



Home Owners Association Newsletter

December 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, January 21, Wednesday, February 18, Tuesday, April 21, Wednesday, June 17, Wednesday, September 23, and Wednesday, November 18. 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

David Sager - davids4001@gmail.com

Mark Wesolowski - 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). ❖

Check Your Smoke Alarms

In the United States, 80 percent of all civilian fire deaths result from home structure fires. In most cases, a working smoke alarm could have saved these lives. Smoke

alarms are one of the best and easiest safety features you can use to protect yourself, your family, and your home. So go ahead and follow these safety tips:

- Location, Location, Location. It doesn't matter if your home is big or small, old or new. All homes need smoke alarms that work. For the best protection, put one in every bedroom, in hallways close to sleeping areas, and on every level of your home.
- Pass the test. Check to make sure it's working. Push the test button or use a broom handle to reach up and push the test button once a month. Always use new batteries when replacing old ones.
- Double your chances. When properly installed, smoke alarms give an early warning needed to safely escape from fire. That's critical because 80 percent of all fire deaths occur in the home, and most occur at night when people are sleeping. Smoke alarms double your chances of surviving a fire!
- Practice often. It is important to conduct regular home fire drills and to make sure everyone in your home knows how to "get out and stay out" in the event of a fire. Fire drills aren't just for schools—they are very important at home, too!
- Be Safe—Replace! It is recommended that you replace smoke alarms that are 10 years old. Why? After working for 10 years, 7 days a week, your smoke alarm has been on the job for over 87,000 hours. Always follow manufacturer's instructions for replacement.
- Smoke can kill. People often assume that most fire deaths are due to flames. In fact, most fire deaths are caused by the inhalation of smoke and poisonous gases.
- You can prevent a fire. Cooking and smoking cause many home fires. Space heater and candles also pose special dangers. By controlling all sources of heat and

fire and checking your home for dangers, you can prevent common types of household fires.

- Contact the Fire Department. For more information about smoke alarms, contact the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Home Fire Safety Evaluation Hotline at (240) 777-2476. ❖

Holiday Survival Tips For Pets

Written by Dr. Sherry Weaver, Woodstock, Georgia.

The holidays are upon us! The following tips can help keep every member of your family safe and happy this season.

- Guests - Pets can become overexcited, confused, or frightened by holiday guests. Keep pets in a quiet part of the house, and make sure they have a safe retreat from children and other visitors. Keep pets' beds in a safe place, and be sure that guests know the area is off limits.
- Chocolate - This sweet treat is a serious pet-poisoning risk, especially for dogs. Bittersweet and baking chocolate, the kinds found in kitchens during the holidays, have even higher health risks than the average candy bar. If a dog eats chocolate, call a veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center National Hotline immediately: 888-426-4435.
- Tinsel - Some pets seem to find shiny tinsel especially appealing. If eaten, the thin pieces can cause the intestines to bunch up and can even cut through the intestinal wall. Either could be fatal.
- Electric Cords - While my home looks like a scene from the movie Christmas Vacation, light strands, loose wires, and electric cords can be a serious hazard to your pet. Some animals may chew cords and put themselves at risk of serious burns or electric shock. Unplug indoor lights when you are not at home, and monitor your pets around cords.
- Noisemakers - Fireworks, horns, bells, and whistles can be extremely frightening to the sensitive ears of pets. Make sure pets are in a safe place away from the noise and that they can't escape the house or yard. If fireworks are a particular problem around holidays such as New Year's Eve, talk to your veterinarian about getting some sedatives to help an anxious pet.
- Christmas Tree - Relax and enjoy this family tradition, but make your tree safer by keeping weighty ornaments close to the floor and valuable ornaments and family heirlooms out of reach of curious mouths, noses, and wagging tails. Keep knickknacks on shelves inaccessible to animals. You may also want to tether your tree to a window frame or wall to protect ferrets or cats that like to climb.
- Traveling - If you will be traveling with your pet this season, make sure you have current ID on the pet or, even better, a microchip with up-to-date contact information. Bringing your pets' beds will also help them relax and be more comfortable in a strange place.
- Decorative Plants - Some plants and greenery, such as holly, ivy, and mistletoe, can be very tempting but are toxic if a pet eats them. Keep all decorative plants out of reach or out of the home.
- Overeating - While cooking my family's favorite holiday meals, I am surrounded by three little four-legged friends pleading for me to drop something, anything. Don't give into the temptation! Stick to a normal diet. Table scraps, garbage raiding, and counter surfing can lead to an upset stomach. Too much rich food (like turkey and sauces) can lead to serious inflammation of the pancreas, which can be life threatening.
- New Pets - While the holidays are not the best time to bring a new pet into the home, some people still surprise a loved one with a new puppy or kitten on Christmas morning. If this is the case, plan ahead! Puppy- or kitten-proof the area the pet will be in, buy the supplies that the pet will need, and know they need extra care in the beginning. Plan on a few nights of little sleep, and most of all, make sure the recipient really wants a pet. ❖