

# THE MANOR MONITOR

A Monthly Publication of The Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Association  
December 2006

## Board Reduces 2007 General Assessment (HOA Dues)

Following an evaluation of the Association's fiscal requirements for the next ten years, the Budget Working Group proposed a 2007 budget to the Board that allows the Association to meet its obligations as defined in the Declaration of Covenants, Article IV, ¶4.06 while maintaining the necessary reserves. The Board approved the budget at its December meeting. The budgeted expenses for the next ten-year projection require \$12,000 less income annually than that generated by the 2006 annual assessment. Therefore, in accordance with Article IV, ¶3.05(d) the Board determined that the Annual General Assessment for each lot for 2007 shall be \$816 payable in monthly installments of \$68 each, due on the first day of each month (Art IV, ¶4.09). No Service Assessments or Special Assessments are required at this time and none is foreseen. This is the annual written notice required by Art. IV, ¶4.09.

## Trash Pickup Schedule

Culpeper Trash has been very good to us. They tolerate virtually everything we put out there. They don't leave a mess behind and they are cheerful and quiet in the process. They adhere to their early morning schedule almost without fail. The Design Standards booklet we received with our initial homeowner's packet on page 37, ¶V. requires our containers "to be placed at curbside very early in the morning on pick up days or after dark the evening before." Our collectors generally arrive here just after daybreak, which gives us plenty of time to be prepared. Yet we have received reports that someone here on several occasions has called the trash office about two hours later with a complaint that their trash was "missed". Each time they returned to the community and emptied the container. There is a cost associated with these extra trips that affects all of us. If you didn't have your container out there after dark the night before or shortly after daybreak, don't add to our burden by calling and reporting a missed pickup. Please be a good citizen, wheel it back inside and wait for the next scheduled day. ❖

## Community Projects

The Mailbox Replacement Project has been completed, and the newspaper company has removed their free-standing receptacles.

The Pocket Parks, another KHov project, also has been completed.

Official VDOT street signage is now in place throughout the development.

Work on the Rogues Road entrance-way is still under way. Additional flowers and mulch will be added. The fence boards have been painted, and one of the lights is out due to faulty hardware, awaiting parts.

Grounds Maintenance - The Board has contracted with WardCo for a Fall Treatment Program for the grass in the Common Areas, to include aeration, seeding and fertilizing. Also arranged, as part of WardCo's regular duties, was the reclamation of a scrub brush and rocky section in the common area behind the homes down near the end of Osborne Drive and the upper part of Sutherland Court.

We are not aware of any other projects for which KHovnianian is responsible prior to release of their bond. ❖

## Board Meeting

The November meeting of the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Vint Hill Manor Homeowners' Association (HOA) was held on the 14th of the month, at 7 PM, in the Conservancy Conference Room at 4263 Aiken Drive. Topics discussed and actions taken at the meeting are covered throughout this newsletter. Apologies are offered to anyone inconvenienced by the change in the date for the November meeting, and appreciation is expressed to Don Brettle for his quick action in getting a flyer notice around the community when it was realized that the newsletter notice would be too late. The December meeting is the fifth, same time and place. ❖



## Let the (Good) Times Roll

Perhaps as a result of our impatience and persistence *The Washington Times* finally got our message and has agreed that we have enough interested homes at Vint Hill that it will be worth their while to establish daily distribution here. If you were one of those who has been waiting and hasn't received a letter from the Times yet, here's the number at their circulation desk to call: 202-627-7835. They have assured us that they will start your delivery within forty-eight hours of receiving your check or credit card information. ❖

## We're Studying The Trees

We are still looking for folks who have experience with trees. A sub-committee of the ARC will be studying the reasons for the types of trees which were specified for our lots and streets by the County and the Conservancy. We have had a number of requests to change tree types and locations and we are unable to respond because changes at this time would violate the terms of our Covenants. Once KHov has satisfied all the terms of their performance bond in compliance with the HOA Design Standards and their performance bond has been released, the Board will be empowered to change the standards. The Board, however, views this as a serious matter and at that time we need to be prepared to assess the overall community impact of any changes in the tree plan as now documented. The rationale used in developing the current tree plan was based on much study to insure our community will be even more attractive as time passes. A disorganized, random placement of various varieties without regard to growing habits and a coordinated appearance could very easily detract from the property values of the community as a whole. Changes anywhere on these small lots have a collateral effect on many other properties. We will not be changing the Design Standards without an expert analysis of the overall effect of any changes. If you have expertise in this area and are willing to assist the subcommittee in studying the possible revision of the current plan, please call George Mendez at 540-341-8386. We would like to have this completed before spring planting time. ✨



## History of Vint Hill Farms Station

*This is the second in a series of articles about the origins of Vint Hill Farms and its military history as Vint Hill Farms Station. This newsletter derives its name from some of the activities that were conducted here between 1942 and 1997. It contributed much to the communications intelligence apparatus from WWII through the Vietnam era and at its peak in 1973 under Colonel George R. Hamer, it employed 1,378 personnel.*

Prior to the activation of the station, all work had been done by small mobile detachments attached to various areas throughout the country. The advantage of activating this post was to consolidate several of these units into one large organization. The first of these units to be called in was from Mt. Hunt, Virginia, which arrived in June and set up on the first floor of the "Big House". Tents were pitched outside for temporary living quarters.

Lt. Pope assumed command of the station and immediately entered into negotiations with the Rural Electrification Administration of Manassas, Virginia, to obtain additional power supplies necessary for this rapidly expanding post. The Fort Hancock, New Jersey Group arrived on July 8, 1942, and set up on the sun porch of the building. "The Barn" was in the process of renovation to suit this type of work and by the early part of October, the work was sufficiently complete to permit partial occupancy of the west wing of the building. The supporting sections of repair and machine shops were located in Building T230 which is located directly behind "The Barn" in the same compound.

The activation of the first school unit on this post occurred in July, 1942, when the school was opened. The purpose of this school was to train both officers and enlisted men for specialized work at the station. Its original location was in what is now the Officers' Club, but with the rapid expansion program underway, they were forced to seek larger accommodations, and the school moved to Building T230 behind the barn on November 1, 1942. At this time Lt. Pope was placed in command of the school in addition to his other duties. Beginning with an instructional staff of two warrant officers, the school grew steadily during the first ten months of its existence. The major problem was the lack of instructors which was solved by converting outstanding students into instructors upon completion of the course.

The large student body of the school was comprised mostly of WAC personnel. On November 1, 1943, an additional 145 WAC's were enrolled in the school. With this addition to the unit's strength it was necessary to schedule both day and night classes. This continued until early 1944, when the majority of students had completed their studies. From then on, the size of the school began to decrease, until May 5, 1944, when it was closed for lack of students. In September, 1944, it was again activated with an initial class of 11 WACs and supplemented to include enlisted men.

Under orders dated 4 October 1942, approximately 43 officers and 250 enlisted men were transferred to Vint Hill and attached to Company A for rations, quarters and administration. At the time of transfer, ground had not been broken for construction of the school building, and the barracks space was not adequate to house the number of men assigned to them. The inadequacy of classroom space provided in the Operations Building and in Building T203 necessitated the scheduling of two shifts of four-hour duration for enlisted students. In November of 1942, the physical location of the school was changed to the Company area where a combination of Mess Hall and barracks were put to use as classrooms. However, there was still inadequate space, and the two shifts had to be continued. (To Be Continued) ✨

The Listening Post is our "Letters To The Editor" feature where we answer questions posed by letters, or verbally, regarding the community. We chose the title of the column to be representative of the Vint Hill Farms Station community before we got here. The photo we use as the logo for the piece was taken at the Station during the active duty phase of the Army's occupancy here. One of our questions this month concerned one of the projects of the Programs Committee: "Is it still possible to sign up for the program to take advantage of the bulk buying power of NOVEC in the natural gas market?"

The answer is "Yes" you can still sign up and we'll tell you how. For those of us who made the 12-month commitment when the announcement was first made, the contract was for \$1.01 per Ccf which was the then-going rate. The rate being offered on the web site as this is being written is now \$1.06, which is still a big bargain when compared with what we expect it to rise to this winter. (When the folks at Heritage Hunt signed up we understand it was \$1.22 and they still felt the savings.)

## THE LISTENING POST



Here's how it works: on our gas bills we pay for two things: the cost of the gas we use and the cost of the delivery system it takes to get the gas to our meters. When the industry was deregulated we were able to buy our gas independent of the company which installed and maintains the delivery system. This is summarized on page 2 of our gas bill. Notice the first four items bill us for the delivery system and the final three list the cost of the gas itself and the associated taxes. The fifth item lists the volume of gas we consumed and its cost per hundred cubic feet. That's the figure that we are comparing our

bulk cost with. Notice on our most recent bill the cost is slightly below the \$1.01 rate which will start on December 1 for the one-third of us who just enrolled. As the cost rises this winter when our gas consumption will be the greatest, we will be achieving a savings. When the cost goes back down next summer, our consumption will decrease markedly and although our \$1.01 rate may be higher than the then prevailing rate, we expect to realize a significant savings on average for the 12-month period.

Our gas bills will still come from Columbia Gas of Virginia (CGV) and they will look the same as they do now. CGV will remit our payment for the actual gas we used to NOVEC who bought the gas in bulk for us.

You can go to NOVEC's web site at [www.NovecEnergySolutions.com/setoptions.php](http://www.NovecEnergySolutions.com/setoptions.php) and complete all the necessary forms to sign up for the program. If you don't have access to the web at home and don't want to make the trip to the library, you can call NOVEC at 1-888-627-7283 and they will walk you through the process.

## Change in ARC Tempo

The Architectural Review and Covenants Committee (ARC) reported a drop in the number of applications they received and processed over the past month and meetings are now only required monthly. The next meeting is Tuesday, December 12 and the following meeting will be January 9, both at the home of George Mendez, Chair of the ARC, 3661 Osborne Drive at 7PM. George reports that there are over 100 changes that are reflected in the database for which the ARC has no applications on record. Letters to those homeowners have been sent. If there are any questions, remember the ARC motto - WHEN IN DOUBT, CHECK IT OUT!

Give George a call at 540-341-8386, or you may contact our property management contractor, The Austin Realty Management and Investment Company (ARMI) at 540-347-1901.

In a related development, the Board approved modification of the Design Review Application form to require the applicant to specify who will be accomplishing the work. If a contractor is to be involved, the name, address, phone number and license number of the contractor will be required. A copy of the new application form will be delivered to each homeowner. ✂

## Web Site Update

Bob McConahy (Treasurer of the HOA and Chair of the Communications Committee) advises that work continues on the development of our Web Site. The basics are in place and Bob announced that John Pincosy has accepted the position of Webmaster. John will be ably assisted in this venture by his wife, Lynne, who will oversee the content. We are fortunate to have this talented team in place for this project. ✂

## Reducing Home Operating Costs

A couple of initiatives were researched recently by John DePerro (Vice President of the HOA and Chair of the Programs Committee) and offered to the community. One had to do with upgrading the insulation in our attics in an effort to reduce the cost of monthly natural gas and electric bills. Those who opted to participate will get an additional 6 inches of insulation which will raise the "R" value from the current, required R30 to the recommended R49. The work will be done by Southland Insulators, the company that installed the initial insulation in our homes.

The other initiative had to do with obtaining natural gas at reduced rates. Those who opted for this initiative will get a one year fixed rate of \$1.01 per Ccf, as offered by NOVEC Energy Solutions. ✂

## Local Developments

A new Program Committee was approved that will be checking into, tracking and reporting on plans and developments of a local nature that are of interest to all residents. As just one example, a new study has outlined three possible routes for a Gainesville-Buckland bypass designed to relieve traffic on Route 29 by providing a high-speed shortcut to Interstate 66. Each proposal would create a 3.5 to 4.5-mile, four lane, limited access highway linking Route 29 in the New Baltimore area to I-66 near Thoroughfare Gap in Prince William County. And plans documented in 1999 call for the widening of Route 215, Vint Hill Road, to four lanes. The Fauquier Board of Supervisors will decide on the matter at their December 14 meeting. A joint meeting with Prince William County is planned for January to deal with the Route 29 interface options. Prince William wants to widen it two more lanes from Gainesville to the Fauquier County line. We should

be aware of, and informed about matters such as these, and be prepared to voice our opinions at meetings and at the polls. The vote potential of our community has not gone unnoticed by our local supervisors. This matter has happened so quickly, however, that it has taken many hours on the part of several people here, studying plans, attending meetings, testifying before the Board of Supervisors, and talking with officials to influence developments.

Changes that are taking place in the New Baltimore Service District regarding new sewer lines may be drastically affecting the size of our neighboring community at Brookside which will have a great impact on the new parkway through Vint Hill.

If you have the time and share the inclination, please give John DePerro a call, and ask him how you can get involved with the Community Relations Program. We need workers and we will all benefit from your help on these kinds of issues. ❀

## The 2007 Budget

This is the budget the Board approved for the 2007 calendar year.



VHMHOA 2007 BUDGET			
November 14, 2006			
Line	Expense Description	Actual 2006 (est)	2007
1	Communications	3,820	8,180
2	Programs	0	2,800
3	Trash Removal	21,800	24,000
4	Grounds	10,000	11,000
5	Management	13,480	19,120
6	Contingencies	32,500	16,500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>81,600</b>	<b>81,600</b>
General Assessment Income			
		\$68/month	81,600

Our thanks to Pat White at the Vint Hill Economic Development Authority for her assistance in providing the resource information for the Vint Hill historical information and photographs.

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