

OFFUTT RIDGE HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

HOA Newsletter

Summer 2004

*Neighborhood Get Together Sunday, August 22nd from 2 - 4pm
See page 2 for details*

The President's Corner

J.D. Westmoreland

Ah...summer is here and the cicadas are GONE!! It is time to get outside and enjoy the weather (oh yeah...I guess there is yard work too). With the coming of summer, there are a couple things to keep in mind. First, kids are out of school and are inevitably going to be outside playing. Please be aware of them when you are driving through the neighborhood. I am noticing that the speeds are picking back up, which is not good. Please maintain the speed limit for your safety and the safety of our children. We will be partnering with the Baltimore County police again to monitor speeds in the community. Secondly, when using the tot lots, please make sure that your kids do not venture off to explore the wildlife surrounding the playground. Last week, while cutting the grass around the Amanda Court playground, I ran over a water moccasin. Granted, it was not a full-grown moccasin, but still a hazardous situation nonetheless. The water areas around the playgrounds are the homelands for many types of wildlife. Please make your children aware of the potential issues with such areas.

Once again, your HOA Board and Officers are working diligently to provide you with services that benefit the community. As some of you may have noticed, the trees along Peddicoat Court and getting very full. We are working to obtain assistance from local organizations to provide a workshop on

tree pruning to assist the homeowners in keeping their trees groomed. Also, coming in September we will be having another dumpster day. Like last year, we plan to have a dumpster on both ends of the community for your convenience. We did not have a dumpster day in the spring for a couple reasons: (1) there is a cost associated with the dumpsters, which is not pocket change and (2) the GPCA cleanup efforts offer us dumpsters for bulk trash dumping. But, we know that the community appreciates this service and we will be offering them in September. Stay tuned for dates.

Additionally, we are working on planning an event for the end of the

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summer. Usually, we do the community picnic. Is this something you would like to continue or do you have other thoughts or ideas? Please e-mail me at john.westmoreland@comcast.net with any ideas or thoughts. Finally, in case you are not aware, several volunteers offered their services on Fathers Day weekend to pull weeds from the Peddicoat tot lot. I believe when they were finished, 30+ bags of weeds were removed. However, it will not be long before the playground is vegetated again. As a result, the Board has voted to find a lawn care service to maintain the tot lot and tennis court areas. This will allow the areas to be functional, as well as safe for the community.

Your comments and feedback are always appreciated. Don't hesitate to contact any of the Board members or Officers with thoughts you may have about the community. Our e-mail addresses can be found on our community website: www.offuttridgehoa.org

Neighborhood Get Togethers

Jackie Brown

The HOA is organizing a couple of "get together" times where families of Offutt Ridge have a chance to socialize with each other and the kids can play together.

The idea is to pick a time and place where the kids can ride bikes or roller blade or do different activities in a safe manner in the neighborhood.

We will gather on the common driveway in front of Andy Grosko's house (3213 Peddicoat Ct.). This driveway provides an area for kids to ride their bikes or play around without the risk of traffic. A volleyball net will be set up and bocce ball will be available. A basketball net is available at the end of the driveway by Jackie Brown's house (3207 Peddicoat).

The first date is Sunday, August 22nd from 2 - 4pm. The second date is TBD.

Please mark your calendars and come out and join us!

In the Garden

With Sheila Abrams-Jones

Sudden Oak Death

Here's another good news/bad news story. Just when we are looking forward to the end of the red-eyed brood X cicadas invasion, now Sudden Oak Death, (SOD, Phytophthora canker disease, Ramorum blight) *Phytophthora ramorum* may have arrived in Maryland. It is a devastating disease that has killed thousands of trees in California. Sudden oak death is caused by *Phytophthora ramorum*, which is a fungus-like pathogen that spreads by sending spores from infected leaves, and twigs. You can go to the Maryland Home and Garden Information Website at www.mhgw.com to see excellent photographs indicating the symptoms on infected plants.

As a Maryland resident, your help is requested! The Maryland Department of Agriculture is seeking help from the public in tracking down infected plant

2004 HOA Representatives

Save this column as a reference for contacting your HOA Representatives.

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Jackie Brown
Andy Grosko

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Richard Jackson

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By-Laws Review

Lynnette Fletcher



material. They are particularly interested in any camellias, lilacs, and viburnums that were purchased and or planted in 2003 or 2004. Also of interest are rhododendrons (including azaleas) that are exhibiting symptoms. In addition, samples of any other plants on the host list published by the USDA, APHIS that were planted in 2003 or 2004 and are exhibiting unusual symptoms should be sent to the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) for testing.

If you suspect that you have an infected plant, whether it has symptoms or not, please call the Home and Garden Information Center phone consultants at 1-800-342-2507 (410)342-2507 in Washington, D.C.) before sending in a sample. (The phone consultants will assist in determining if a sample needs to be sent to MDA. They will take your name and address which will be forwarded to MDA daily. If you prefer, you can send your name and mailing address with a message requesting a postage paid sample kit via the "Send a Question" link on the Home and Garden Information Center Website. MDA will send you a postage paid sample kit. Samples should only be sent to the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Do not send or hand carry samples to the Home and Garden Information Center or your county cooperative extension office.

All of the information in this article comes directly from the Home and Garden Information Website, an excellent free resource for your gardening questions. Just thought you

would want to know!

Excellent Links to Sudden Oak Death Information

1. Maryland Dept.. of Agriculture Sudden Oak Death Info Page www.mda.state.md.us/plant/sod2004.htm
2. Cal. Sudden Oak Mortality Task Force Sudden Oak Death Info Site www.suddenoakdeath.org
3. USDA APHIS Sudden Oak Death site Check here for regulated and associated host plants. www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ispm/sod/

Offutt T-Shirt Sale

John Mackey

We have a limited number of OFFUTT RIDGE clothing items for sale this summer. We have gray tee shirts, golf shirts and khaki colored hats, all with a green OFFUTT Ridge logo imprinted on it. The quantities are limited, so act fast. If you wish to preview or purchase any of these items please call John Mackey at 410-496-2687. All items cost \$10 which goes back in the OFFUTT HOA account.

Quantities available: (10) hats; (9) XL T-shirts; (4) Medium T-shirts; and (1) Large golf shirt.

Check This Before You "Chuck" That!

Sheila Abrams-Jones

We all know the saying "One man's junk is another man's treasure." Well, Baltimore County now has a Reuse Directory that can help you find a good home for some of your no-longer-wanted but usable stuff. This free, helpful reference lists organizations in the Baltimore Country area that accept a variety of used materials. The directory includes

organizations that will take almost anything you would like to donate, including computers, tools, sports equipment, clothing, books, baby items, and much more. The Directory lists each organizations address, phone number, contact person, and other helpful information, including whether it offers pick-up service.

Donating reusable items is an innovation way to help others, reduce disposal costs as well as pollution, and possibly earn valuable tax deductions. To receive a Reuse Directory, contact Baltimore County's Bureau of Solid Waste Management at 410-887-2000.

Congratulations

This column is devoted to congratulatory remarks. If you have a special event, i.e. graduation, a new baby, wedding, wedding anniversary, job promotion or appointment to a prestigious position, etc., or any event you want to celebrate, send your write up to rkjacks@verizon.net and it will be published in the next newsletter.



Kalinda A. Dennis, MD

Congratulations to Kalinda who graduated from Meharry Medical College in Nashville Tenn. on May 22, 2004. Dr. Dennis is currently doing her residency in OB/GYN at the University of Maryland Medical Center. Kalinda is the daughter of Paulette Jackson and stepdaughter of Richard Jackson. They reside at 2621 Amanda Ct.

How To Avoid Identity Theft

John Mackey

1. Destroy unordered credit cards received in the mail.
2. Cut up or shred unsolicited credit card applications received in the mail.
3. Keep your eye (and your hands) on your purse or wallet at all times when you have it out in public places.
4. Never give out your Social Security number without good reason.
5. Shred any piece of paper you no longer need, but that has your personal information on it.
6. Get at least one free credit report each year from Equifax (800-685-1111), Experian (888-397-3742), or TransUnion (800-916-8800). Since we live in Maryland, we have a right to a free report annually. Check the reports carefully and report any discrepancies immediately to the company.
7. Never give out credit card or bank numbers, unless you are absolutely certain that the request is legitimate.
8. Do not use the red flag on your rural mailbox when you place mail in it. The postal delivery person will find the mail while delivering yours. If you don't always get something in the mail, then try to use a postal service box or the post office itself.

9. Photocopy all of the cards in your wallet or purse (front and back) and keep a copy in a safe place. Then, you can use the copy to notify credit card companies of any loss.

If you do become a victim or identity theft, immediately notify the Office of the State Attorney Generals Bureau of Consumer Protection at (410) 528-8662; call Equifax at (800) 525-6285, Experian at (888) 397-3742, and TransUnion at (800) 680-7289; and, begin notifying the banks and companies belonging to all of those cards you may carry in your wallet. For more information, please call (877) ID-THEFT.
(Thank you to the NARFE Greater Baltimore Chapter 600 for this article.)

Health Matters

Rich Jackson

Exercise and Diabetes

If you have type 2 diabetes and are exercising diligently per doctor's orders, don't be discouraged if you don't lose weight in the process. That's because exercise still helps stabilize diabetes - even if you don't lose any weight. Exercise helps in two ways:

- 1) It makes your body cells more sensitive to insulin, and
- 2) It helps get glucose (sugar) out of the blood and into the body's cells more efficiently.

Source: American Diabetes Association

Cholesterol - HDL vs. LDL

A low fat diet can help lower LDL cholesterol levels that are too high. However, that same low fat diet can also lower HDL - the "good" cholesterol - in some people. And that's not what you want to do. The

higher your HDL, the better. What to do? Stay with a moderate fat diet, but cut back on saturated fats (meat, dairy) and include more mono and polyunsaturated fats (olive and canola oils, nuts and seeds, and fatty fish) instead. This will lower both LDL cholesterol, and maintain or boost HDL.

Other things you can do to boost HDL: exercise, lose weight, and take prescribed medication (e.g., statins, niacin).
Source: Cholesterol Education Program

HOA Web Site

www.offuttridgehoa.org

Rich Jackson

How many of visited the HOA web site this week? That's what I thought. There's a hit counter on our site. In the last three years, as of this writing, we've had only 1491 hits. That's less then 500 per year! In case you didn't know, our web site is a very powerful tool and it's at the disposal of every resident in Offutt Ridge. There's lots of useful information to be found there. The web site provides a fast way of getting important notices to the membership. A prime example is the misunderstanding of the \$50 dues collection fee resolution letter sent to each of you. That letter generated lots of questions because some thought it was saying they were late paying their 2004 dues. Well, had you gone to the web site you would have seen the notice explaining the

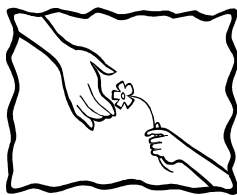
letter.

Communications is very important and that's what the web site offers. As a community, we need to take full advantage of this resource. Currently, there's information on schools, libraries, newspapers, entertainment, dining, sports, the local and federal governments, house and garden information, and research tools that can be used to find almost anything from zip codes to flight information at BWI. In addition, most things concerning HOA business is on the site also, such as meeting minutes, treasurer reports, important e-mail addresses, the HOA by-laws, and current and back issues of the newsletter. Other topics will be added in the future. We could even vote on important issues via the web site if we wanted to. The possibilities are massive.

I'm the webmaster, and I am willing to entertain all ideas for making our web site more useful. You can find my e-mail address on the web site, so send me your suggestions. Lets not squander this opportunity to make our information sharing more efficient. Remember, A Web Site is a terrible thing to waste!

Quote of the Day

Advising is easier than helping.
-- German Proverb



This Space Reserved For You

Your newsletter is in need of news. Surely there must be something you want to share with the community. That's what the newsletter is for. So, while you're thinking about it jot down a reminder to send an article to one of the officers or the newsletter committee. E-mail addresses for both are on the web site.

Do you cook? How about sharing that special recipe or perhaps there's a special event you want to share. Maybe you had a good or bad experience with a service provider. Chances are someone in the community will require that same service. Lets help each other out! Why not fill this space in the next newsletter with *your article*.

Next Newsletter, Place Your Article Here!



**The Offutt Ridge
Community...
like no other!**

Desktop Publisher: Rich Jackson