

THE INSIDER

SHADOWBROOK HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

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Message From The Board

Along with the summer's close, the Shadowbrook Homeowners Association is marking the close of the 2009 fiscal year. While this past year was fiscally challenging, the HOA is ending the year in good financial standing. Thanks to the collection of the special assessment, the prudent decisions of the Board and the volunteer efforts of our small but mighty Community Self Help Group, the HOA stayed within a very tight budget.

While the timing of the special assessment was not ideal, we collected nearly 100% of the total amount. As a result, the member's equity fund has gone from a negative balance of \$48,976 to \$11,989; and we are on track to move into positive territory by next year. In addition, we were able to pay back the reserve fund for the money spent on the hill erosion project.

The Board also chose very carefully when decisions were required for necessary work and renewal of contracts. In one example, members of the Board walked the grounds with a representative from Dominion Paving and Sealing to determine the road repairs that were absolutely necessary following an original quote of \$77,000 for work in each of the three sections of the community. Following the walk through, the Board decided the pavement work would take place in three phases to occur during the next two to three years so that the cost could be spread out over the different budget years. The first phase was completed in September and cost the community about one-third less than the original estimate. In addition, the Board successfully re-negotiated our contract with American Disposal Services for a reduced per residence rate for the next 5 years.

Last, but certainly not least, the Community Self Help Group took on several projects that otherwise would have been contracted out thereby saving the community several hundreds of dollars. The projects included removing dead trees, cleaning the entrance monuments, repainting the fences on Wadebrook Terrace, repairing the tennis courts gate and painting the fire lane sign posts.

Please make sure to thank Steve Minutolo for both forming the group and donating his time to these projects, as well as Tim Stern, Martin Ryan, Christina Bartlett and Nancy Bennett for their hard work as participants. The group will continue to take on these types of projects at the request of the Board. Please consider joining in this commendable effort to beautify the community and save us all a little money. If you join the group, you do not have to participate in every project. All those who are interested should contact Steve at 703-455-7238; s.minz@verizon.net.

While we have much to be proud of, we still have a ways to go in order to ensure we continue on this path of positive future financial security. We not only need to be compliant with the repairs detailed in our Reserve Study but we also must be prepared to address the unexpected as our community ages. Additionally, we must absorb increased service rates from Dominion Power for 2010 and increased attorneys' fees for collections of delinquencies and bad debt. As a result, the Board has decided to raise the HOA dues by 10 percent to \$96 per month for 2010.

Message From The Board Continued

In other news, the Board is sorry to announce the departure of one of our long-serving and dedicated community volunteers, Kathy Krolak, the HOA Board President. Kathy has been on the Board for six years and the ARC for one, and has decided she would not seek re-election when her three-year term expires this month. The Board would like to thank Kathy for her many contributions to this community. Her tireless efforts have made a lasting impact. She will be missed, but she promises to continue attending the quarterly Board meetings; she will just be seated on the other side of the table. Elections will be held during the HOA Annual Meeting, Thursday, Oct. 29, 7:00 pm at the Saratoga Elementary School SACC room to fill this vacancy as well as a second seat that has been empty for several months. Please consider volunteering your time as a Board member. Nominations may be taken during the meeting. If you cannot attend the Annual Meeting, please return the proxy you received in the mail with your signature. This is important to achieve quorum. If quorum is not reached, business may not be conducted and another meeting will need to be scheduled, causing unnecessary cost and inconvenience. If you did not receive your proxy, please contact Victoria Garner at Cardinal Management Group at 703.569.5797

Parking Update:

The Board is reviewing and updating the parking policy as a result of increased complaints about parking violations. A copy will be posted to the Shadowbrook HOA web site for comment in the coming weeks. As a reminder: **RESIDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN VISITOR PARKING** and are subject to towing. Each residence is allotted two parking spaces – for homes with garages, the two spaces include the garage and the driveway. Please be considerate of your neighbors and their guests and abide by these rules. If you are using your garage for storage, then you must find parking elsewhere. Additionally, the Board is considering a contract with A1 towing service to monitor the parking lots for violators.



Spring Walk-Through Status:

This past spring, members of the Architectural Review Committee walked through the community to check homeowner compliance with community architectural policies. Residents were notified of repairs/corrections that needed to be made in order to bring their property into compliance. The follow-up walk through was completed this month. Residents who are still not compliant will receive notice and/or be fined.

Trash and Recycling Collection Reminder

Trash is collected on all holidays except New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. If our service day falls on any of these occasions, our next pickup will be on the next scheduled service day. Christmas trees will be collected the first two weeks in January.

Also, recycling consists of newspaper, cardboard, magazines, mixed paper, glass and metal food & beverage containers and #1 through #7 plastic bottles and jugs.

American Disposal Services also reserves the right to cancel collection service on days or in areas in which roads are deemed unsafe due to snow or ice. There will be no makeup day. Trash will be collected on the next scheduled service day.



Home Fire Prevention

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, there were more than 3,600 deaths and nearly 18,000 injuries as a result of fire in the U.S. in 2005. Fire killed more Americans than all natural disasters combined. 83 percent of these deaths occurred in residences. The three leading causes of home fires include smoking, cooking and burning candles.

Never smoke in bed!

A recent report by U.S. Fire Administration indicated smoking materials caused an estimated 520 deaths annually. The fire fatality rate due to smoking is nearly four times higher than the overall residential fire rate. 40 percent of all smoking related fires start in the bedroom. Many beds and blankets are made of combustible materials, making falling asleep with a lit cigarette a very dangerous situation. The potential for risk increases with the use of alcohol, drugs, and medications that impairs the smoker. A responsible smoker should always extinguish cigarettes in a fire-proof ashtray located away from all combustible materials.

Never leave cooking unattended!

A report released recently by National Fire Protection Agency states that cooking equipment was involved in more than 118,000 reported home fires and outdoor grills were involved in nearly 3,700 reported fires. Leaving equipment unattended was the leading cause of those fires, while using grills on wooden or combustible decks was also a contributor. When cooking, always:

- Keep cooking appliances clear of combustible materials such as rags, towels and packaging materials
- Keep children away from all cooking all cooking areas.

Never leave burning candles unattended!

Recent statistics from a report released by Central Washington University indicate 18,000 home candle fires in the U.S. resulting in 190 deaths. In many cases, candles were being used as a light source because power had been shut off or was temporarily out of service. Keeping a flashlight and batteries on hand for emergencies could prevent the need to use candles for emergency lighting.

If you do burn candles, always:

- Use sturdy holders
- Keep candles out of children's hands
- Keep candles away from pets
- Extinguish candles before going to bed
- Keep candles on even surfaces

Keep candles away from upholstery or window coverings.

Board Meetings:

HOA Board meetings are quarterly. If you would like to receive email notification of upcoming meetings, send an email request to the Board via the web site (<http://www.shadowbrookcommunity.org>) or you may periodically check the web site for meeting dates.

Wadebrook Terrace Concerns:

There have been a number of complaints regarding the appearance of Wadebrook Terrace. It is the Virginia Department of Transportation's responsibility to maintain the roadway. If you are unhappy with the job they are doing, please contact them at (703) 383-8368. Remember, the squeaky wheel gets the grease!

Your Shadowbrook HOA Key Representatives

Shadowbrook HOA Board

Kathy Krolak—President
Nancy Bennett—Vice President
Michele Buisch—Secretary
Martin Ryan—Member at Large

Architectural Review Committee

Dan Hupfer —Chair
Steve Minutolo

The Insider Newsletter

Shadowbrook HOA Board
Layout - Tim Stern

Community Volunteer Coordinator

Steve Minutolo

If you prefer to receive this newsletter via email, please make your request via the community web site. Remember to include your email address as well as your home address.

REMEMBER the Speed Limit is 15 MPH

There are many children in our neighborhood. so please watch your speed.

We're on the Web! See us at: www.shadowbrookcommunity.org