

Letter from the President

Ah Spring ... at last! As far as winters go, that wasn't so bad! Granted, I've probably jinxed our good fortune, but this winter was a cake-walk compared to last year's snow-mageddon!*

Now the wind, that's a different story. Ever see a sporting event when the fans do the "wave"? Next time the winds kick-up, check out your neighbor's shingles doing the wave. Keep in mind, your neighbor might be watching yours! For houses built in the first couple phases, those alleged 20-year shingles are ready to be replaced. As one of several homeowners on Sweetwater getting quotes for new shingles, it's not going to be cheap and rumors are the rising cost of oil will push up the cost even further.

Wind and weather aside, here's a look at the business end of things –

The WREHOA ended 2010 within budget. A couple anomalies kept things interesting, but overall, it was a good year (much thanks to our Treasurer for keeping the dollars in line!). The 2011 budget is locked in. Based on current projections and planning, we will operate within expected spending levels which mean HOA dues will stay the same for the foreseeable future.

Announcements:

- Schedule of Events: The entire year is planned! See last page.
- First Annual WREstates 5k run and 1mile fun run/walk scheduled for May
- Summer Cookout: Now on a Sunday to accommodate the majority of athletic schedules.
- Get connected: Join us on Facebook "West River HOA" and/or visit the website <http://westriverestates.org/>

Take a moment to scan through the next couple pages to stay current with the happenings. Get out there and enjoy the warmer weather ... assuming my opening commentary hasn't riled up the weather deities.

Have a safe and enjoyable Spring!

Vince Penkala
President

*Yup, jinxed it. I'm finishing this up on the Sunday, March 27th. There's snow on the ground.

2011 Projects

In addition to standard mulch beds, flower plantings, tree / shrub maintenance and grass cutting, here are the projects slated for 2011 based on feedback from homeowners:

- Repair of sidewalks at the intersections of Beauvoir and Plantation and Sweetwater and Plantation.
- Installation of vandalism deterrents at each end of Plantation.
- Improvement to grade in the common area at the corner of Sweetwater and Plantation (location of the Easter Egg Hunt and Cookout).
- Completed: Tree clean-up along all paths including the path to the pier, behind Plantation and linking Birch to Lavender Courts.

Reach Out and Touch Someone

(That copyright has expired, hasn't it?)

By Bob Brantner
Member, Community Board of Directors

I'd like to extend my quarterly greeting to all of my neighbors out there. We on the Board hope that you all have been able to participate in some (if not all) of our community events. Many of us were able to gather together this January at the Winter Gala at the Renditions' Country Club, and I would imagine everyone enjoyed the lighted homes and luminaries this holiday season. I would also like to remind everyone that we will soon have the community's first 5K run/walk, so please, no matter what your role, please join us.

However, parties and races aside, that is not the reason for this article. This article is to inform everyone of what we are doing on the board in an effort to better reach you with news about our community.

In this new age of technology and information sharing we have taken a few steps to not only better communicate with you, but also to allow you to communicate with your neighbors.

First, as before, there is our community website, www.westriverestates.org. This is your one stop shopping destination for all things West River Estates. If you want to find out who your elected representatives are, or look up past issues of the West River Wire, this is the place to go. Additionally, over the next couple of months we will be changing around the website and looking for ways we can improve it for you, our neighbors. With that said, if anyone has any suggestions, please let us know through any one of our new communication tools we will be listing in this article. Remember, this is your

website and we are looking to you to help us make it better. We've also implemented a few new tools to better communicate with the residents. The first of these is our new group on facebook. Although we realize that not everyone has joined facebook yet, if advertising is to be believed, most of you have. Further, a good number of our neighbors are already members of this facebook group. If you are on facebook (or even considering joining) and want to know how to join, simply look up "West River Homeowners" under groups. You will be directed to our group and all you have to do then is simply click join. Once you are a member we can send you invitations to upcoming community events and provide details with only the click of a button. It also provides a nice forum for you to communicate with one another by writing on the community wall. (It's also much less destructive and costly than using spray paint to write on the actual community wall) One topic that has come up so far was a question of who to use in putting up a brick mailbox. I responded to that question on the wall, but was told later that Vernon Terrill is now retired and no longer doing mailboxes. So if you have information, please post it as some residents are still looking for a good mason.

We have also procured a Gmail account for e-mail. This means that you no longer need to log onto our website to communicate with your Board. By going to WestRiverHOA@gmail.com your e-mail will be sent directly to an account that is checked hourly (that's an optimum estimation on my part, in reality it's probably weekly since Vince has a life outside of his responsibilities at the HOA) by our community president.

And if all of these new ways to communicate were not enough, we've also printed up business cards that will be sent out with our reminder of our semiannual general meeting. These business cards are perfect for taping up on your message board at home so you will always know how to reach us. Further, all of us who volunteer have a small collection of cards we can share with you should you lose the one we sent out. All you have to do is come up to one of us and ask for the card. In response we will regale you with some wonderful story on why we don't have a card on us, but we will assure you we will get you one as soon as possible.

Again, in all seriousness, this is your community and I really do believe that we have a great one. But our greatness is thanks to all of you, and your participation will help to strengthen our bond as neighbors. We've really tried to help facilitate greater communication between all of us, but it's up to you to make use of the tools we've established. It's also your input that will help to make the communication stronger. So if any of you out there have any ideas of what we could be doing better, please let us know. We can't wait to continue to improve the way we stay in touch with one another.

2011 Violation Enforcement (yeah, the reminder ...)

Top 5 Violation Letters in the last 12 months

- Parking on Sidewalks
- Failure to stow garbage and recycling
- Structural infractions: Moldy siding, architectural change forms, etc.
- Failure to pick up after pets
- Yard / Landscaping infractions: Dead bushes/trees, etc.

Violation enforcement process:

- First letter: 10 days to comply
- Second letter: 10 days to comply
- Third letter: If not remedied within 10 days, a fine of \$25 per-day will be accrued until issue is resolved.

Anne Arundel County will also participate in certain infractions with much higher penalties and fines. Two situations from last year:

- Removal of trees in common area without a permit (section along Plantation Blvd had several trees removed in 2010).
- Failure to clean up after pets.

Also, the Board of Directors was asked to review the guidelines for vehicles with security and law enforcement lettering. Since the guidelines do not provide an exception for these types of vehicles, the Board voted in favor of granting a waiver for vehicles bearing security and law enforcement lettering for the primary reason that the presence of such vehicles in the development is a benefit to the community.

First Annual WRE Community 5K!

Over the years your HOA has tried to institute several community activities to give all of you an opportunity to get to better know your neighbors. These range from events where you have to travel (such as our annual golf outing or holiday gala) to closer in events like our community picnic and Halloween parade. However we have now come up with a new event that should cover everyone in our community and all you need to do is come out to your front door step!

We are proud to announce that May 14th will be the first annual West River Community 5K fun run and walk!

As most of you already know, we have a large number of our residents who enjoy touring our community while staying in good physical shape. It

is these numbers of runners and walkers that led us to put together this exciting new event.

The run/walk will start at 9:00 AM on Saturday morning in Lavender Court. All who wish to participate will follow a 5 kilometer (3.1 mile) course all throughout our community, finishing with a run through our wooded path, ending in Birch Court. Once everyone is done, we will be hosting a 1K fun run for the kids, which will start in Birch Court, through the wooded path into Lavender Court, and then turning around for a finish back on Birch. From there your neighbors can visit as we share snacks and drinks.

The entry fee for this race is only \$5 for West River residents and \$10 for non residents. However, we need more than just runners. We are also looking for volunteers for a water stop, as well as course monitors. But even if you can't make it out to run, we would encourage everyone to head out to your driveway and cheer for our competitors as they travel through our community. And of course, everyone is invited to the after party as well.

More information can be found on our website, www.westriverestates.org or you can e-mail us at WestRiverHomeowners@gmail.com.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone out there on May 14 with your running shoes on!

Floating Pier: Drama in shallow water

Due to a complaint filed with the County, the association was forced to remove the floating pier. The County limits the surface area of docks and piers and we are allegedly at the maximum even without the floating pier. We hope the removal is temporary but we have a steep hill to climb. We need your help! If you are interested in helping with the fight to get our floating pier back in the water, please contact us at WestRiverHOA@gmail.com.

Open WREHOA Positions!

Interested in getting involved? If so, please consider one of several available positions including Vice President, Board and social volunteer roles. Please attend the Spring General Meeting for more information and the chance to get involved!

Vandalism

The topic of unwanted attention from people who have little else to do was included in the last issue of the WREporter. As we enter the season when

the frequency of incidents spike, we ask that everyone stay watchful of suspicious vehicles and people. According to emails from homeowners, weekends between 9pm and 2am tend to attract the most activity. As a reminder:

- Keep an eye out for vehicles and people that appear suspicious.
- Report it! Even if it seems trivial, send an email to contact@westriverestates.org so we can catalog patterns. If you see something that needs to be acted upon immediately, call the non-emergency number for Anne Arundel police at (410) 222-8610.
- Lock your car doors and avoid inviting trouble.

WREHOA Marketplace

Freecycle – Lothian Group

Have things that you'd like to give away? Check out this creative non-profit. http://groups.freecycle.org/Lothian_Freecycle/description

Reminders!

- Watch your speed and record license plates of speeders!
- Runners, walker and joggers: Please wear reflective clothing!
- Dog owners: You know ... Seriously, you know!

WREHOA Information Directory:

WREHOA general website: <http://westriverestates.org/>

WREHOA mailing address: West River Estates HOA
PO Box 206
West River, MD 20778

WREHOA Facebook: West River HOA

Downed power lines (emergency): 1.877.778.2222

Burnt out street lights: Google with the pole #: BGE street light outage

Animal control: 410.222.7000

Police (non-emergency): 410.222.8610

2011 Calendar of Events:

Please visit <http://westriverestates.org/> for more information and updates.

WREHOA Spring Clean Up

Saturday, April 9th

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 23rd

Corner of Sweetwater and Plantation (see enclosed flier)

Spring HOA General Meeting

Wednesday, April 20th

West River Methodist Center starting at 7:00pm

Annual 5k Event

Saturday, May 14th

Registration information

Community Yard Sale

Saturday, May 21st

Annual Golf Outing

Sunday, June 12th

Annual Cookout

September 18th

Corner of Sweetwater and Plantation starting at 1pm

Face painters needed!

Halloween Parade and Party

Saturday, October 29th

Starts at the Corner of Sweetwater and Plantation and ends at the end of Sweetwater.

Fall HOA General Meeting

Wednesday, November 9th

Holiday Swags: Going up!

Week of November 28th
Volunteers needed!

Luminaries

Orders accepted between December 1 and December 15th:
2012

Winter Gala

January 21st

Location: To be determined

Holiday Swags: Coming down!

January 14th and 15th

Volunteers needed!