

July 2014 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.

It is nice that the long cold winter is behind us and we now see green grass and have warm weather. We hope everyone has a wonderful summer and enjoys the nice weather. Weekly mowing of the common area along with 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. We also express our thanks to Nicole Baucom for organizing this year's community-wide yard sale.

Once again, the community saw low annual association fees, and 99% 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 "<http://ehhoa.info/>" website for financial reports.

The 2014-2015 annual dues has again been set to \$40. 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 still face an urgent need to replace board members who have served for several years. 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.

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 visit our community website at "<http://ehhoa.info/>" to obtain a Modification Request Application Form. This form is also included with this newsletter. Please discard old versions of the form.

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. Failure to pay dues for three years may result in a lien being placed on the related property.

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

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 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" are acceptable means to provide these updates.

AUGUSTA COUNTY SHERIFF & VDOT

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. Also note that VDOT maintains and plows our roads. Please contact VDOT if you have questions about road maintenance.

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.

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

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 will be during the first week of September. A tentative date of Wednesday, 7pm 9/3 at the Fishersville Library has been set. Please watch your listserv email or our website for details as the time gets closer.

NEED FOR NEW BOARD OFFICERS

Our association continues to face an urgent need to replace officers. We currently have only three positions filled. Kurt Michael 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. Nominations for these positions were requested prior to last year's annual meeting but none were received. Unless we fill at least the position of President, we may no longer be able to 'legally' function as an corporation. This would have serious negative impact on our community and property values.

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. 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.

Won't you please step up to the plate 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". Election of officers will be on the agenda of our September annual meeting.

We also welcome assistance in other areas such as service on the Architecture Review Committee (ARC), helping with Welcome packets, Website management, and more. Let us know if you can help.

EHHOA Board of Directors

Road Safety Tip

"Walk left, ride right."