was cheap, Rene di Rosa purchased 460 acres of land in the Carneros region of Napa County. Di Rosa grew wine grapes, made barrels of money and in 1986 he sold much of his land to Sterling Vineyards, making even more money. Di Rosa's wealth helped fund his passion for art and he amassed what may be the most significant collection of art in the world by Northern California artists. Now operated by a foundation, the Preserve houses 2200 works of art by more than 900 artists. The art is displayed in several galleries in the original di Rosa home, which itself was an old stone winery, and is scattered throughout the grounds. Much of the art is abstract expressionism, so if you are into trees looking like trees, the art may not be your cup of tea (or glass of cabernet) but it is never boring. The grounds are beautiful and peacocks and geese vie for your attention, along with the art, and very knowledgeable docents explain what you are seeing. Entrance to the collection is by reservation only and tours are offered Wednesday through Saturday. Check it out at www.dirosapreserve.org

From the di Rosa Preserve, we headed to Yountville. Michael again got his hopes up that we were going to the French Laundry. Our destination, in fact, was Redd, a Michelin one star restaurant on Yountville's main drag. We lunched on the terrace, which was delightful in spite of being only feet from busy Washington Street. Most of the menu consists of small plates and we shared lots of plates. The menu is eclectic with Mediterranean and Asian flavors predominating. We particularly enjoyed an heirloom tomato and bread salad, lettuce cups filled with stir-fried chicken and eggplant, caramelized divers scallops, and duck confit with duck foie gras meatballs. Everything was yummy. The weakest course was dessert but perhaps that was because out of deference to Michael's birthday, we didn't order a chocolate dessert. (Can you imagine someone not liking chocolate???)

We tried (unsuccessfully) to walk off lunch by browsing in the shops and galleries in Yountville and then returned home feeling very content, even though we hadn't gone to the French Laundry. Besides, the entire day cost about 20% of what lunch alone at the French Laundry would have cost.

Thhhhhhat's all folks. Hope you have a wonderful holiday. See you next year.

-Cheryl

Hiller Four to Replace All Landscaping with Artificial Plants!



I thought this title might get your attention. But seriously, we really love our live plants and 60% to 70% of HHIV's annual budget (and therefore of the dues that you pay to the Association) is spent in keeping our plants looking beautiful and healthy. The cost of landscaping has continued to rise (along with the cost of everything else) and your Board is looking to cut costs without sacrificing quality. There is one area in which people have strong feelings, both pro and con, and that is the use of leaf blowers to clean the landscaping vs. hand sweeping. You know the usual arguments. Those who hate the use of leaf blowers assert that they are noisy, smelly and that they propel particles into the air that could be hazardous to one's health. Proponents of leaf blowers assert that newer model leaf blowers are not so noisy and that allergies are not aggravated by leaf blowers but by Mother Nature with her wind and pollen. Further, landscapers are much less efficient at their jobs when they hand sweep and it ends up costing us a lot more money.

The Board has decided to use leaf blowers on a trial basis and see if they cause the problems here that have caused concern elsewhere, and to see if using a power blower really frees up our gardeners to spend more time on landscaping. Please be patient during this trial and give us your feedback.

Are blowers causing you any problems? Are there times of day that you would prefer them to not be used? Do you feel that we should raise dues, if necessary, in order to pay more for our landscapers' time, and have them hand sweep? Or should we replace everything with artificial turf and call it a day? Please e-mail me and let me know what you think. clbrodsky@sbcglobal.net





“I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.
I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no 'brief candle' to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to the future generations.”

- GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Hiller Four Needs You

We still don't have an Editor for this Newsletter. The job can be broken down so that it is not too burdensome for any one person and multiple people can effectively use their greatest strengths. Are you good at proofreading? We can use you. Are you good at rewriting articles that are less than artfully written? We can use you. Are you clever or creative and can you come up with captions or titles for articles or themes for the Newsletter? We can use you. Are you good at computer layout? We can use you. Are you good at photography? We can use you. How about being circulation manager (going door to door and leaving copies of the Newsletter in mailboxes)? We can use you. You get the idea. WE NEED YOU. Please contact Cheryl Brodsky clbrodsky@sbcglobal.net or MaryEllen Smee mesmee22@aol.com to help with any aspect of the Newsletter.



What Color is Your Thumb?

“HE THAT PLANTS TREES LOVES OTHERS BESIDES HIMSELF.”

- ENGLISH PROVERB



Is your thumb green, or at least not too brown? We are seeking several people to work with Barbara Schindler on the Landscape Committee. This will involve occasional walkabouts with Barbara and our landscape contractor, so that you are up to date on what needs to be done, and meeting a few times a year to develop a list of the projects that you'd like to see completed in the future. We promise: no weed pulling is required! Please contact Cheryl Brodsky clbrodsky@sbcglobal.net or Barbara Schindler ws.farniente@gmail.com for more information.

More Volunteer Opportunities

by Janet Saalfeld

Knowing that you have just been waiting to be asked, here is another opportunity to volunteer! The Event Committee is looking for new leadership. Pauly Langguth and I are not able to work on the Annual Meeting / Social event in April in 2011 and are looking to turn over this fun opportunity to some new people. We are very willing to help organize and there are even reports available to help get started. Many of you have been very generous with your time for the last few events and you know that we have a good time planning and preparing. I have names of people who made suggestions after the Fall Social so now is your chance to implement those great ideas! Please call (510) 843-1088 or email me: saalfeld@sbcglobal.net with questions, suggestions or recommendations. Thank you in advance, for your generosity of time.

Architectural Control

by George Innes

Service Providers

In the Fall Newsletter, we asked readers to submit names of service providers who have provided good service. As a result we have added some names to our list. While the providers listed are not “endorsed” per se by Hiller Highlands Four Association, they have been used by one or more of our homeowners or are otherwise recommended by credible sources as vendors who provide professional service with satisfactory results.

Appliance Repair & Sales: Galvin Appliance, Albany, CA. (510) 527-2244

Chimney Service (inspection, cleaning, etc)
East Bay Chimney Service, Alameda, CA
Tony Williams, (510) 522-1323

Carpet Cleaning: Bob’s Khem-Clean, Alameda, CA.
(510) 839-0468

Duct Cleaning (furnace, bath fan & dryer vents):
Air Doctor, 800-584-5941

Electronic Device Recyclers (old TV’s, computer related devices, etc.)
Alameda Co. Computer Resource Center
620 Page Street (corner of 2nd St.), Berkeley, CA
(510) 528-4052

Handyman (repairs, woodwork, paint, etc. and house cleaning) – Bob Liu, Richmond, CA.
Call Bob: (510) 504-7474

Handyman (repairs, woodwork, paint, etc.)
Jeronimo Works, Handyman for You.
(510) 919-5710 or (510) 276-7274

Locksmith – Reed Brothers Security
4432 Telegraph Ave. Oakland, CA
888-590-6415 www.reedbrothers.com.

Locksmith – The Key Shack, Inc.
1089 San Pablo Ave, Albany, CA. (510) 524-8609 or 524-8628. keyshack@att.net
www.keyshacklocksmith.com

Painting – Certa Pro Painters, Berkeley, CA 800-462-3782. www.certapro.com

Painting – The Golden Brush, Richmond, CA
Juan Cerritos: (510) 685-3590 or (510) 965-9132

Painting – Rafael Silva (415) 680-5987

Paper Shredding
Automatic Response Systems (ARS)
1461 Eastshore Hwy, Berkeley, CA
(510) 524-8292. ARS is also a licensed recycler of electronic equipment.

Plating (Silver & Brass Refinishing/Replating)
Monsen Plating & Silversmiths
3370 Adeline, Berkeley, CA.
Ask for Gary or Joe (510) 655-0890

Plumbing (repairs, fixture replacement, leaks, etc)
Marx Snodgrass.
(510) 886-5452 or Cell (510) 206-5452 (Marx does **not** do roto-rooting of drains)

Termite/Pest Inspections – East Bay Structural Inc.
Greg Nichols. (510) 652-4712

Termite/Pest Inspections – Charles Mayer Co.
(510) 428-1916 or (925) 685-7370

If you have other providers to recommend please send an e-mail to George Innes, ACC Chair at georgeinnes@sbcglobal.net or drop a note to George in his mail box at #2 Clipper Hill or in the Hiller Highlands Four mail box at 30 Schooner Hill.



Emily Post for Contractors

The Fall Newsletter included an article titled “Sounds of Progress; Remember Your Neighbors” commenting on the importance to each and every HH4 homeowner of maintaining and upgrading our homes but also being considerate in alerting your adjacent neighbors when you’re having work done on your home that may result in noise, vibration, etc. that might cause some inconvenience to them. Obviously this requires good communication between you and the contractor or service provider to understand how the job will be undertaken and the importance of considering neighbors in the process.

Similarly, it is important that you communicate with your contractor/service provider as to the “etiquette” they should observe in bringing workers and vehicles in to perform work in a community consisting of closely grouped town-homes with relatively narrow streets and landscaped common areas.

Parking of Trucks

Medium and large pick-ups or other trucks are wide and are often parked 18” – 24” away from the curb. On our narrow streets, that’s the equivalent of abandoning the vehicle in the middle of the street, making passage difficult for other drivers. If there is another truck similarly parked on the opposite side of the street, passage between the two is sometimes nearly impossible. Here are a few suggestions:

If your driveway is deep enough for a vehicle to park, ask the contractor to pull his/her truck/van into your driveway perpendicular to the garage door

- If your driveway is shallow, ask the contractor to park in the driveway **parallel** to the garage door
- If the contractor must park in the street ask him/her to pull the truck tires up to within 6” of the curb and to avoid parking immediately opposite a truck parked on the opposite side of the street.

Loading/Unloading

Routine deliveries (by UPS, for example) may result in driveways or passage being temporarily blocked, but these situations generally only last a couple of minutes. However, delivery of major appliances or pieces of larger furniture often involves larger vehicles, and takes longer, especially if placement and installation is also being done. If the vehicle is blocking a neighbor’s driveway or impedes the exit from a garage across the street, a major inconvenience to a neighbor may occur.

In this circumstance a couple of steps you can take are:

- Advise the delivery/installation people that if a neighbor’s access is blocked by their vehicle they need to be prepared to drop everything they are doing and move the vehicle on a moment’s notice.
- If they indicate the impeded access will be lengthy, you should try to contact the affected neighbor(s) **before** the unloading starts. If they wish, the neighbor(s) can remove their cars from the garage and temporarily park them on the street so that they can be used while the delivery/installation is being completed.

Protect the Common Area

Contractors performing work on the exterior of your home should be advised of the importance that you and all the residents of HH4 place on taking appropriate precautions to protect the common area when work is being performed. In the event there is damage to the common area plantings, irrigation system, streetscape planter boxes and/or street lighting resulting from work being done on a home the CC&Rs provide that the homeowner will be billed by HH4 for the cost of repair/replacement necessary to correct the damage. If you intend to hold the contractor responsible to reimburse you for the cost of repair, we recommend this be included in the contract and discussed before the work commences. Thanks for being a considerate neighbor.

Thinning



Thinning may be thought of in the context of the sometimes never-ending battle to keep down the size of one's waistline. However, for purposes of this article, thinning refers to the process of eliminating possessions and records, especially for those of us who are beyond the age of accumulation in our lives.

If you find yourself in need of destroying paper records that contain confidential information but are beyond the need to be retained, in an amount that is too large to feed through a home shredder one sheet at a time, you might want to consider the service offered by Automatic Response Systems (ARS). They serve commercial customers, but for individuals, you can bring in one or more file boxes and they will shred the contents in mere seconds, while you watch. They charge \$7.00 per box. Your humble ACC Chair has taken old files to ARS on a number of occasions in recent years and found the service great and I am always exhilarated to get rid of old stuff that takes up space.

Similarly, if you have old TVs, computer monitors, or other electronic devices creating clutter in your home you may want to recycle them. ARS is a licensed recycler of electronics. However, there is also the Alameda Co. Computer Resource Center (located next door to ARS) where you can recycle electronic items.

The names, location and phone numbers of these two vendors have been included in the Service Providers listing appearing at the beginning of this Architecture section.

Termite/Pest Inspections



In recent years, a number of Hiller Four residents have discovered dry rot or other problems with the siding or around the windows in their homes. Sometimes the problem is discovered by painters

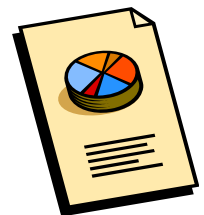
when preparing for repainting or are identified as a result of inspections performed prior to sale or purchase of a home. Often, problems such as this are not always obvious to the layman. This being the case, and now that most of our homes are 15+ years old, you may want to consider having a professional termite/pest inspection performed on your home so that any smaller problems can be addressed before they become big ones....just a thought.

If you decide to do this, the choice of a professional inspection firm is yours, of course. However, for your information, the list of Service Providers appearing in this Newsletter includes the names and contact information for two well-known firms who perform termite/pest inspections in our area.

- George

Treasurer's Report

by Gordon Seligson



Information regarding the 2011 budget, quarterly dues (which are remaining at \$385) and the updated reserve study were provided each owner late in November. Please contact me if you have any questions or want additional detail.

For those owners making payments by mail, you will receive your 2011 payment coupons directly from First Bank in January. When sending a payment to the First Bank lockbox, you must include a coupon, otherwise we get assessed a \$25 charge – so if you do NOT have a coupon, send your check to 30 Schooner Hill so I can mail it as a regular deposit and avoid the charge.

Year-end, 2010 financials will be provided to each owner in January.

Neighborhood Notes

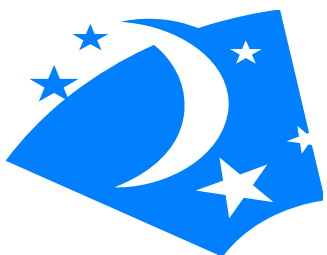
by Janet Saalfeld

Colette Luckie and her family have moved into 49 Schooner Hill. Please welcome them and introduce your selves. It is important to exchange names, phone numbers and/email addresses with your closest neighbor, in case of emergencies.

Good neighbors are not only friendly and helpful but are so important to the safety and welfare of our homes and the residents. Let your neighbors know if you are going to be away so your papers can be collected or packages placed in utility cupboards. If garage doors are left open, ring the bell and give a reminder that open garages are an open invitation to un-welcome visitors!

We send fond, farewell wishes to **Rosemary Paterson** who is moving back to her childhood home in Virginia. As many of you know, Rosemary has been tireless in helping us to be organized and prepared for the "Big One," which is sure to come. She has helped start the Neighborhood Watch program as well. We shall miss you Rosemary and know that it won't take long before you are involved in your Virginia neighborhood.

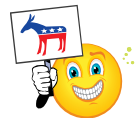
Long time resident **Carl York** is back walking the Hiller Four roads as he recovers from some recent heart issues. If you see him out walking, ask him about the stars in the bright evening skies. He is an expert! We all wish you continuing good heart health, Carl.



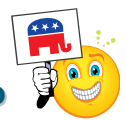
Roster Update

by Pauly Langguth

We are planning to produce an updated roster of residents in the near future. Please send any corrections and additions to Pauly Langguth at 5 Captains Cove, call me at (510) 549-9081, or send me an email at pl2gs@sbcglobal.net.



What's Your Sign?



The posting of signs is frequently an issue at HHIV and it can be confusing as to what is permitted and what is verboten. If you take a quick peek at the CC&R's, section 3.1.22 you will have your answer. No signs whatsoever may be erected on any lot except a "for sale" sign. During the recent political campaigns there were questions about where campaign signs can be posted and the answer is, not on common areas. Yes, the landscaped area in front of or beside your home is common area. If you wish to show your neighbors who you support for political office, you are welcome to place your sign in the window of your home.

Streets & Lights

by Gordon Seligson

Two failing streetlights at the end of Captains Cove have been repaired in recent weeks. The ballasts in the fixtures have a normal life span of 60,000 hours, which means that we are living on borrowed time with the 35 fixtures that have not yet had their ballasts replaced. I can replace burned out bulbs, which have a 30,000 hour lifespan, but ballasts are beyond my expertise. The symptom of a failing ballast is that the light cycles on and off approximately every 5 minutes. Please let me know if you see this situation, or a lamp that does not come on after dusk or stays on too long after the sun rises. The latter situations indicate that the sensor needs replacement.

The Back Page

More views of why we love living in the Bay Area and the Hiller Highlands. Thanks to Mike Brodsky and David Spellmeyer for sharing their artistry with us.

Photo at right: Golden Gate Bridge framing San Francisco.
©2010 - Mike Brodsky

Photo below: Hiller Highlands Four Nearing a Winter's Sunset, © 2010 - David Spellmeyer. This photo, taken just as the setting sun dropped below the approaching storm clouds, is used as the background image behind this month's newsletter title. It is reproduced here without alteration to show the full detail and amazing colors of the winter sunset.

