

NHPNA

NEW HOLIDAY PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Dear friends and neighbors:

January 29, 2003

Together, we have faced a most challenging and difficult test. We witnessed fear turn friends against former friends, and cause many of our normally sensible members to act in irrational ways. This is the danger of fear. Fear, such as we observed, prevents us from working as a team to find solutions to life's many complex issues.

The public and personal issues surrounding David Siebers are complicated and evoke intense emotions. Essentially, our government failed all of us – for the number one mission of government is to protect and secure the safety of its citizens. As you may know, I am a Political Scientist. I specialize in Public Policy, with emphasis in Criminal Justice, Criminology and Constitutional Law. I also work professionally with Behaviorally Disadvantaged young people. This crisis forced a convergence of all these disciplines in my life.

AnnMarie and I watched the events regarding David with great sadness. We mentioned each night how the State of Michigan failed society, and David, by releasing him from prison, and then announcing he was dangerous and highly likely to re-offend. This is a most irrational policy. Our government must accept a greater responsibility for their actions. In addition, this ill-conceived strategy made it nearly impossible for David to find a place to call home. As he was “kicked” from community to community, a wave of mass hysteria began to precede his every movement.

For weeks we continued to say, “Somebody must do something.” Taken to the logical extension, someone was going to harm David, or he was going to snap and possibly harm others, as well as himself. When a panicked resident of Verguita attacked David the week of January 13th, we realized our politicians were not going to intercede. As civic-minded citizens we decided, “The buck must stop here.” We acted, because we believed if one family exhibited Faith, we could encourage others to take action as well. Facing a possible catastrophe, somebody had to demonstrate the courage to end the madness.

Many of you criticized me, as your neighborhood president, for leading this action. This, I believe, is the duty of leadership. I knew the facts. I believed we could offer David safe sanctuary in our home, thus buying time to find a better, and permanent, solution. I hope you understand my reasoning now. I have tried to answer each one of you, and explain the complexities in this matter. It is my hope that history, as well as reason, will judge me accordingly.

Please remember AnnMarie and I undertook this challenge, not to frighten our neighborhood, but to demonstrate the courage, conviction and Faith that initially brought us all together. We hope this incident strengthens the foundation of our neighborhood, and restores confidence to our community.

God Bless this Great Nation,
Scott Goold, NHPNA president