

# July 2013 Newsletter

**Emerald Hills Homeowners Association, Inc.**  
**PO Box 1024**  
**Fishersville, VA 22939-1024**



## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

The Board of Directors would like to thank every resident who has made our neighborhood one of the most desirable places to live in Augusta County.

Over the past year we were faced with unexpected repairs at our front entrance. An August storm caused significant erosion that required repair and placement of additional rip-rap (rocks) on both sides of our main entrance roadway. Following just a few weeks later, our entrance signs were vandalized by the removal and damage of several letters. Weekly mowing of the common area along with recent entrance shrubbery trimming and mulching gives our community a very professional look. We'd like to thank our contractor, Poppy's Home & Lawn Care, for their excellent work.



Once again, the community saw a successful community-wide yard sale, low annual association fees, and 99.5% compliance on collection of annual dues. Please note that the homeowners' association is "legally" responsible for collecting dues. According to our covenants, we are required to oversee the upkeep, maintenance, and improvement of Easements and Common Areas. In order to accomplish this, annual assessments are required. Please visit our website for financial reports at "<http://ehhoa.info>".

The board has voted to continue the \$40 per lot annual dues for another year. This rate will allow us to operate at our current level of service while still maintaining a strong reserve. The board appreciates your quick reply in paying your fees. By doing so, it helps keep our administrative cost low and helps the volunteers who stuff envelopes, send out the invoices, and manage the billing process.

The Board of Directors is proud to serve you and is committed to continuing the excellent quality of life we enjoy here in Emerald Hills. Again, thank you very much for your time, patience, and most importantly, your support. However, we now face an urgent need to replace board members who have served for several years and desire to step down. Failure to maintain a viable board will have negative impact on our community and ultimately on property values. Serving requires very little effort. Please consider this urgent need.

## IMPROVING THE EXTERIOR OF YOUR HOME

According to the covenants, owners are required to get approval from Architecture Review (ARC) before starting any new building, performing exterior modifications to existing structures, or altering your property. This includes new construction, home painting, structural additions, fences, walls, sheds, pools, etc. Please visit our community website at "<http://ehhoa.info>" to obtain a Modification Request Application Form. This form is also included with this newsletter.

## DUES ASSESSMENT OBLIGATION

All property owners are required to pay an annual assessment (dues) for each lot owned. The annual assessment period runs from July 1st through June 30th. Billing notices are sent out early in July and are due 30 days from the invoice date. A 12% late fee is added to dues balance if not paid by the due date. Invoices unpaid after 90 days are turned over to our lawyer for collection where legal and registered mailing fees are attached. Prior period unpaid balance is assessed a 12% penalty with the first billing in July.

Please be aware that the HOA does not collect "partial dues payments", with the rare exception of new construction purchase. If a property in our neighborhood is sold during the assessment period, the real estate "closing attorney" should pro-rate a credit to the property owner. This is similar to how property taxes are handled, and should be reflected on the closing statement. Note that having a dues balance risks holding up closing until payment and any fines are paid in full. Also, please inform your Realtor that no sale or open house signs are permitted on association common areas, including the front entrance. Thanks for respecting our covenants and good luck on the sale of your home.

## ABOVE GROUND vs SEASONAL POOLS

In keeping with the character of our neighborhood, above ground pools have always been discouraged by the Architecture Review Committee. After much debate, it has been construed that an "above ground pool" may be defined as a permanent structure, large in size, with rigid sidewalls. On the other hand, a seasonal pool is a small pool usually purchased from a local department store such as Walmart or K-Mart. Seasonal pools are temporary in nature, small, made of vinyl or hard plastic with sidewalls ranging from a foot to approximately three feet high. Seasonal pools have historically been acceptable in the community as long as they are not put up before Memorial Day and are taken down by Labor Day.

## **OWNER, RESIDENT, PROPERTY STATUS**

Emerald Hills Homeowners Association, Inc is a legal Virginia corporation and is required to maintain a reasonable member list as a corporation in good standing as well as a basis for our Federal and State tax filings. Our Treasurer requests that owners provide status of property sales, rentals, and mailing address changes. Providing this information in a timely manner saves us the cost and effort of obtaining it from the county. Mailing to our above address or to [Treasurer@ehhoa.info](mailto:Treasurer@ehhoa.info) are acceptable means to provide these updates.

## **LOOSE AND BARKING DOGS**

Dogs not under direct control of their owner are deemed to be 'roaming' and prohibited in Augusta County. The Augusta County Animal Control Department is responsible for issues related to wild or domestic animals that may be an annoyance or danger to our community. Please do not hesitate to call the animal control officer at 540-245-5635 if you see stray dogs or a wild animal that is acting strangely.

Also, please be considerate of your neighbors. Leaving a barking dog out or in a house with windows open can be a nuisance to your neighbors. Please do not allow your dog to run loose into the road as people walk and, finally, please be courteous and clean up after your dogs when walking them.

## **AUGUSTA COUNTY SHERIFF**

The Augusta County Sheriff's Department is responsible for the general public safety of our community and roadways. The speed limit of 25mph is the limit when conditions are ideal. Please slow down when approaching pedestrians. Do not hesitate to call the Sheriff's Department at 540-245-5333 with issues dealing with speeding traffic, min / off-road bikes, illegal fireworks, and other illegal behavior. Call 911 in case of an emergency.

## **VEHICLE PARKING REMINDER**

Complaints have been made about a growing number of vehicles parked along the roadways on a permanent or long term basis. By way of a reminder, Article II, Section Ten, of our Covenants contains the text "*No recreational vehicle, or boat shall be permitted to be parked in front of the dwelling constructed on any lot. No larger commercial vehicles shall be permitted on any lot.*". Generally, the board has handled this on a case by case basis. Also note that vehicles parked on or partly on the roads poses a danger for our residents, especially our children.

## **NEW RESIDENTS & PROPERTIES SELLING**

Several new residents have recently moved into our neighborhood. Four new families in 2013 so far. This obviously suggests that homes are again selling in our area. We've also experienced a number of rentals. Two lots have also sold; one at the Northern end of Peterson and the other on Johns Valley where a new home is currently under construction.

## **EHHOA ON FACEBOOK**

Become a fan of the EHHOA by 'liking' our Facebook page.

To access the EHHOA Facebook page, login to Facebook and search for Emerald Hills Homeowners Association or click on the Facebook icon found on the EHHOA website.



Once there, click on the "Like" button. Facebook users are bound by the rules of Facebook rather than those stated by the organization thus allowing direct sharing of thoughts, ideas, concerns, etc. by subscribed Facebook users. At this time, our page is available to all Facebook users over the age of 18.

## **URGENT NEED FOR BOARD OFFICERS**

Our association now faces an urgent need to replace officers. We currently have only three positions filled. Kurt Michale as President, Ryan Aleshevich as Secretary, and Jack Cameron as Treasurer. Our president and secretary have served for several years beyond their expected terms and have expressed a need to step down due to job requirements. Nominations were requested for these positions at our Annual HOA meeting in November, but none were submitted. We've now reached the point where the board may no longer be able to 'legally' function. This might mean that the county would have to take over which would have serious negative impact on our community.

Serving on the board is not a complex task, takes minimal time, and offers the satisfaction of helping out your community. Now is the time for you to step up and get involved. The following positions are currently being done, as necessary, by our current board or are open, in the case of Vice President. Also note that 'Architectural Review Committee' is , as the title suggests, operates best as a multi-person committee that reports to the board.

*President*

*Vice President (open)*

*Secretary*

*Architectural Review Committee*

At an absolute minimum we need to replace our current President. Based on our By-Laws, vacancies in the Board of Directors may be filled until the date of the next annual meeting by the remaining Directors.

In addition to the need for new officers, help is needed for things like organizing the annual yard sale, doing a newsletter (more often than once a year), website, property / sales tracking, and more. What we need now are new officers, once done, we'll be in a position to expand our committees to better serve the community.

Won't you please step forward and help your community with this urgent need? Please let us know by sending us nominations for officers who are willing to serve. Nominations may be mailed to our address at the top of page 1 or emailed to "[Board@ehhoa.info](mailto:Board@ehhoa.info)".

***EHHOA Board of Directors***