

The Needle

Pinewood Lake Homeowners Association

www.pinewood-lake.com

December 2004

PLHA ANNUAL MEETING

Our community is meeting to:

- Elect four Board of Directors;
- Vote to update our By-Laws;
- Review the state of our community.

Refreshments will be served.

**You are cordially invited
to the PLHA Annual Meeting
Wednesday, December 1, 2004**

7:30 PM

**South County Government Building
Room 221 A,B,C**

Remember that if there isn't a quorum, a second meeting must be scheduled creating additional expenses for the community.

If you are unable to attend, please return your proxy ballot to the PLHA office by 4 PM on December 1.

HOLIDAY TRASH COLLECTION

The regular trash collection schedule will be followed during Christmas and New Year's since both holidays fall on Saturdays.

Christmas tree collection will occur on Jan. 5 and Jan. 12. All tinsel and ornaments must be removed from trees prior to pickup.

SPECIAL TRASH PICKUPS

You must schedule special pickups with AAA before putting items at the curb. **This service is free, but AAA will not pick up special items without prior notice.** To schedule a special pickup, call 703-818-8222.

HOMEOWNER ASSESSMENTS

Beginning January 1, 2005, assessments will increase from \$99 a month to **\$102 a month.** Your 2005 Coupon Book will be mailed this month.

2005 PINEWOOD LAKE BUDGET

As noted above, your assessments will increase in 2005 to \$102 per month. The Board can say that the increase only reflects the cost of living and no more, but we know that that does not satisfy many homeowners. You rightfully ask where your money goes.

First, \$71 of your monthly assessment funds the operating budget. Those monies support the day-to-day operations of the Association, such items as utilities, trash, insurance, maintenance, snow removal, and the pool. The operating budget will regularly go up by the cost of living, because the Association's bills, both for people and contracts, are tied to the cost of living. Here in more detail is exactly where your \$71 will go.

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Grounds Contractor | \$14.12 |
| Refuse | \$10.75 |
| Office Staff | \$ 8.92 |
| Pool | \$ 7.05 |
| Insurance | \$ 4.46 |
| Security | \$ 3.81 |
| Tree Trimming | \$ 3.08 |
| Maintenance | |
| Employee | \$ 2.81 |
| Utilities | \$ 2.69 |
| Publications | \$ 2.07 |
| ACC Administrator | \$ 1.96 |
| Attorney | \$ 1.92 |
| Collections & Billing | \$ 1.23 |
| Streets and Paths | \$ 1.04 |
| Landscaping/Plants | \$ 0.81 |
| All Else | \$ 4.29 |

Continued on page 2

Budget *continued from page 1*

As you can notice, over 40% of your assessment will go to keeping our common area up and collecting trash. Also, since 9/11 insurance rates have gone up significantly, and in the past year we have faced several law suits.

Second, the remaining \$31 of your monthly assessment funds the capital budget. Those monies rebuild and extend the life of our infrastructure: our roads, paths, fences, lake, and parks. Here in more detail is exactly where your \$31 will go in 2005:

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Streets and Paths | \$12.06 |
| Site Lighting | \$ 5.42 |
| Pool | \$ 3.44 |
| Lake | \$ 3.10 |
| Office/Compound | \$ 2.92 |
| Contingency | \$ 2.82 |
| Engineering Services | \$ 1.24 |

By Virginia law, the Board must conduct a reserve study at least every five years. One is currently ongoing, conducted by the licensed reserve analysts of Facilities Engineering Associates. Moreover, by law the Board must maintain a reserve. This is not a slush fund to be used as the Board whimsically decides, but can only be accumulated to replace or restore the capital components of the Association.

To avoid levying a special assessment each time a street, or the pool, or the fences come due (all amounts near or over \$100,000), the Board sets money aside so that when a road or the lighting or the pool needs to be replaced (as estimated by the reserve study), we have saved sufficient money. To give you an idea of the magnitude of our capital needs, the replacement value of our common area is in excess of \$2 million. Even though we have over \$700,000 currently in our reserve accounts, we should have over \$1.1M. It would take a special assessment of over \$800 just to fully fund the reserve.

So, yes, \$102 is a lot of money to pay a month, but then again Pinewood Lake has a lot more amenities than the new communities

going up around us. It takes money to keep up our common area – and so help keep up the value of your home.

Mike Shigley 703-360-7237

New PLHA Office Hours
 12 - 3 PM Monday-Friday
 9 AM - 12 Noon Saturday
 effective Monday, January 3, 2005

Pinewood Lake Homeowners Association
www.pinewood-lake.com
 8159 Fernlake Court
 Alexandria, VA 22309-1209
 Phone: 703-360-6212
 FAX: 703-360-6771
 email: plha@verizon.net
Office Hours:
 1 PM - 4 PM Monday-Friday
 9 AM - 12 Noon Saturday
 Community Manager: Kirsten Davis
 Asst Community Mgr: Carmen Nuñez
 Admin Assistant: Victoria Silver

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| President: | Mike Shigley |
| Vice President: | Bill Kiehl |
| Secretary: | Bev Card |
| Treasurer: | Jack Kaufman |
| Members at Large: | |
| Jim Brown | Nathan Grace |
| David McAuley | vacant |
| Nancy Razzino | |

The Pinewood Lake Needle Staff

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Guest Editor | Bev Card |
| Community Announcements | Jane Quigley |
| Copy Editor | Frank Holub |
| Special Projects | Bernice Pratt |
| Webmaster | Kirsten Davis |
| Advertising Manager | Lois Passman |
| Phone: 703-780-4236 | Fax: 703-780-6903 |

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Stairway to Heaven Or ...?

The Gramercy Model Stairway

The Gramercy model home is arguably the most distinctive model in our community. Its front staircase provides access to the middle floor of the house, which at times presents the Pizza or Chinese restaurant delivery people a dilemma as to which door to choose. With its brick wall and zigzag stair case and iron railings, many of us in Pinewood Lake chose this model from among others when we bought our homes.

As an owner of a Gramercy model, and a new member of the Architectural Control Committee (ACC), I agreed to write this article in an effort to keep a promise made to a community member by the committee. My purpose is to solicit feedback and ask for assistance from homeowners, especially Gramercy owners, regarding the design, maintenance and repair issues associated with the stairways.

Having completed a non-scientific inventory (drive around the neighborhood) looking at Gramercy models, it's obvious to me we are all experiencing the same problems to one extent or another. Like me, some people have already "bitten the bullet" and replaced their staircases. Some continue to patch and repair as best they can. Others are in violation of the current ACC standard having chosen not to complete repairs.

One of our neighbors, and a Gramercy owner, requested the ACC to survey Pinewood Lake, specifically Gramercy owners, regarding Gramercy stairs. While a formal survey has not been conducted – nor is one planned – it is our aim to use The Needle as a forum to reach homeowners and to ascertain their desire to research, develop, and process a change to the Gramercy stairway design and request a change or alternative to the current standard.

The purpose of a design change would enable Gramercy homeowners to better maintain, and more cost effectively replace their aging stairways with a design that is aesthetically

pleasing and in character with our Federalist architecture. Our neighbor is an advocate for changing the design for the stairways on the Gramercy Model. She however has not researched or identified a specific design that she is offering as a new or alternative to the existing standard. She has expressed an interest in working with our community to research develop and process a change to the design standard for the Gramercy stairways.

One suggestion is to form a subcommittee of concerned homeowners to conduct research and present changes to, and/or an alternative to, the current Gramercy model stairways. The subcommittee would be temporary, convened only to address this issue. The subcommittee would be given a short time frame (possibly 60 days) to complete its agenda. This would make the best use of people's time and ensure focus and progress to:

- Determine whether there is desire or need to change the design;
- Determine what might be the design alternatives;
- Develop a design to be considered in addition to the existing standard;
- Draft a change to the Standard for consideration;
- Make a presentation and submit the Draft Standard to the ACC for consideration, and subsequently to the Pinewood Lake HOA Board of Directors for a vote.

If you are interested in participating as a subcommittee member of homeowners to address issues concerning the design of the Gramercy Model Front Stairways, please submit your name and phone number to the PLHA office by December 30.

My best to all of you this holiday season.
Gina Sebastian 703-360-0825

NEEDLE EDITOR NEEDED

Contact the office at 703-360-6212

Board Happenings

On October 14 the treasurer's report included

\$133,069 in operations and \$721,252 in reserves, which is an increase of \$19,254 from August. Delinquent accounts decreased by \$3,223 to \$ 23,916 - the lowest in recent memory for the second month.

Under community comment:

- Sonny Jones asked about a trailer full of building debris parked on Central Park Drive. *The office will contact the owner. Residents are reminded all vehicles on private and public streets must be currently licensed and driven regularly.*
- Sonny Jones asked the Board to conduct a door-to-door get-out-the-vote campaign to change the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions since the Association is operating under the burden of outmoded, obsolete requirements.
- Bernice Pratt asked about two vehicles on Fernlake Court that are sharing the same license plates. *The office has handled this violation.*

Under old business the Board directed ACC to notify homeowners with fences that aren't in compliance with the Standards for Painting Fences that they have until June 2005 to correct violations.

For new business the Board tabled discussion about the shed standard until November so ACC can consider more details of the size and design of storage buildings.

The owners of 4325 Lawrence Street, appealed the ACC decision to deny the replacement of a parking pad wrought iron fence with a wooden fence. The appeal was denied and the homeowners must reinstall a wrought iron fence by October 31, 2005.

The Board approved the Hospitality Committee Charter and Policy Resolution 2004-05 defining use of the PLHA compound.

During announcements:

- Sonny Jones, Publications Committee Chair, said he will be moving and a new Needle editor will be needed;

- Kirsten Davis, reporting for the Hospitality Committee, remind committees to have members sign up for the Volunteer Dinner;
- Nathan Grace, Nominations Committee Chair, has 5 candidates for 4 Board seats;
- Kirsten Davis, Office Manager announced:
 - there have been two recent home break-ins ; *everyone stay alert to who's in the neighborhood;*
 - complaints were received concerning the quality of the recent curb painting – *the company has been contacted;*
 - Heidi Bopp requested the extension of the fire lane on Saint Annes Court;
 - Nathan Grace, Nominations Chair, asked about the fact that two candidates for the Board are husband and wife. *The Nominations charter doesn't address this issue*

October 18th Due Process cases included the following rules violations:

- 7901 Central Park Circle: The vehicle is now licensed. A \$15.00 administrative processing fee was assessed.
- 4412 Longworthe Square and 4318 Birchlake Court: The vehicles were still unlicensed. A monetary charge of \$3.00 a day for thirty days, \$5.00 a day for the next thirty days, and \$10.00 a day thereafter was assessed until the violations are corrected.

A contract was awarded to J & C Welding Co. for \$1500 to replace 22 feet of wrought iron fence near the Oaklake Court outfall.

October 21, 2004 Budget Meeting

All the Finance Committee recommendations were approved and the Community /Bathhouse Building line specified that the office equipment be a laptop, scanner, and 80 gb of increased memory for one of the current office computers.

The Reserve Study contract was awarded to Facility Engineering Associates for \$6,300.
Bev Card 703-360-2528

BOARD HAPPENINGS

On November 11, 2004, the Board of Directors convened at 7:30 PM for its regular meeting at the Association office. Present were Jim Brown, Bev Card, Nathan Grace, Jack Kaufman, Bill Kiehl, David McAuley, and Mike Shigley.

The Treasurer's report showed a cash balance of \$862,264, including \$739,374 in the reserve accounts. Total delinquencies as of October 31, 2004, were \$25,351, an increase from the previous month, but still the third lowest end-of-month level in the last 8 years. The Board approved applying excess 2004 income above expenses to the reserve account.

During Community Comment the Board heard from the following:

- Susan Hosek, who asked if there were any more volunteers who would be able to attend the community recognition dinner.
- Delora Dillard, who expressed concern about how new owners are informed about ACC violations on their property when purchasing into the community. Mike Shigley explained that there is an ACC inspection placed in the disclosure packet that the buyer receives when purchasing the property.
 - Daniel Agyekum, who wanted to know what measures the community is taking to keep crime down. Mike Shigley explained that we employ off duty police to patrol the community and above that we rely on homeowners to report suspicious activities, etc.
 - Frank Holub, who commented that on Longworthe Square there have been several car windows broken, and multiple incidents of vandalism around the lake. He feels there is an increase in vandalism in the community.

Under Old Business, the Board approved revisions to the Personnel Manual, but tabled final action until February 2005 so that the Board could vote on a clean copy.

Under New Business, the Board made the following decisions:

- It approved the charter of the Neighborhood Watch committee.
- It appointed Nancy Razzino as chair of the Nominations Committee for 2005 and David McAuley, Heidi Bopp, Dick Knapp, and Peggy Parsons as members.
- It discussed proposed Policy Resolution 2004-06 Use of the Community Center and Outdoor Common Areas but tabled final action until December 2004 so that the Board could review a clean copy showing changes the Board had discussed.
- It discussed a letter from the Fairfax County Health Department listing several violations that need to be corrected before we will be allowed to open the pool next season and approved soliciting the help of the Lee District Supervisor for help in getting an extension of time.
- It awarded the Snow Removal Contract for 2005-2007 to RCR Services, Inc.
- It awarded a contract to National Paving in the amount of \$2100 to correct an additional drainage problem on Central Park Drive.
- It awarded a contract to National Paving in the amount of \$4100 (with a contingency to go up to \$6100) to repair the southwest area of Central Park Circle.
- It awarded a contract to Mr. Nunez in the amount of \$1600 to repair concrete in the vicinity of 7972 Central Park Circle.

The Community Manager announced that there was another attempted break-in on Cedarlake Court.

The Board entered Executive Session at 10:47 P.M. to discuss the personal liability of members to the Association and pending litigation.

At 12:15 AM the Board returned from Executive Session, approved collection actions, and adjourned at 12:16 AM.

Mike Shigley

703-360-7237

STOPPING VANDALISM

In Board Happenings, you may have noticed comments from several concerned homeowners about an increased level of vandalism and other crime. In the past month there have been several car windows damaged, break-ins at a couple of residences, and significant damage to the common areas of Pinewood Lake. Wrought iron from the pool fence has been removed, structural steel around the lake has been twisted, and twice planks have been removed from the bridge at the dam.

All this damage costs you and your fellow Pinewood Lake residents money. Your car may not be damaged or your home may not have been burglarized, but the money to repair vandalism comes out of your monthly assessment. Our first-line defense rests with you. Homeowners keep telling the Board that they witness suspicious activity. Well, there is a Fairfax County phone number you should call right way when you witness suspicious activity. Call 703-691-2131. We don't ask you to accost or confront anyone. Call the police non-emergency number. The people may be gone by the time the police arrive, but the fact you made a report is recorded. If enough people call, a pattern of potential crime is established, and that is grounds for increased police patrols.

Help take back Pinewood Lake. Call 703-691-2131 when you see suspicious activity.

Mike Shigley 703-360-7237

**Thin
Ice
Warning!**



Talk with your children about the danger of our lake when it appears frozen. Moving water underneath the ice makes walking on it unsafe at any time.



Happy Holidays !
From The Marketing Group
Roger Reutershan, Chairman
Lis Henderson
Ginger Krup
Tom Beale
Fred Blanchard
Frank Holub
Jack Kaufman

Jump on board in 2005 !!!

Hospitality

Seasons Greetings everyone! I hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I know that my family did. We got together with loved ones, visited and, of course, overate.

Now that there's such a flurry of activity, I hope that everyone with little ones will be able to slow down for just a while and join us for Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 11th at 10AM. Come have a bowl of cereal and get a small prize from Santa.

Please slow down a little and enjoy this wonderful season. It's not really about giving and getting gifts, as the retailers would have us believe. It's about being with those that we love and counting our blessings, no matter what your beliefs are. Have a blessed season and we'll see you next year!

Continued on page 7

Hospitality *continued from page 6*

If you're new to Pinewood Lake, we'd like to meet you and tell you about the great neighborhood you live in. Please give me a call at (703) 360-8743 and I'll arrange a visit from a Hospitality Representative.

Susan Hosek (703) 360-8743

PLHA Calendar

Regular meetings in PLHA office @ 7:30

PM

- Dec 1 Annual Meeting
South County Government Center @ 7:30 PM
- Dec 7 ACC
- Dec 8 Volunteer Dinner
Primo's @ 6:30 PM
- Dec 9 Board
- Dec 11 Breakfast with Santa
10 AM
- Dec 13 Neighborhood Watch
- Dec 14 Publications
- Dec 17 Needle Deadline
- Dec 20 Due Process

Trash at Our Compound

Residents have been dumping trash outside the community compound. This is not the appropriate place to leave trash. Call AAA @ 703-818-8222 and arrange a free special pickup at your own home.

NEEDLE EDITOR NEEDED

Published twelve times a year.

Contact the PLHA office at 703-360-6212.

The Needle Advertising Policy:

- Free personal ads from Pinewood residents and absentee owners that offer "one-time" sale of goods or requests for goods/services;
- Paid commercial ads from businesses.



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