

May 2015 Newsletter

Emerald Hills Home Owners Association Inc.
c/o Association & Property Management Services
PO Box 2182
Harrisonburg, VA 22801



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. Spring has definitely come to Emerald Hills with warm weather and another successful community-wide yard sale.

According to our covenants, our association is legally bound to oversee the upkeep, maintenance, and improvement of Easements and Common Areas. In order to accomplish this, owners are assessed an annual fee per lot. Our upcoming 2015 -2016 assessment will raise only slightly to \$45 per owned lot. This rate will allow us to operate at our current level of service while still maintaining a strong reserve.

After several years of seeking board member replacements to no avail, our Board of Directors has decided the time has come to contract much of the management of our organization to an association management company. While this decision has not been an easy one, we feel that doing this is in the best interests of our community as we move into the future. On April 1st, Association & Property Management Services (APMS) of Harrisonburg was hired to assist in the management of our association. All owners will receive or are receiving an enclosed letter announcing that we have retained them for these services. This does not change our organization structure but rather enhances our efficiency by reducing the workload of our board. Obviously there is a cost to this. Our current estimate suggests that annual assessments will rise about \$5 per year over the next three years.

The Board of Directors is committed to continuing the excellent quality of life we enjoy here in Emerald Hills. Again, thank you very much for your understanding, patience, and most importantly, your support.

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT

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, exterior painting, structural additions, fences, walls, sheds, pools, etc. Please contact APMS at 540-423-3879 or use the 'ARB Form' on their 'Homeowner Central' link on their '<http://www.aapmrealty.com/>' webpage to submit a "Modification Request".

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 in the middle of June and are due no later than July 31. A 12% late fee is added to assessment balance if not paid by July 31. Invoices unpaid after 90 days are subject to collection fees, including legal and registered mailing fees. Failure to pay assessment for three years may result in a lien being perfected on the related property.

Please be aware that the HOA does not collect "partial assessment 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 an assessment balance risks holding up closing until payment and any penalties 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

Above ground pools are considered permanent structures, large in size, with rigid sidewalls. These pools will not be approved by Architecture Review. 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 the weekend prior to Memorial Day and are taken down by the weekend following 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. Please contact APMS or use the 'Contact information update' form on the APMS website to update your

information.

AUGUSTA COUNTY SHERIFF & VDOT

The Augusta County Sheriff's Department is responsible for the general public safety of our community and roadways. 25mph is the maximum speed on our roads and only 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, ATVs, mini/off-road bikes, illegal fireworks, and other illegal behavior. Call 911 in case of an emergency. Also note that VDOT maintains and plows our roads. Please contact VDOT if you have questions about road maintenance.

DOG OWNER RESPONSIBILITY

Please consider your neighbors. Uncontrolled dog barking continues to be the number one complaint in our neighborhood. Leaving a barking dog outside 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. Please be courteous and clean up after your dogs when walking them.

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.

SIGNS NOT PERMITTED

Advertisement signs have been seen in several yards. Please be aware that, as per our covenants, only specific signs are allowed. Article II, Section Four says "No sign of any kind shall be displayed to the public view on any of said lots except one sign of not more than five (5) square feet advertising the property for sale or rent, or signs used by the builder to advertise the property during construction. One sign not exceeding one-half (1/2) square foot displaying the name of the owner of the property shall be permitted on any of said lots".

VEHICLE PARKING REMINDER

Vehicles parked along the roadways on a permanent or long term basis is not allowed. 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.

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.

ANNUAL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

Our next annual meeting is tentatively set for September 14th ; place and time to be determined later. Please watch your listserv email or our website for details as the time gets closer.

NEED FOR BOARD OFFICERS and ARC CHAIR

We currently have four Board of Director members. Nicole Baucom as President, Kurt Michael as Vice President, Ryan Aleshevich as Secretary, and Jack Cameron as Treasurer. Our vice president, secretary, and treasurer have served for several years beyond their expected terms. We sincerely thank Nicole Baucom for taking on the position of president last year. However, our remaining board members have expressed interest in taking a break.

Serving on the board is not a complex task, especially now with APMS on board. It takes minimal time, and offers the satisfaction of helping out your community. Please consider how you can help. We will seek nominations as we get closer to the September annual meeting.

We also welcome assistance in other areas such as serving on the Architecture Review Committee (ARC / ARB). Kurt Michael has chaired ARC for several years but must step down as his home is currently on the market. Several others serve from time on the committee, however, we now need a committee chair. We thank Fred Grunder in delivering welcome packets to new residents for many years now, and Jack Cameron for website management since its inception. Our hard working volunteers deserve a break. Please let us know if you can help.

EHHOA Board of Directors

Road Safety Tip

"Walk left, ride right."