



The WREporter

The Voice of West River Estates
www.westriverestates.org

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Spring 2008

Letter from the President:

Margaret Cullember



As 2008 has arrived, and hopefully the spring also, as President of the HOA I wanted to update the community on what is going on. Actually not much since last year; with a few exceptions, which follow; The floating pier has been approved and we are in the process of getting permits and a contractor to install; it will be a nice addition to our existing pier making it a lot more user friendly for the types of activities the community uses the pier for, such as crabbing and canoeing or kayaking. Hopefully the project will be completed in the spring just in time for the summer season!

A date has been selected for the Community Summer Party; it is to be held Saturday, September 13, 2008. Also, we have selected a date and location for the Community Christmas Party - it is scheduled for Saturday, December 6, 2008 and is being held at Renditions in Davidsonville.

As you can see, things in West River Estates are pretty settled; I do want to send out a plea for anyone who would like to offer a little of their time to help with the HOA, any volunteers would be greatly appreciated; there are positions on the Board of Directors available and we need people to fill them. Those volunteers that have been taking care of things for years are stepping down so now is the time to get involved. I will thank you in advance for your consideration.

Regards,
Margaret Cullember

Volunteers Needed

Andy Wilson

The West River Homeowners Association is in need of volunteers for open positions within the Homeowners' Association. Many of the current Board members have been serving the Community for more than 5 years.

The Board consists of 3 elected Board of Directors, 4 appointed positions - President, VP, Secretary and Treasurer as well as Committee Chairs (Landscaping, Covenants, Welcome Committee etc.)

The Community has always been run by Volunteers. Many people don't volunteer because of the perceived level of commitment. The commitment is only 2-3 hours per month. There is a Board of Directors (BOD) meeting on the first Monday of the month. At the Board Meeting plans for improving the community are discussed and voted on. Plans are also made for the children's activities, community picnic and the holiday party.

Another reason that people don't volunteer is they are afraid that once they volunteer they will be "stuck" volunteering for 5 plus years. All three BOD positions are three year terms. The President, VP, Secretary and Treasurer positions are not bound by a specific term. A suggestion was brought up at a recent BOD meeting to rotate the President, VP and Secretary positions each year. That way a volunteer knows that there is only a three year commitment and you won't be "stuck". Using a rotation of the positions will allow volunteers to learn how the Board works within the community.

Volunteers also allow our Community to have very reasonable HOA Fees. What happens if we don't get Volunteers? There would be the option of bringing in a professional management company. Professional management companies are \$\$expensive\$\$ and would most certainly require an increase in HOA Fees.

Do you want our community run by people who don't live here? A management company would also be required to enforce the covenants to the letter. Is that what we want for our community? In the Washington Post on February 3rd there was an article detailing how some management companies have "misused" HOA funds. The article states that some HOA's pay more than \$1600 a year in fees that include management company services.

We live in a beautiful well established and well maintained community. We need volunteers to keep the community spirit alive and well in West River Estates.

Landscaping Update, Spring 2008

Jack Mateosky

This year as in past years, we plan on continuing to maintain and enhance the look of West River Estates ... YOUR neighborhood. This spring we will be edging and applying fresh mulch to common area trees and HOA maintained beds.



We will also plant annual flowers several times this year and continue to replace dead trees and shrubs where appropriate. We will also be trimming encroaching tree limbs from sidewalks and paths and where the over-growth is impacting the growth of our maintained trees. As always, commencement of mowing and maintaining common area grass will begin in April. Occasionally we will miss, or accidentally neglect an area, so feel free to drop an email if you have a concern or see something that needs attention.

We need ALL homeowners to take a look at their own front yard and see what they can do to tidy up the landscaping of their own home. Mulching and edging trees and edging sidewalks, trimming hedges and raking up leaves, all goes a long way to beautifying the entire neighborhood. As always, picking up after your animals and picking up trash while walking or jogging through the neighborhood ... it is always the RIGHT thing to do.

Whenever possible, keeping automobiles on your own driveway is a simple thing that really maintains the clean look of our courts and streets. When you do have to park in front of your home on the street please keep vehicles off of grass and sidewalk areas, this usually results in rut damage and/or cracked sidewalks to that area which will need to be fixed by you or by the HOA ... either way you pay, so let's prevent that up front.

WRE HOA holds regular monthly meetings as well as two group "hugs" per year. We regularly review requests by neighbors for new projects to consider. We need everyone to participate in the process of keeping our neighborhood looking nice!!

As always, feel free to call me or better yet, email me at: jmateosk@ieee.org Phone: 410.867.3226

Thanks.

-Jack

Covenants

The Covenants Committee

Hi there from your covenants committee. Before I get started, I would like to take a few minutes to familiarize those of you who are not sure of what we do in our job and why it is important to our community.

The covenants committee often receives a lot of heat because we are the ones who try to keep an eye on the neighborhood and make sure that you and all of your neighbors are living within the guidelines that you agreed to when you bought your home in West River Estates. Unfortunately, that means that we are the ones who report to the board that you have put up a bench in your front yard or a birdbath in your front garden. Both of these might be done very tastefully and look attractive, but both are not in accordance with the West River covenants. The good news, however, is that we are also the ones forcing your neighbors to remove the broken down cars in the front yard and all of those pesky pink flamingos (yes, we really have had residents stick those pink birds in their front lawns).

However, we do want you to know that all hope isn't lost. Yes, we all have agreed to certain covenants and yes, we cannot make major (and in some opinions, minor) modifications to our homes and landscaping without being in violation – but there is some hope. We do have a process in place where residents can submit a request to the board and they will consider modifications and/or additions you might want to make. Further cause for hope is that the board of West River, unlike many other communities, is comprised of residents in this community. That means that you will not get a rubber stamp rejecting any requests you might have. Rather, in our community your neighbors will give it all due diligence and in most cases approve the change. Yes, there are some cases where the request in question is so far out of the West River guidelines that, to hold within our established covenants, the request must be denied. If this is the

case and something had been erected or even worse, constructed, it may be necessary to have said structure removed. This can get very expensive so in this case it is most definitely better NOT to ask for forgiveness rather than permission. There have been incidences in our community where just such an occurrence has happened and it was very expensive for the offending party.

Again, I would like to reiterate, we are not living in a police state and the job of your covenants committee is a difficult one. We do not like being the bad guys. However, this community belongs to all of us and by working together to ensure we stay within the set of standards all of us agreed to when we move here, we can make sure West River Estates remains the wonderful, and beautiful community we all enjoy.

West River Estates Directory

By Mia Jones

Welcome to our new residents. If you would like to be included in our West River Estates Directory please email or complete the following form. We only include people that forward their information. Please send in all changes by April 1.

West River Estates Directory

To be included in the directory, please submit the following information to Mia Jones at 641 Plantation Blvd. or Miabjones@aol.com.

Last Name: _____

Family Members' First Names: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Upcoming Events

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
General Meeting	April 23 rd	7:30 – 9:00 pm	West River United Methodist Center
Community Clean Up	May 3rd	8:00am – 4:00pm	
Community Yard Sale	June 14th	8:00am – 12:00pm	
Community Golf Outing	June	date TBD	
Community Summer Party	Sep. 13th		
Community Holiday Party	Dec. 6th		Renditions

From the Shady Side Rural Heritage Society

By Mavis Daly

MAGGIE SANSONE TO PERFORM AT SHADY SIDE MUSEUM MARCH 14

Maggie Sansone, award winning hammered dulcimer artist, will present her 7th annual Celtic Concert, at the Capt. Salem Avery House Museum, 1418 EW Shady Side Roads, on Friday evening, March 14, at 7 p.m. Admission is \$15 for members, and \$20 for non-members, and reservations may be made by calling 410 867 4486. Coffee and desserts will be served prior to the program. Guests are urged to make reservations early because of limited seating.

CENTENARY UM CHURCH HANDMADE EASTER EGGS READY FOR SALE

The traditional handmade Easter eggs created by members of the Centenary United Methodist Church in Shady Side are now ready for sale, and anyone desiring to purchase them may call 410 867 9567 to arrange for pick up. Merchants in the area have also volunteered to distribute them, and they can be purchased at Shady Side Market and Renno's Market in Shady Side.

The very popular quarter-pound chocolate covered Easter eggs are available in four cream flavors—butter cream, chocolate, coconut, and peanut butter, and sell for \$2 each. They have been produced by members of the Centenary UM Church using a family recipe handed down through generations.

MARYLAND DAY TO BE CELEBRATED AT SHADY SIDE MUSEUM FEATURING MRS. AVERY'S TEA TOURS

The Shady Side Rural Heritage Society will celebrate Maryland Day on Sunday, March 30, from 1 to 4 p.m. by hosting Mother-Daughter Tea Tours. The event will take place at the Captain Salem Avery House Museum, 1418 EW Shady Side Road, and is free.

Two separate seatings in the Great Room of the Museum will take place, the first at 1 p.m., and the second at 3 p.m. Guests will be served delicious samples of tea cakes, cookies and sandwiches typical of food that would have been served in 1870. Guests will be served in beautiful tea cups from Mrs. Avery's collection. Small groups will be given guided tours of the Captain Salem Avery House by costumed docents.

Registration is limited, and reservations must be made by March 20. For more information and to make reservations, call the Museum office at 410 867 4486.