

River Bank Woods Newsletter

Check out River Bank Woods on-line
www.riverbankwoods.org
for updated community information

Volume 3, Issue 2

Spring 2006

From the Board...

The River Bank Woods Homeowners Association (HOA) meeting for Spring 2006 was held on Tuesday, April 25, 2006, at the Senior Center at Cascades Marketplace. All members of the board were present. Tom Markell represented Cardinal Management Group, Inc. Committee reports were presented by the various board members.

Communications Committee Update

We are still trying to get all our neighbors listed in the **River Bank Woods Directory**. We hope you will complete, sign, and return the **Neighborhood Directory Information Sheet** (available on www.riverbankwoods.org). We really want to get all 78 homes in the Directory! Being able to contact all our homeowners quickly and efficiently will benefit everyone if a safety issue or crisis arises. Board members will be canvassing the area to get your directory information. We hope to publish and distribute an updated directory as soon as we have correct information on all our neighbors. Please e-mail webmaster@riverbankwoods.org to be added to the **River Bank Woods e-mail distribution list**. If you would like to help write, publish or distribute the **River Bank Woods Newsletter**, please contact Teresa Bettac at secretary@riverbankwoods.org.

Activities Committee Update

Jina Ames is planning the **3rd Annual Community Garage Sale**. The Garage Sale is scheduled for Saturday, June 3, 2006, 8:00am-2:00pm. This has been a very successful event for our community. Please contact Jina Ames at director@riverbankwoods.org or Jinasfun@aol.com if you can help with this event or have any questions.

Amy Nolasco is planning the **Neighborhood Spring Fling**. The tentative date for the Spring Fling is Saturday, June 10th. She is looking for volunteers to help coordinate publicity, activities and food for this neighborhood even. Please contact Amy at anolasco@adelphia.net if you can help with this fun neighborhood event.

Be on the look out for more information on both events. Information will be distributed to your white mailbox.

Neighborhood Watch Update

Master Deputy Terry Davis, of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, met with a group of neighbors on Wednesday, March 29th, to discuss our Neighborhood Watch program. The meeting was well attended. Jina Ames is presently writing and organizing a handbook to be distributed to all neighborhood watch members. If you would like to help with the Neighborhood Watch, please contact Jina Ames at director@riverbankwoods.org or Jinasfun@aol.com.

Next Neighborhood Watch Meeting – Wednesday, July 12, 2006.

Architectural Review Committee (ARC) Update

The ARC will walk the neighborhood this spring to update and maintain our Architectural Modification Request Application (AMRA) files. The River Bank Woods HOA Covenants / Bylaws / Rules & Regulations require an application and approval process for exterior home improvements. **Please “Catch Up and Plan Ahead” for exterior home improvements. Please use the Architectural Standards (AS) to complete an AMRA – both are available on www.riverbankwoods.org.** Please submit completed applications to **Teresa Bettac**, Secretary, at 20667 Forest Overlook Court. It takes 2-3 weeks to receive written confirmation of approval. Be sure you include the following when completing your application:

- Signatures of surrounding property owners
- A copy of your plat with the location of improvement(s) indicated on it
- Include complete information including, photographs, sketches, building permits

Action Items / Hot Topics / Issues / Concerns / Special Projects

The River Bank Woods HOA Board of Directors logs all items in a spreadsheet and works to close each ASAP. The RBW HOA BoD will make a strong “Spring Cleaning” push to close open items. If you have an item or status, please e-mail Mike Morgan president@riverbankwoods.org. There are currently:

32 Open + 3 Re-Opened + 22 On-Going + 11 Not Started + 118 Closed = 186 items total

Next Up...

The Board is actively looking for a new location for our quarterly meetings. If you have any suggestions please contact one of the board members. The quarterly meetings are open to all River Bank Woods residents. We encourage all homeowners to attend. There is a Homeowners Forum at every meeting for residents to share ideas on how to improve our neighborhood. We hope to see you at our next meeting on Tuesday, July 25, 2006.

Neighborhood Watch

What is Suspicious – Helping Law Enforcement Help You?

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Special Operations Division Crime Prevention Unit

The Sheriff's Office cannot function effectively without the assistance of concerned, responsible residents. They are depending on YOU to call and tell them whenever you see suspicious persons or activities.

Some residents fail to call the Sheriff's Office simply because they are not aware of what seemingly innocent activities should be considered suspicious. Others may recognize suspicious activity and be hesitant to call for fear of being thought of as the neighborhood "Busy-Body." Yet others simply assume that someone else has already called in the incident.

Call the Sheriff's Office immediately about all suspicious activity - and do it yourself! Don't worry about bothering the Sheriff's Office; it is part of their job to investigate suspicious matters. Do not feel embarrassed if your suspicions are wrong; think instead about what could happen if your suspicions are right and you don't call.

What is Suspicious

Generally, anything that seems slightly out of the ordinary for your area or for the time of day may signal criminal activity? Some of the most obvious things to watch for and report include:

- A stranger entering your neighbor's home or property when the neighbor is not home.
- Screaming or shouting may signal a fight, robbery, rape, etc.
- Offers of merchandise at ridiculously low prices could mean stolen property.
- Person removing car parts, license plates, or gasoline is considered suspicious.
- A person looking into parked cars, looking for valuables to steal.
- The sound of breaking glass or other loud explosive noises could mean an accident, break-in, or vandalism.
- Persons loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas, or in the neighborhood may be sex offenders, may be "casing" for a crime, or may be acting as a lookout.
- Persons around the neighborhood who do not live there could be considering committing a criminal act.
- Persons claiming to be representatives of utilities gas, phone, water, electric, cable, etc. but who are not in uniform or have no company identification may be criminals.

Some Not-So-Obvious Things To Watch For

Not every stranger who comes into your neighborhood is a criminal; there are many perfectly legitimate door-to-door sales and service-people conducting business everyday. Criminals, however, take advantage of this by pretending to be a legitimate business representative. After all, if criminals looked like criminals, none of us would have any trouble spotting them.

Following are some situations you might see and what they might mean:

- Persons going door-to-door in your neighborhood. Watch for a while. If they look into windows, appear to be trying doors to see if they are unlocked, or go to a side or back of a residence, they may be a burglar.
- Anyone tampering with or forcing entry into a building or vehicle is suspicious anytime, anywhere.
- A person who is running and does not appear to be exercising, especially if carrying property could be fleeing the scene of a crime.
- Simply carrying property may be regarded as suspicious if it is at an unusual hour, in an unusual place, if the person appears to be trying to conceal the property, or if the property is not wrapped as if it was just purchased.

What Happens When You Call The Sheriff's Office?

All calls to the Sheriff's Office are prioritized according to the seriousness of the situation, not simply according to the order in which they are received. If you call the Sheriff's Office, please be prepared to provide as much of the following information as possible:

- What are you reporting?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Is anyone injured?
- Vehicle description (including license number)
- Suspect description, including race, sex, age, height, weight, hair, eyes, facial hair, clothing, and any other identifying characteristics.
- Direction of flight (street and direction)
- Weapons involved (gun, knife, bats, etc.)
- Where are you calling from?

While some, if not all, of the suspicious circumstances described above could have logical and legitimate explanations, the Sheriff's Office would rather investigate a potential criminal situation and find nothing than be called after it is too late and someone has been victimized. Your call could stop a criminal act, prevent an injury, or possibly even save a life! **Non-emergency: 703-777-1021**

What I like about you!

As part of the Foundation for Community Association Research's recent survey, association homeowners were asked to rate the importance of various HOA member benefits.

Below are the percentages that checked off each one.

	Importance Level
Living in a clean neighborhood	98%
Protecting the value of your property	98%
Living in a secure neighborhood	96%
Your home's curb appeal (overall appearance from the street)	95%
Living with neighbors who share your home-owning values	92%

Making Our HOA Work

There are two sides to any successful management relationship – a community's leaders (including board members, managers, and committees) and its residents. Each group has its own specific responsibilities.

Residents Have the Responsibility to:

- Read and comply with the governing documents of the community.
- Maintain their property according to established standards.
- Treat association leaders honestly and with respect.
- Vote in community elections and on other issues.
- Pay association assessments and charges on time.

Community Leaders Have the Responsibility to:

- Fulfill their fiduciary duties and exercise discretion in a manner they reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the community.
- Exercise sound business judgment and follow established management practices.
- Balance the needs and obligations of the community as a whole with those of individual homeowners and residents.
- Conduct fair, open, and well-publicized elections.
- Encourage input from residents on issues affecting them personally and the community as a whole.

The River Bank Woods HOA Board Members would like to thank all of our residents that are actively working to make River Bank Woods a safe and beautiful neighborhood. Working together we can create a welcoming environment for everyone.

Attention Dog Owners

Dog-related complaints can reach their peak this time of year. Due to the beginning of spring, the weather is starting to get nice outside and people and their dogs are outside more and more. There are rules and regulations to help protect your dog and our neighbors.

Listed below are the rules and regulations put in place by Loudoun County:

Rule # 1 Pick up after your dog – Loudoun County rule; Ordinance 612.19 (a) – (9)

Rule # 2 Leash law – a dog must be on a leash when out in the community.

Rule # 3 Clean up your yard – Loudoun County Ordinance 612.19 a (5)

Rule # 4 No barking – Loudoun County rule; Ordinance 612.19 (a) – (5)

Please call Animal Control – (703) 777-0406 to report the following:

- Stray cats and dogs.
- Dogs without a leash.

Please call the Loudoun County Sheriff non-emergency (703) 777-0445

- Dogs that bark constantly or at night.

Neighborhood Watch Meeting

The next neighborhood watch meeting will be held Wednesday, July 12th, at the home of Jina and Mitch Ames, 47427 River Bank Forest Place, at 7:00pm. Please contact Jina Ames if you can attend or have any questions. (703) 406-0088 Look for a flyer in your white mail box to remind you of this important meeting.

Lawn Care – Be A Good Neighbor

Beautiful lawns take a lot of work. Be sure you are maintaining your lawn. All lawns in our neighborhood need to be mowed and trimmed as needed. In the spring when grasses are germinating and growing you will need to mow at least once a week. All lawns in our neighborhood need to be treated for insects and grubs. Weed killers and fertilizer applications need to be applied throughout the growing season. Maintaining your lawn is the neighborly thing to do. It makes our neighborhood more inviting and it also helps your neighbor maintain their lawn. Remember curb appeal is essential if you want to get top dollar for your home. If you are short on time there are several lawn services operating in our neighborhood that would be glad to help you maintain your yard.

Bunco

Ladies are meeting monthly (third Friday of each month) for fun-filled conversation and gaming. We now have 20 women from RBW and surrounding areas participating. If you are interested and would like to join, please call Jina Ames (703) 406-0088. No experience is necessary to play Bunco. Bunco will continue through the month of May and start back up in September.

Play Dates

Spring is the perfect time to plan a play date at the Tot Lot and Play Area on River Oaks Drive in RBW Section II. It is a great opportunity to meet other preschool children and parents in the neighborhood. Please help set a day and time (weekly or monthly) for this activity.

Contact: Mike Morgan at president@riverbankwoods.org

Neighborhood Clean-up

The RBW HOA would like to schedule a Spring Clean-up. We are looking for someone or a group to work with block captains to help organize this event. The HOA will provide trash bags, trash removal if necessary and snacks. Bring your own gloves. Neighbors should clean up litter in the Tree Save Areas and areas near their house and/or help clean up Brockman Farm Lane. To volunteer, please contact Teresa Bettac at (703) 444-3035 or secretary@riverbankwoods.org. This could be a great family activity.

Recommendations / Comings and Goings / Congratulations

This is your newsletter. If you have news to announce, please contact Teresa Bettac at (703) 444-3035 or secretary@riverbankwoods.org, or contact any Board Member.

Several houses are for sale in River Bank Woods. If you have friends or relatives you would like to have as neighbors please invite them to check out our homes for sale. We will miss all of our great neighbors.

Zoning Notice – Animal Medical Center of Cascades Relocation

A Public Hearing will be held as follows:

Date: May 10, 2006
Time: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Place: Lowes Island Elementary School (cafeteria)
20755 Whitewater Drive
Sterling Virginia 20165

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss relocation and expansion of the Veterinary Hospital in Great Falls Plaza.

FAQs

What is an easement? What is a right-of-way?

An easement is the right to use another person's land for a stated purpose. Right-of-way is a type of easement that gives someone the right to travel across someone else's property. All homes in River Bank Woods have an easement on their property. Be sure not to plant or build anything on the easement. The easements are used by VDOT and the utility companies in our area.

What do I need to obtain a permit from the county to do work on my house?

Generally, permits are issued by the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development. However, if you are expanding the footprint of your house (with a deck or another type of addition), you also need a permit from the zoning department. All the permits can be applied for at the County Government Center, 1 Harrison Street, S.E., Leesburg. If you need to find out whether you need a permit call the customer service number at (703) 777-0220. The most common permits issued are for decks and finished basements. The county has streamlined this process, offering standardized design drawings you can use to cut down on the approval time. **If you live in a subdivision with a homeowners association, you must get their approval for any exterior projects.** Don't forget to bring your checkbook when you apply for a permit. There are fees involved.

BE SURE YOU FILL OUT AN ARCHITECTURAL MODIFICATION REQUEST APPLICATION BEFORE MAKING ANY EXTERIOR CHANGES TO YOUR PROPERTY.

UPCOMING RIVER BANK WOODS HOA MEETING DATES:

July 25, 2006

October 24, 2006

CONTACT INFO

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