

OFFUTT RIDGE HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

HOA Fall 2004 Newsletter

HOA General Meeting November 18, 2004, Granite Presbyterian Church A
Meal will be Served at 6:30pm ♦ The Meeting starts at 7:00pm

The President's Corner

Sheila Abrams-Jones

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Offutt Ridge Homeowners Association General Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 18, 2004 at the Granite Presbyterian Church, 10637 Old Court Road, starting at 6:30 p.m.

Since you may be coming to the meeting directly from work, a meal will be provided starting at 6:30 p.m. Then promptly at 7 p.m., we will commence with the meeting.

If you plan to arrive in time for the meal (and we hope that you do), please **RSVP to Andy Grosko via e-mail at fishinghour@hotmail.com or via telephone at 410- 521-8665 by Nov. 10.**

We would like to have a representative from each household present. The HOA represents your interests and concerns. This is an important meeting in which we will be electing three directors to serve on the Board as well as soliciting volunteers to serve as HOA officers and committee members for 2005. You can find complete rules regarding the election and the duties of these positions at:

www.offuttridgehoa.org/bylaws.htm

At the meeting, we will also be discussing current community projects. The only way to maintain our overall property value and the qualities that you want in our community is by your active engagement and participation. Please consider volunteering. So that we can prepare a list of candidates for

nomination to fill positions, please submit your nominations in advance in writing or volunteer to serve in another capacity by contacting Jackie Brown, HOA Board Director, at 3207 Peddicot Court, no later than November 10. You can also submit this information to Terry St.Laurent, 3208 Peddicot Court. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can vote via proxy. The nomination and proxy forms are provided in this newsletter. Contact any HOA board member after Nov 11 regarding the list of candidates. This is an opportunity to find out what is going on in the community, give

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your input and meet your neighbors. Please plan to attend.

Fall at the Farm

Brenda Crieghton

Fall at the farm seems more like the end of the year. Things come to a close as the days shorten and the weather cools. I know that around me children and teachers start up a new school year. Fall is a beginning for much of the world, I know. My riding students shift schedules and parents tell me of all the things that must be accomplished before school begins. I hear the school buses start up their new routines late in August. By this time, my horses have already started to thicken their coats for winter. And for us, there are a number of things to be done before winter comes.

In September, I notice the asters blooming in the field as the days are quiet and after school lessons have begun. I have the farm to myself most days, except for the occasional visit of a friend, or the coming and going of Matt and his help as they fill my front barn with second cutting hay. September days can be hot, then suddenly late in the afternoon the cool air creeps in, reminding me of the coming frost and freezing temps. I order a new tank de-icer for the horses' water trough in the loafing shed.

Mornings grow later as we enter October. The long low shadows of a slowly rising sun promise a coming time change. Cool, dark mornings allow the evening primroses and four o'clocks to stay open, making the damp morning air fragrant as I turn the horses out of the

mudlot onto the field or paddock for the morning. But the blue skies and crisp air of October seem to make many people consider horseback riding. To me, this is the end of my year, but many choose this time to begin.

I see the bittersweet and rose hips in the hedgerows and wonder if this is nature's provision for the birds that stay for the winter. The barn swallows have left their mud nests empty until next year. John has taken down the Martin house until April again. In October, the dew is heavy and the sun has less time to dry out the field. So third cutting hay lays longer in the field as we watch for no rain as the hay cures. Leaves are turning, browning and falling, tired after a long summer. Dropped along the road, they swirl up as the afternoon buses bring chattering children home.

During my quiet days, I consider the things we have done this year, and what needs to be hurriedly done before the short dark days of December. Bitter winds and wet will whip at my daughter as she cares for the horses while I recover from yet another surgery. There is plenty of hay in the barn, but I will need to both order more sawdust for bedding and buy a supply of bagged or baled sawdust or wood shavings. The last two years we've had days of a snow-covered sawdust pile. John had to dig through the snow to get to the bedding so we could dig out frozen sawdust to bed down the stalls. I have learned from this experience, and have developed a plan B for bedding when our tarp-covered supply is unreachable due to frozen precipitation.

I also modify the horses'

diet in the winter. Unlike us, they actually need more calories in the winter. So while we fight off the urge to sit and eat, the horses must. Along with the bales of hay and bags of bedding, I get a dozen bags of alfalfa cubes and two hundred pounds of beet pulp. Both of these are moistened before feeding to the horses, to add the moisture into their diets that they are not getting from eating grass (since there is none then).

So as October comes to a close, my barn is literally full. But not of horses, just the things to take care of them with. We currently have seven horses on the property, with three of them over twenty years old. Winter is always hard on these old ones, and my annual anxiety about who will make it or not make it through the winter comes on me. And while I know seven is enough to care for, the phone begins to ring with offers of horses for sale, because like I said, winter is just a little harder to have horses. A little more food, a little more bedding, a little more concern, and a lot more work.

It is in the fall that we kind of tuck in the edges around the farm so we can have that winter rest. It's an ironic thing, this idea of sleep in winter when actually our work is just a little harder.

Computer Bytes

Rich Jackson

In this article are several topics that should be of interest to most home computer users. Hopefully the information will improve your computer IQ.

Google's New Search Tool

Google Inc. released free

software that lets you simultaneously search the Web and your personal computer for information. It's called Google Desktop Search. It has the ability to let you enter one search term and see files relevant to that topic from both your computer and the Web displayed together. If you'd like to find out more about this product, it is available for download at desktop.google.com.

Are you aware of SPYWARE?

Spyware is a technology that assists in gathering information about a person or organization without their knowledge. On the Internet, spyware is programming that is put in someone's computer to secretly gather information about the user. As such, spyware is cause for public concern about privacy on the Internet. Spyware can record every action you take while using your computer, gather personal information, and relay that information to other people. Spyware can compromise your privacy and expose you to identity theft and other serious hazards. Spyware dialers will make use of your telephone line to 'call home' resulting in hefty long distance fees. You need to protect yourself before your personal documents are let loose. There are things that you can do to protect your computer from spyware. Just like virus protection programs, there are also spyware protection programs. There are several that are available for free downloading. Three examples are:

Spybot Search and Destroy
(<http://www.safer-networking.org>-

[g/en/download/](#))

Spy Sweeper

(<http://www.webroot.com/downloads/>)

Ad-Aware SE

(www.snapfiles.com/get/adaware.-html)

Try going to the sites listed, read the info on each program and download it if it meets your needs.

Windows XP Service Pack 2

SP2 is the latest upgrade for Windows XP. If you use Windows XP, you should install SP2. Microsoft Windows XP Service Pack 2 (SP2) provides new proactive security technologies for Windows XP to better defend against viruses, worms, and hackers. In addition to a more robust security infrastructure, SP2 improves the security configuration options of Windows XP and provides better security information to help users faced with security decisions. Go to <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/protect/windowsxp/choose.aspx> for a free download.

Congratulatory Messages

Submitted by Your Neighbors

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.

Congratulations to **Joan da Silva Heit** for winning first flute in the National Flute Association's 2004 Professional Flute Choir. Twenty-one flutists from around the country made up this flute choir that performed in Nashville this past August.

2004 HOA Representatives

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

Board of Directors

John Mackey
Jackie Brown
Andy Grosko

Officers

Acting President *
Sheila Abrams-Jones
Treasurer
William (Bill) Heit
Secretary
Arik Brown

* President Resigned in Sept.

Committee Chairs

Architectural Review

Charles Thomas

Maintenance

Andy Grosko

Hospitality

Sidney White

Newsletter/Web Site

Richard Jackson

Community Liaisons

Willis Williams
Arik Brown

By-Laws Review

Lynnette Fletcher

Joan resides at 2604 Amanda Court with her husband, William Heit, their two Golden Retrievers, Mr. Dave Handsome and Miss Georgia, and Himalayan cat, Sir Simon.

Here's a happy little announcement.....

Allysha Robinson graduated from Western School of Environmental Science & Technology June 2004. She's now a freshman at Univ. Maryland at College Park majoring in Computer Science. Her parents, Bill & Carolyn are now happy "empty nesters".

And another blessed event....

In May 2004, after faithfully attending classes for three years while still holding down his full time job, **Royce E. Jones** received his Master of Divinity Degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Royce is now serving as an assistance minister at Providence Baptist Church in Baltimore pending a calling and final ordination. Way to go, Royce!

The Farm Calendar Project

Brenda Creighton

Over the past year, Terry St. Laurent has been photographing the farm. Early or late, in heat or through snow, she has been documenting the year at the farm. We'd like to compile a selection of these photographs into a calendar for the year 2005.

I'd like to collect a list of those of you who would be interested in a copy of our specialty calendar. Currently, it looks like the calendar will sell for \$15.00 based on the estimates I have

gotten so far. If I can find a cheaper way to produce a quality copy, then of course, we'll reduce the price of the calendar. (Is anyone in the neighborhood a printer or related to one?)

Remember, a good calendar can easily be recycled into wall art when the year is over. I think Terry has taken some great shots of the barns and horses, but then I might be biased. If you might be interested in an Offutt Ridge Farm calendar, please drop me an e-mail, or leave a message on my machine. And certainly if you have any ideas on reducing reproduction costs, let us know.

Thanks. Brenda Creighton
farmgirl57@email.com,
Ph: 410 922-1302

Free Credit Report

Rich Jackson

Credit is one of our most important assets. Given that fact, many of us never have a clue about our credit rating until we make a major purchase. It doesn't have to be that way. Just living in the right place gets you **one free** report upon request each year. You are in luck if you live in one of these states.

- Colorado
- Georgia
- Massachusetts
- **Maryland**
- New Jersey
- Vermont

Try these phone numbers for requesting free credit reports:
Equifax: 1-800-685-1111
Experian: 1-888-397-3742
Trans Union: 1-800-888-4213

THE COMMON COLD

Myths & Facts

Myth: Colds are caused by bacteria, and an antibiotic will make you feel better faster.

Fact: Colds are caused by

viruses, and antibiotics have no effect on them.

Myth: You'll catch a cold if you get chilled.

Fact: Colds are caused when you come into contact with a cold virus. Colds are common during cold winter months probably because people are inside more and in closer contact with one another (and kids are in school, spreading viruses from one to another, and then their parents).

Myth: You are most likely to get a cold if you share a drink with, or kiss someone with a cold.

Fact: This is one way you could catch a cold, but not the most common one. The most likely way you'll catch a cold: shaking hands - or touching a surface that someone with a cold has touched - and then touching your nose, eyes, or mouth. This is why hand-washing is such a good way to help prevent a cold.

Source: Infectious Diseases Society of America

The HOA Newsletter

Rich Jackson

This is a friendly reminder to all HOA members. Our newsletter provides an excellent means of communicating with the membership. However, it can only be successful if you contribute information to be published. Please consider writing an article on the topic of your choice. E-mail all articles to **rkjacks@verizon.net** or give them to any board member.

Quote of the Day

It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.
-- Herman Melville

Nomination Form

Use this form to nominate someone to serve on the HOA Board of Directors. You can nominate yourself! Use this form also to volunteer to serve as an HOA Officer or a member of an HOA committee.

Nominations

Homeowner's Name _____ Address _____
(print)

Lot # _____

Homeowner's signature _____

I nominate the following persons to fill one of the 3 positions on the Board of Directors:
(Submit up to 3 names)

I volunteer to serve as:
(you may check more than one)

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

I am interested in serving on the following committee(s):
(you may check more than one)

- Architectural Review
- Hospitality
- Maintenance
- Newsletter
- Web Site
- Community Liaison
- By-Laws Review

Submit to:
Jackie Brown at 3207 Peddiccoat Court

PROXY FORM

Use this form to submit a proxy vote.

PROXY

I/we _____
(Name in block letters)

of _____
(Address in block letters)

being a homeowner of Offutt Ridge

hereby appoint _____ of _____

or, failing him/her, _____ of _____

or, failing him/her, the chairman of the meeting as my/our proxy to attend, speak and, on a poll vote on my/our behalf at the annual general meeting of the Offutt Ridge Homeowners Association to be held on Thursday, November 18, 2004 at 6:30 p.m.

My Candidates of choice for Board of Directors:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Signed: _____