

The Spring Lakes Gazette

January 2004
Issue 4

www.slhoa.org



Spring Lakes

Communications Committee Update

The Communications Committee would like to welcome Mark and Joanne Cooper, a husband and wife team, and our newest volunteers.

Mark will be taking over as the official proofreader for The Gazette, making sure that it's in good form before it goes to print.

Joanne, will be in charge of the website maintenance and development efforts. She will be looking for ways to enhance communication about ongoing HOA efforts, as well as adding new resources to the site.

Please send your suggestions for The Gazette or our community website to: chair@communication-committee.org. We look forward to your input.

Who You Gonna Call?

No, not Ghostbusters...

Have a problem? Make Zalco Realty your first point of contact....

Michael Constant

Zalco Realty, Inc .
8701 Georgia Ave
Silver Springs, MD 20910
mconstant@zalco.com
(301) 495-4158

Community News from the Finance Committee...

By Nancy Carter

Several issues were negotiated with AAA Recycling and Trash Removal Services, and their proposal for pick-up of trash and recyclables was forwarded to the Board for approval and signature. Among the issues discussed with the AAA representative was the concern among our homeowners that pickups were not being made on a timely basis. The agreed upon time for pickup is between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays.

Unfortunately, due to the holidays falling on Thursday's, the level of trash being picked up on the following Mondays caused significant delays in November and December. AAA is very eager to provide the level of service that we expect, and we will continue to monitor their performance.

November financial statements, prepared by Zalco Realty, Inc. were reviewed. They reported that they have been following up on delinquent dues, and have sent letters to homeowners who appear to have past due balances. Anyone who received a letter from Zalco is encouraged to contact them for details. It is a high priority that we bring current all amounts owed to the Association, and correct any possible errors with their records.

A letter was sent out to the developer and builders in Spring Lakes requesting that they forward monies due to the Association in accordance with the original Declaration signed in 2000. As of the end of December, 68% of the amount due the Association was collected.

The finance committee and Board are still working on issues that will impact the 2004 budget. Therefore, the 2004 budget has not yet been submitted for adoption.

The Annual Board Meeting... There was a large turnout for the Annual Board Meeting in December. It was clear that there were many unhappy homeowners who had come to vent their frustration.

The challenge, from my perspective, is to realize that the HOA is not the enemy. We are all **Volunteers** working to better our community. Most of us work full-time, and have stepped forward to take on this additional responsibility because we do want OUR community to be a great place to live.

I was disappointed at the disrespect shown by a number of community members to the board and committee chairs. I would encourage you to think about the way in which you speak to the people who are working on all of our behalf. If they aren't fighting and working for us, who would be? There are many projects, and not nearly enough people in the community stepping forward to do them. If you're not happy with the job being done, then please volunteer your time and energy. It's easy to be an armchair critic, but if you want to make a difference, you need to get involved and make things happen. We need your help!

By Risa Nicholas

The Spring Lakes Gazette

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Pool Update

By David D'Onofrio

I am pleased to report that following Spring Lake's December vote, we have given the Board of Directors the authority to proceed with the pool construction by a vote of 109-5. Thanks to everyone for their support.

On the logistics side, we had a very productive meeting in late December with the County and the Developer. The Board of Supervisors approved the course of action established to turn the pool site over to the HOA, and the administrative personnel are working with us to expedite permits and approvals.

We now have a plan in place that should see construction start on the pool by March. Under the current schedule, we are looking at a late summer opening if the weather cooperates. Understandably, this is disappointing but, as aggressive a timeline as we could achieve. Over the next several months, we will be firming up the exact figures on the financial impacts upon the community, but every single indication is that they are well within the estimates already approved.

Open Space Committee Update

By Linda Kibblewhite

In early December, the Open Space Committee and Michael Constant, from Zalco Realty met with Dana Malone, the Loudoun County Arborist, to discuss the clean-up of the Tree Save Areas in the Spring Lakes Community.

Mr. Malone provided an informative document regarding management of Tree Save Areas (as submitted with this report). The majority of trees and common areas around the perimeter of the Spring Lakes community are designated Tree Save Areas, which are governed under special regulations from the County. As noted in this document, hazardous trees and fallen trees within Tree Save Areas can only be removed with a plan from a Certified Arborist.

Mr. Malone stated that he would take under consideration the "out of the ordinary" tree situation at Spring Lakes, in his consideration of any plan submitted by an arborist on behalf of Spring Lakes Community.

Our first selected arborist could not turn around the work in the timeframe we expected, so discussions are now underway with a second arborist. The goal in working with the arborist is:

- To identify and document all hazardous trees for subsequent removal
- To identify, recommend and document (for County purposes) cleanup of fallen and/or damaged trees and related debris
- Provide recommendations for preservation of existing trees
- Provide a 10-year tree reserve assessment for the community

While this is in progress, our landscaping team is continuing to clean-up various areas in the neighborhood. By spring, our goal is to have the debris and stacked wood removed from the community.

The Open Spaces Committee has also reviewed the Draft Transition report as prepared by the HOA hired engineer. Details within the draft report were cross-referenced with homeowner input. Additions and changes were provided as feedback.



Spring is in the Air

Spring is just around the corner and expect great things at Spring Lakes. We will be doing a lot of beautifying over the winter in preparation for spring. All the stacked wood and most of the debris in the common areas will be removed, new flower beds will be created, and we will form a gardening committee as well. If you would like to volunteer, please send an e-mail to board@slhoa.org.

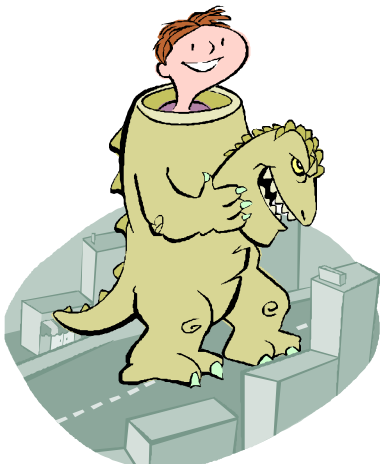
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Community Recreation

The 2nd Annual Spring Lakes Halloween Parade was a huge success. The event had over 75 families, and was attended by the Leesburg Fire Department. We look forward to establishing other new traditions for our community. Please stay tuned to the Gazette for new community events!



Do's and Don'ts of Tree Save Areas

Many development sites and communities in Loudoun have areas that have been designated for "Tree Save" purposes. Existing trees, which are to be preserved, may be included to meet all or part of the canopy requirements, and may include wooded preserves if the site plan, or record plat, or construction plans and profiles, identifies such trees and the trees meet standards of desirability and life-year expectancy established by the Zoning Administrator. Included among the many benefits associated with Tree Save areas are the following:

- Enhanced recreational and aesthetic values
- Improved water quality through soil stabilization
- Improved water quality through the filtration of surface and sub-surface nutrients and other impurities (Riparian function).
- Enhanced wildlife and aquatic habitat
- Visual screens and buffers for noise abatement
- Positive microclimate impacts (lower summer temperatures, reduced glare, and creation of summer breezes)
- Reduced maintenance costs

Designated Tree Save areas must therefore remain undisturbed with few exceptions. The following list of **Do's and Don'ts** are intended to be a guide for the HOA to help insure that Tree Save areas remain in sustained forest cover and functioning in viable fashion:

- No mowing may occur in the Tree Save since this would eliminate establishment of natural regeneration.
- Removal of "hazard trees", vines, invasive tree or plant species or stand management in the Tree Save is allowed as long as there is a forest management plan prepared by a Professional Forester or Certified Arborist and approved by Loudoun County. Hazard trees are defined as any tree that threatens an adjoining property. It will require a single page letter stating the need and requesting an FSM waiver (\$250.00 fee). This process can generally be acted upon within two working days.
- No removal of fallen trees within the Tree Save is allowed as this is part of the natural ecology of the site. The exceptions would be unusual damage from high winds, insect, disease, fire, or drought mortality. This process would also require a forest management plan prepared by a Professional Forester or Certified Arborist with County approval and an FSM waiver request.
- Pruning back of all vegetation extending from a Tree Save into an adjoining property is allowed as long as it does not extend back into the Tree Save area. This will require permission from the HOA.
- Supplemental tree planting in the Tree Save is encouraged in areas that are inadequately stocked. The County Urban Forester would be glad to provide technical advice in this regard to any HOA.
- The County highly recommends that Tree Save areas be evaluated by a Professional Forester or Certified Arborist to identify hazard trees. Once identified, they may be removed following the same waiver process as already described. Live canopy lost in this process should be replaced using canopy trees with a 1 inch minimum caliper from a native species list provided by the County.
- Contact the County Urban Forester concerning any Tree Save issue not previously addressed.

Submitted by Dana Malone
County Urban Forester

*These are the guidelines that have been established by the County,
that all HOA's are obligated to follow.*

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Credit card processing machine and printer in good condition.

Contact Risa Nicholas at 703-737-3322 if you are interested in the site or credit card equipment.

Announcements:

Homeowners, Risa Nicholas and Joanne Cooper have committed to raise \$2,000 each for The Susan G. Kohman Breast Cancer Foundation when they "Walk For a Cure" on Aug 13-15. They begin training for their 3-day, 60-mile walk March 1. To learn more about the event visit: www.the3day.org.

*Have an ad or announcement?
Send it to newsletter@slhoa.org.*

Look for the next edition of the Gazette in March.

The HOA Board will begin meeting quarterly, and the next meeting is planned for March.

Community Watch

A Spring Lake resident had their Christmas decorations vandalized over the winter break. It is not the first report we've received of mischievous activity in our neighborhood.

This is not the kind of activity that we want happening in the place we call home.

While we don't have a formal Neighborhood Watch program, we want to encourage you to look out for your neighbors. As a community we can make a difference.

Although the victims do not have direct information about who vandalized their property, they, like many of us, are concerned about the number of children and teens wandering the streets after dark.

Please supervise your children after dark. Not only do we not want them accused of inappropriate activities, but we want to keep them safe as well. It's hard to do that after dark, when we can't easily watch out for each other.



Trash Day Advice....The wind has an amazing effect on our garbage. If you have loose bags, try double bagging them, or put them in boxes. Light weight garbage is sure to get blown away. Work on securing your garbage cans and lids to the best of your ability. Unfortunately, we can't avoid empty containers and lids blowing around the community, but we can do our best to minimize the trash. If you're home, you might want to do your neighbor a favor and bring their cans in. If you're concerned about weather and garbage pick-up, visit AAA's website for updates at: www.aaatrash.com.

Community Reminders

We love our pets, but we don't love their pet waste. Please make sure that you are picking up after your dogs. The common space areas are not a place to leave pet waste, nor is private property. Make sure you have bags to pick up after your dog when you go out. Also, if you go out at night, please bring a flashlight so that you aren't leaving a neighbor with a mess. Thanks for your consideration.

Please remember to put your garbage cans out on the day of pick-up (Monday and Thursday), and put them away that evening. This is a covenant that we all need to abide by in order to keep Spring Lakes beautiful.

Take a day a month and pick up trash around your property. The windy days, and garbage that has blown everywhere, has left the neighborhood looking pretty run down. If we each took a day to clean up our property, it would make a huge difference.

Recycling pick-up is between 6 am and 7 am. Don't forget to place your bins out in time for pick-up.