

THE MANOR MONITOR

November 2009

A Monthly Publication of The Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Association

www.VintHillManor.org



The Board of Directors' meeting date for November has been changed to the second Tuesday, the 10th

President's Columns

VDOT Report - Route 29

I attended the third and final public session on Route 29. Although this is not a complete report, these things may be of interest to our community.

* A new road will connect Route 15 and Route 29. It will run southwesterly from Route 15, skirt the northern edge of Buckland, and connect with Route 15 at Riley road.

* The number of stop lights will be reduced between Gainesville and Warrenton. These will be mainly in the immediate vicinity of either Gainesville or Warrenton. Anyone wanting more information may get it at <http://www.virginiadot.org/route29>.

One area was conspicuously absent from the study. Some of the considerations leading up to the overall study were increased traffic and safety on Route 29. This, in turn, should result in increased traffic on side roads. These side roads are mostly hilly, windy, do not have shoulders, and pose a safety hazard. Twice within the last year, other vehicles have come far over the center line as they came around curves at high speeds as I drove from the opposite direction.

See VDOT on page 2

Snow Removal

This is information received in a written reply to my several requests for clarification of VDOT plans. Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is responsible for clearing all state maintained roadways. When clearing snow and ice from the roadways VDOT clears the interstates and primary roadways first, and secondary roads with high traffic volumes. Key among the top-priority roads are the "Snow Emergency Routes". These are area highways designated by localities for immediate snow removal for emergency vehicles use. Once the snow and ice stops, and the main roads are clear, residential streets will be sanded or plowed. VDOT's goal is to make all roads passable within 48 hours after a storm ends.

When I told them about our 55+ community and asked them to give us the highest possible priority, they said, "If an emergency does occur during a storm, call 911 immediately. VDOT will work with the emergency services to clear any roadways as needed."

They also said, "You can access road conditions 24 hours a day at the following web site <http://www.511va.org/Conditions>." If

See Snow on page 2

Formalized Procedure for the Common Area

Last year, you may have heard talk about 'jurisdictional control' in regard to the common area. For legal reasons, the Conservancy could not delegate control of the common area. They did, however, formalize a procedure so each HOA could come forward with proposals in regard to requested changes to the common area. This policy was delineated in a document dated September 16, 2009.

In addition, an Operating Procedure, dated that same day, requires each HOA to submit requests at least 60 days prior to the Conservancy board meeting at which the request will be considered. It also provides for the other HOA to receive a copy of the request at least 45 days prior to the meeting. This procedure and policy are primarily aimed at structural (above ground) changes.

Cold War Museum

The Cold War Museum is a candidate to become another addition to our growing list of amenities in the Northern Virginia area. The location is planned for the Lorton Nike Missile Base, pending

See Museum on page 2

VDOT (from page 1)

No recommendations were made for safety on these roads. VDOT said they would be considered in the 2035 plan. Multiple deaths have occurred in the last five years along Rogues Road. The rest of the roads that surround Vint Hill are accident sites waiting to happen. I voiced my objections to VDOT on the meeting critique form and wrote to the VDOT manager in charge of the 2035 plan. If you are interested in working to increase safety, please let me know.

Snow (from page 1)

you have any further questions concerning snow removal operations, please feel free to contact VDOT at 540-347-6441.

Museum (from page 1)

approval from the Fairfax County Park Authority. The Museum is actively searching for permanent donations of related material from 1945-1991. This includes, but is not limited to photographs, uniform items, oral & written histories, personal items, unit memorabilia, maps and diaries, flight logs, documents, letters home, and period clothing. You may donate to or contact the Museum at P.O. Box 178, Fairfax, VA 22038, or 703-273-2381, or www.coldwar.org.

If you have any comments or questions on any of the above, please feel free to contact me at 540-341-1473, or send me an email at – fafuerst@earthlink.net. Thanks, Frank

Drug-Free Pain Relief –

Here's a good reason to enjoy a cup of morning coffee. In a University of Illinois study, 25 cyclists who consumed the equivalent of about three 8-ounce cups of coffee before working out had significantly less pain while training.

Source – *AARP Magazine*, November/December 2009

THE MANOR MONITOR

P.O. BOX 3413

Warrenton, VA 20188-3413

NEWSLETTER STAFF

EDITOR: TOM DAILY

PRODUCTION: BOB MCCONAHY

Printer: Printing For You
Warrenton

ARMI

The Austin Realty Management and Investment Company (ARMI), as part of its service under contract to the Vint Hill Manor HOA, is positioned to serve as a liaison between the community and the BOD and/or the ARC members. Fred Austin, owner of ARMI, advises that direct contact with his company results in all BOD and ARC members, as the case may dictate, being advised.

ARMI's address, where our monthly HOA assessments are sent, is: PO Box 3413, Warrenton, VA 20188. Phone: 540-347-1901, Fax: 540-347-1900

Website: www.ARMIVA.com.

Proposed Programs

Mark Melancon, Program Committee Chair, provided update status on some proposed programs:

Power Washing of Homes

– Received ten notifications indicating interest. The contractor, Hydro Tech, will be contacting those individuals, who expressed interest, starting the week of November 2, 2009, to set up a schedule to do the work.

Irrigation System Winterization

– This was accomplished on Thursday, October 29, 2009, by AA Irrigation and 20 homes were serviced.

The Conservancy will hold its annual meeting 7PM Monday, November 9, at the Inn at Vint Hill

Board of Directors' Monthly Meeting

The October meeting of the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Homeowners Association (HOA) was held on Tuesday, October 6, 2009, in the Conference Room at the Vint Hill Conservancy/ EDA offices at 4263 Aiken Drive. The regular, monthly BOD meetings are open and all members are invited to attend.

At the beginning of each monthly meeting, there is an opportunity for members to make comments and/or present questions for the BOD's consideration, as well as advise concerns, or offer ideas. Minutes of the previous meeting, as well as current financial statements, are made available to all attendees. Significant items addressed at the meeting are covered in this newsletter.

Can the Weather Make Us Sick?

Fresh studies of scientific research are busting all those health myths we grew up with. For example:

Myth – Illnesses come from cold or wet weather.

Fact – Colds and flus come from viruses, not the climate. Because some viruses are more common in winter, it follows that we are more likely to get sick then. In addition, when the weather is chilly or rainy, we are more likely to stay inside – and share our infections with other family members.

Myth – Most of our body heat is lost through our heads.

Fact – Untrue. This myth likely originated from a 50-year-old military study; wherein subjects enduring extreme cold lost the most heat from their heads. But the head was the only exposed body part! The fact is that we lose heat from any uncovered/exposed body part(s). There is nothing special about the head.

Myth – Taking Vitamin C and Zinc will help prevent

or shorten a cold.

Fact – Taking Vitamin C daily won't prevent illness, and if we consume it after we start to feel sick, it won't ease the symptoms, according to the studies. As for Zinc, three of four well-designed studies found it ineffective, while a fourth study found that Zinc Nasal Gel did help relieve symptoms. However, the FDA recalled some Zinc nasal products that were linked to a loss of the sense of smell in some people. Bottom line: There is no need for extra C, and Zinc may actually cause harm.

Myth – We should drink at least eight cups of water per day.

Fact – There is no medical reason to follow this advice. In 1945 the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council recommended that adults take in 2.5 liters of water per day (about 84.5 ounces), noticing that most water comes from food. Many adherents, however, ignored the last part of that statement. We can drink up if we like; but studies suggest that most of us get enough water from what we eat and drink. The average person takes in about 75 ounces of water a day according to Department of Agriculture surveys.

Myth – We are really only using about 10% of our brains.

Fact – Now we can sound really smart when we refute this misconception. Images from numerous studies show that no area of the brain is completely shut down, and that each region of the brain has a function. Studies demonstrate that neurons everywhere in the brain are pretty well continuously active.

Source – AARP Magazine, November/December 2009

Vint Hill Manor Homeowners' Association Board of Directors Meeting Agenda November 10, 2009

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Membership Comment Period**
3. **Minutes of Previous BOD Meeting**
4. **Financial/Treasurer's Report**
5. **Committee Reports**
 - a. **Architectural Review**
 - b. **Common Grounds**
 - c. **Communications**
 - d. **Documents Review**
 - e. **Programs**
6. **Unfinished Business**
 - a. **2010 Budget**
7. **New Business**
 - a. **Letter to BOS re: County Recycling Fee**
8. **Adjournment**

Architectural Review Committee (ARC) Activity

During the ARC meeting on September 29, 2009, three design requests were reviewed and approved. There are still 5 lots (6 unapproved modifications) that are in a non-compliant status. At the BOD meeting, it was discussed that a concerted effort would be made to reduce this long-standing number of violations.

The regular ARC meetings are scheduled for the last Thursday of each month at 7:00PM, at the home of Steve Chronister, 6828 Averbach Court.

The ARC is always ready and more than willing to meet with any homeowner to provide guidance and/or assistance with the necessary application(s) which are required for exterior modifications to our homes.

In the spirit of cooperation, please help the ARC reach its goal of Complete Compliance. **Remember: Manor Pride!**

**Planning some changes?
give Steve a call at 428-1828**

How Safe are Safe-Deposit Boxes

Well, they are better than a shoebox for storing important documents and valuables; but, they are not impenetrable. They are loss-resistant, not loss-proof. And, the contents are not insured unless they are covered in a home-owner's or renter's policy. Only money is insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Here are some tips on the subject:

✓ Go for the vault – Though self-service boxes are easy to access (some even 24 hours a

day), they are, by definition, not as secure as those in a bank vault.

✓ Seal the contents – Boxes can get flooded; so pack whatever is to be stored in the box in watertight plastic bags.

✓ Create a cyber-backup – Banks and online vendors offer "virtual safe-deposit boxes where digital documents can be stored. For those who are computer-savvy, their own website can do the job, as well.

✓ Pick a co-tenant with care – Many people want to give someone access to a box in case they become disabled. However, a family member with a drug problem obviously would not be a good candidate, lest he/she would use it as a personal treasury.

✓ Pay the rent – Otherwise, the state may seize the contents as unclaimed property.

Interesting factoid – The value of property abandoned in safe-deposit boxes, or otherwise unclaimed, is in excess of \$32 Billion.

Source – AARP Magazine, November/December 2009

Common Grounds Initiatives

Frank Fuerst, Acting Chair of the Common Grounds Committee (CGC), provided a status report on some actions taken:

* In September, 2009, there were some areas of buried asphalt removed near the path down from Averbach Ct, and then the area was seeded, at a total cost of \$1890. The Johnsons whose property is adjacent to this area agreed to provide irrigation and will be compensated for the water used.

* Bare spots in the area between Osborne and Sutherland were aerated, seeded, and watered as part of the Conservancy contract with Ruppert.

Frank also announced projects aimed at the fourth quarter, namely;

* Bare spots between Osborne and the woods – aerate, seed, water – under contract.

*** Drainage problem behind the Owens property – bid received from Ruppert for \$1080.

*Wetlands cleanup – delayed until colder weather - \$1890 (estimate).

***At the meeting, Ruppert's bid was accepted for the job to correct the drainage problem behind the Owens property. The Owens agreed to do whatever watering is necessary and will be compensated for the water used. The work was done on October 26, 2009.

Frank also presented a draft of the Common Grounds Management Guidelines for the CGC to use when presented with a homeowner complaint about a problem in the common grounds area that is impacting their property. The Guidelines are designed to give homeowners an idea of how to approach the CGC, and subsequently the BOD, with such a request. Steve Chronister and Tom Daily worked with Frank, as a sub-committee, on the development of the Guidelines.

At the meeting, a discussion ensued regarding whether or not

“after-care watering” if needed for a given project, should be a mandatory requirement on the part of the homeowner submitting the request. When it was decided to not make this mandatory on the part of the submitting homeowner, further action on the Guidelines was tabled until the November BOD meeting. In the interim, Mark Melancon and Tom Daily volunteered to wordsmith the Guidelines to reflect the change, and submit their proposed revisions to the CGC sub-committee for review/incorporation.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the CGC Chair position is encouraged to give Frank a call at 341-1473.

The Secrets of Resilient People

“Resilient people are like trees bending in the wind. They bounce back.” This saying is attributable to Steven M. Southwick, M.D., professor of psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine. Research shows that resilient people share some common qualities – ones that we can cultivate to master any crisis:

- ✓ Stay Connected – Resilient people rely on others to help them survive tough times.
- ✓ Be Optimistic – People who have a sunny outlook do better at managing crises.
- ✓ Be Spiritual – Generally, people who are active in a religious faith tend to get through difficult times better.
- ✓ Be Playful – Resilient people enjoy themselves like children do. They wonder about things, experiment and laugh.
- ✓ Give Back – The benefit derived for oneself is as great as that given to others.
- ✓ Pick Our Battles – Resilient people tend to focus on things over which they have some influence and not spend time on things they can't control.
- ✓ Stay Healthy – A good diet and

VINT HILL MANOR
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 3413 WARRENTON, VA
20188
www.VintHillManor.org

DIRECTORS/ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President	Frank Fuerst 540-341-1473 fafuerst@earthlink.net
Vice-Pres	Tom Daily 540-341-7606 tomdee@comcast.net
Secretary	Stan Manvell 540-341-2886 stanvell@comcast.net
Treasurer	Ed Ortiz 540-347-5927 edortiz_50@yahoo.com Mark Melancon .. 540-341-4177 melanconmjf@comcast.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Architectural Review	Steve Chronister 540-428-1828
Chartering Documents	Frank Fuerst 540-341-1473
Communications	Tom Daily 540-341-7606
Common Grounds	VACANT
Programs	Mark Melancon 540-341-4177

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

AUSTIN REALTY MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENTS, INC	
President	FRED AUSTIN 540-347-1901
Assistant	JUDY PECORA 540-347-1901

regular physical activity provide crucial buffers against stress. Exercise literally helps to repair neurons in brain areas that are particularly susceptible to stress.

✓ Actively Seek Solutions – Experts call it ‘active coping’ which is the opposite of waiting passively for things to happen. Resilient people quickly home in on challenges and devise strategies for dealing with them, such as: asking for help, seeking our resources, learning new skills, or striking out on novel paths.

✓ Find the Silver Lining – Resilient people convert misfortune into good luck [good fortune *sic*] and gain strength from adversity. They see negative events as opportunities to better themselves or become better people.

Source – AARP Magazine, November/December 2009.