



# Home Owners Association Newsletter

September 2008

## HOA Board Meetings

Regular HOA Board meetings will be held at the Longwood Community Center from 7:00PM to 9:00PM on the following dates: Wednesday, November 19. All homeowners are welcome to attend. ❖

## Volunteers Needed

The Architectural Review, Communications, and Landscape committees are in need of new volunteers. It is a rewarding experience to meet and help your neighbors keep this community working well. With just a few volunteer hours each month, you can help make your community a better place to live. If you are interested, please contact the respective committee chairperson:

Debbie Stine - [debstine@verizon.net](mailto:debstine@verizon.net)

David Sager - [davids4001@gmail.com](mailto:davids4001@gmail.com)

Mark Wesolowski - [markweso@hotmail.com](mailto:markweso@hotmail.com) ❖

## HOA Web Site

The HOA web site located at <http://www.geocities.com/bfmdhoa/>. It includes information about the HOA such as ARC forms, minutes from previous board meetings, current and previous newsletters, as well as contact information for board members. ❖

## Newsletter Articles

If you would like to submit an article to appear in the next HOA newsletter, or for any inquiries, please send them to David Sager ([davids4001@gmail.com](mailto:davids4001@gmail.com)). ❖

## Street Trees

Home owners have always had responsibility for the maintenance and replacement of "Street Trees" on their property. Early on, the HOA assumed responsibility for replacement of "Street Trees" because this was viewed as resulting from the flawed trees planted by the original

developer. But this ended long ago. Home owners should ensure that there is an eight foot clearance from the sidewalk to the lowest branch of a "Street Tree" overhanging sidewalks. "Street Trees" may not be removed without prior written authorization from the HOA board. "Street Trees" are defined as trees planted within the swale adjacent to the street by the original developer. Other trees planted by the developer in the front yards of homes are not considered "Street Trees". The HOA has responsibility for "Street Trees" that are planted on land not directly owned by home owners (common areas). ❖

## Fall Gardening Tips

Debbie D. Dillion, Urban Horticulturist, Loudoun County Extension

- Clean up fallen rose and peony leaves. They can harbor disease and insect pests over the winter if allowed to remain on the ground.
- If azaleas look chlorotic (pale-green to yellow), check soil pH. They need acid soil because alkalinity locks up iron needed for green color. Sulfur reduces soil pH.
- Leaf miner larvae tunnel inside leaves, leaving whitish trails as they move about. Holly, boxwood, and locust are particularly susceptible to damage.
- Powdery mildew diseases attack a great many ornamentals, most often in late summer when the days are warm and nights cool. Some mildews, particularly those on roses, apples, and cherries, also are increased by high humidity. Prevention by proper cultural techniques is the first defense. Grow resistant varieties; space and prune plants to improve aeration and lessen shading; water early in the day and at the base rather than on leaves; and reduce nitrogen applications to avoid excessive, late-season growth.

- Apply herbicides to your lawn to eliminate weeds that germinate or form rosettes in turf during the fall. Check herbicide labels before using and select an appropriate chemical for the weed types and lawn type in your yard.
- Don't retire the lawnmower when the growth of your lawn slows down this fall. As long as the grass continues to grow, it should be mowed.
- Don't allow leaves to accumulate on the lawn. Rake them up regularly, and store in a pile for use as mulch in your garden next summer. Leaves accumulating on your lawn may become matted down by rain and kill the grass.
- Early autumn is the best time of the year for sowing grass seed. Grass sown in spring is often killed by hot, dry, summer weather. For more vigorous growth, spread a very thin mulch of clean straw over newly seeded areas. The straw shades delicate seedlings from the hot sun and helps preserve moisture in the soil, yet lets enough light through for germination. By the time cold weather arrives, the grass is fairly well established and ready to grow and thicken early the following spring.
- Healthy green grass outside the windows of your home can cool the breeze off hot pavement by as much as ten degrees. ❖

## Wascally Wabbits

Dr. Steve Velling, Ashburn Village Animal Hospital

Ever thought about owning a rabbit? They are great pets for families with older children, or younger children who are well supervised. Young kids like to pick up rabbits by their ears sometimes, which of course isn't good for them.

In addition, a rabbit's strong back legs make him difficult to hold and handle, and his back could break easily if he is dropped or mishandled.

Rabbits are quiet, clean, and, if handled often, affectionate. Avoid smaller rabbits, like dwarf or Rex bunnies, as they are more high strung and can even be aggressive toward you or other pets! Stick with the larger breeds, like Dutch or Lop.

Although a rabbit doesn't need to be "walked", he does need exercise and attention. Clip his nails regularly and provide special toys and wood for him to chew on to

control the growth of his front teeth. Brush his coat daily to reduce hair-balls, which can get bad enough to cause an obstruction in his intestines! Watch for weakness, poor appetite, or a lack of droppings—if that happens, call a veterinarian who specializes in rabbits.

Rabbits usually live to be about 6 to 10 years of age, and can be trained to use a litter box!

Some advice about wild rabbits (which you may see around the community) — leave them alone! If you come across a nest in your lawn, block it off and leave them be. This goes for any little baby bunnies you think have been abandoned. Chances are mother rabbit is close by, or coming back shortly. Keeping them as pets almost always leads to their death, as they typically die of stress. Call a wildlife hotline if you want further advice or assistance about what to do with a possibly sick or orphaned bunny. ❖

## Security Tips

Vandalism continues to be a problem for our community. You may want to take the following precautions:

- Park cars in garages, if at all possible.
- Keep the garage door closed, even if you are at home.
- Always lock car doors (even in the garage).
- Do not leave valuables inside your car.
- If you have to park your car outside the garage, remove the garage door opener.
- Never leave your keys inside the car.
- Never leave your car running unattended.
- Keep your house doors locked.

If you observe any suspicious activity, call the Montgomery County Police at 301-279-8000. ❖