

# THE MANOR MONITOR

February 2010

A Monthly Publication of The Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Association

[www.VintHillManor.org](http://www.VintHillManor.org)



## President's Column

### Heads Up! Hesqz Qb;

This is an advance notification of our upcoming Annual Membership Meeting, which is scheduled for Tuesday, March 2, 2010, at 7:00PM, at the same location as last year, i.e., Greenville Elementary School. More specific data will be forthcoming and there is a more detailed article in this issue of the Manor Monitor.

There will be one vacant position on the BOD to be voted on and filled that night. If you would like to be considered a candidate, please submit an application consisting of your name and a short resume to the HOA Secretary, Stan Manvell, no later than February 9, 2010, in order to ensure that your name will be on the ballot. Resumes of 200 words or less will be printed in *The Manor Monitor* prior to the meeting. Stan's address is 3587 Osborne Dr, and his phone number is 341-2886. His e-mail address is - [stanvell@comcast.net](mailto:stanvell@comcast.net).

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](mailto:fafuerst@earthlink.net).

Thanks, Frank

## Board of Directors' Monthly Meeting

The January 2010 meeting of the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Homeowners Association (HOA) was held on Tuesday the fifth 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 issue of *The Manor Monitor*.

## Single Number Service

Yes! There is one phone number that people can call to get information about various federal benefits and services, such as applying for Social Security and Medicare and renewing a passport. The Federal Government has launched a telephone information service. The number is 800-FED-INFO (1-800-333-4636). The purpose is to help people who are seeking an answer to just about any question regarding U.S. government benefits and services. Operators speaking

English and Spanish are available Monday through Friday, from 8AM to 8PM, Eastern time. Another option for getting information is online at - [www.answers.usa.gov](http://www.answers.usa.gov).

## Watch Your Words Scam Alert

It was a not unfamiliar scenario. A couple from the State of Washington got an unsolicited phone call from a telemarketer selling Internet services. The husband answered the phone and politely responded the way people do when they're eager to get off the phone and resume their dinner. He requested the telemarketer mail him the information and advised he would take a look at it. The following month, the wife noticed a charge of \$29.95 on their phone bill for the GoInternet services the husband never ordered.

These folks are among the estimated 400,000 people who were bilked out of nearly \$75 million by the now-defunct Philadelphia-based company. Until busted by the federal authorities, the company's real mission, say prosecutors, was to trick people into paying monthly fees without their knowledge. How they were able to do this was through 'clever editing' of those initial telemarketing calls and even more cleverly sending service agreement terms disguised as

junk mail.

The process started with the GoInternet telemarketers phoning small-business owners, individuals and nonprofits, and recording those calls. During their pitch, they would ask questions designed to produce 'yes' answers, such as whether the person would agree to receive mailed information explaining company services. Even something as simple as asking if they had the person's name correct. The company then edited those recordings to make them sound as if the person being called had said 'yes' to having monthly charges appear on their phone bills, according to Ms J.A. Williams, an assistant US attorney. The tapes served as 'proof' that the charges were authorized, in case people later complained to the phone company.

Finally, the company mailed 'welcome packets' to the people that were intentionally designed to look like junk mail so that most people who received them just threw them away. However, by discarding the packets, the people never saw the legally required disclosure of their "enrollment", including a notice that they had 15 days to cancel their "service" to prevent future monthly charges.

Because GoInternet's targets were primarily small businesses, the extra items on their phone bills often went unnoticed or were mistaken for legitimate charges, according to Ms L. Bungo, an attorney with the Federal Trade Commission, who won a \$58 million judgment against GoInternet for unauthorized billing.

Federal prosecutors then indicted three GoInternet officials on fraud and tax evasion charges in 2007. Last October, just before a trial was to

begin, all pleaded guilty. The officials are to be sentenced next month. The CEO of the company faces up to 46 years in prison and a \$1 million fine. The other two executives face up to 20 years in prison and fines of \$250,000.

### Lessons to be learned:

**WATCH WHAT YOU SAY** - Assume that telemarketers are recording the calls and may be trying to manipulate you into saying 'yes' to their advantage. Just hanging up on unsolicited callers is always less costly in time and money.

**OPEN ALL MAIL** - Important disclosures by legitimate companies, such as changes in your credit card interest rate, also may be mistaken for junk mail.

### Examine your phone bill

- Look out for third-party charges, which typically will be on a separate page. Dispute any that are unauthorized.

*Source: AARP Bulletin, Jan-Feb 2010*

### 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 \$45 HOA assessments are sent, is: PO Box 3413, Warrenton, VA 20188. Phone: 540-347-1901, Fax: 540-347-1900

Website: [www.ARMIVA.com](http://www.ARMIVA.com).

### BOD Vacancy

In accordance with our HOA regulations, the terms of the BOD members are staggered to provide continuity. To review quickly, there are five BOD positions, all of which are equal. The three year term for the position held by **Mark Melancon** expires in March 2010. That position will be filled by the election at the annual meeting on March 10.

The HOA *Officer* positions, on the other hand, all have a one year term limit. Therefore, at the end of each Annual Membership Meeting, the new BOD members decide among themselves who the Officers of the HOA will be. The BOD member elected by the other BOD members to be the President of the HOA, automatically also serves as the Chair of the BOD. The President of the HOA is **required** to be a BOD member. The other HOA Officers do not have to be BOD members. In a small community, it is not uncommon for the remaining BOD members to assume the other HOA Officer positions. The only other stipulation is that the HOA President can not also be the HOA Secretary.

Even though the Annual Membership Meeting is not until March, it is not too early to start thinking about helping to manage your HOA. You could be one of the five members who represent the rest of us in managing the affairs of our association. We need your help.

*Please share your talents with the HOA and submit an application consisting of your name and a brief resume, including any previous HOA experience and/or other related qualifications, no later than February 9, 2010, to the HOA Secretary, Stan Manvell as described in The President's Column.*

*In a community such as this we have many accomplished people with outstanding careers that we could benefit from. Consider doing your part for a term of office.*



## Common Grounds Initiatives

**Frank Fuerst**, Acting Chair of the Common Grounds Committee (CGC), reported that the winter fertilization of the common areas was completed on December 16, 2009. He also noted that, due to the inclement weather, he had been unable to check out the wetlands area behind the homes on Averbach Ct to determine if Ruppert had completed the clean-up operation. **Mark Melancon** and **Tom Daily** agreed to walk through the area and conduct the inspection on Wednesday, January 6, 2010. This item will be revisited at the BOD meeting in February 2010.

If you are interested in learning more about the CGC Chair position please give Frank a call at 341-1473. This is an important task, but the BOD Chair should not have to do it all himself. *Please help us.*

## Cheers

“Here’s to your health!” We may hear this toast often; but many of alcohol’s effects on the body may actually be harmful to our health. It all depends upon how it is approached. The health hazards associated with heavy alcohol consumption are well documented and range from liver damage to heart disease. Just one night of heavy drinking can cause short-term maladies including headache, body aches, fatigue, nausea, and dehydration. When heavy drinking becomes a pattern, it puts immense strain on vital organs, jeopardizing a person’s health and making his/her RealAge much older.

But, alcohol, in moderation, can be good for our health. Some research shows moderate drinkers enjoy lower risks of heart attack and stroke and may live longer than nondrink-

## Vint Hill Manor Homeowners’ Association Board of Directors Meeting Agenda February 2, 2010

1. Call to Order
2. Membership Comment Period
3. Minutes of Previous BOD Meeting
4. Financial/Treasurer’s Reports for December and January.
5. Committee Reports
  - a. Architectural Review
  - b. Common Grounds
  - c. Communications
  - d. Programs
6. Unfinished Business
  - a. Annual Meeting
  - b. Wetlands Cleanup
7. Adjournment

ers or heavy drinkers. Some health experts now recommend a ‘moderate’ serving of red wine, a nip of scotch, or a bit of beer each day. While, on one hand, this can be good news, on the other it also has caused some confusion. People are sometimes unsure of the definition of ‘moderate’ – a critical distinction. It can mean different things to different people. For some, it could mean a glass or two of wine every night with dinner. For others it could mean drinking only on the weekends. Still others believe that partaking only at special events and celebrations is the definition of a moderate drinker. This makes it hard for people to know whether their particular drinking habits fit the ‘healthful’ mode or if they are putting their health ‘on the rocks’.

The general guidelines, i.e., no more than one drink of wine, beer, or liquor per day

for women and two drinks for men, may seem straightforward; but, studies and surveys show these recommendations can be misinterpreted. Often we tend to wing it when it comes to estimating the size of our drinks or the alcohol content of them, and this can lead to unintentional overimbibing. We may think we’re only having one drink; but, because of the alcohol content, we may be having two. A small serving of a stronger beer, lager, or spirits may contain many times the recommended daily amount of alcohol. Or the size of the glass may trick our eyes and lead to larger serving sizes.

A ‘standard’ drink is generally considered to be about a half an ounce of alcohol. This corresponds roughly to: 12 fluid ounces of regular beer, 5 fluid ounces of wine, 1.5 fluid ounces of 80-proof liquor/distilled spirits (standard shot glass), 1 fluid ounce of 100-proof spirits. However, some drinks contain more than the typical amount of alcohol. Different glass sizes and heavy pours also could result in too big of a drink. Especially, when we mix our own drinks, they can be too strong, if we just ‘eyeball’ it. Occasionally, a heavy pour or stiff drink is not cause for alarm; but, for those who consume alcohol regularly, it is best to stick to modest sized serving containers, and to consult labels for information on alcohol by volume (ABV) or proof. A single serving should contain about half a fluid ounce of alcohol, or about 12 grams.

[To read the actual above article in full](#), and more on this subject, with additional topics such as What’s in a Day, The Benefits Breakdown, Is Wine Better, System Overload, Repairing Past Damage, and Exercising Discretion, go to

the RealAge web site -

[www.realage.com/check-your-health/disease-prevention/alcohol-and-your-health](http://www.realage.com/check-your-health/disease-prevention/alcohol-and-your-health)

**Final analysis** - Alcohol is not an essential part of living. It is not a health food or a wonder drug and your cardiologist will tell you if you have some heart problems it is toxic to the heart. However, for some people, it can be an enjoyable complement to an otherwise healthy lifestyle. Our approach to drinking must be reasonable and responsible. If we practice moderation, alcohol can offer some valuable health benefits, particularly for people over 40.

### Getting a Tax Refund?

**Make a note:** You can check on your 2009 federal tax refund by using the "Where's My Refund?" tool at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or by calling 1-800-829-1954.

### Architectural Review Committee (ARC) Activity

**Steve Chronister**, ARC Chair, commented that, as had been planned/announced, there was no ARC meeting in December. Steve went on to advise that the records in existence prior to the most recent drive-around assessment by himself, Frank Fuerst and Stan Manvell reflected only two lots with two unapproved modifications.

The aforementioned drive-around assessment, however, netted a possible increase of 16 unapproved modifications. In December, Steve performed an analysis on his own comparing this new information to both the ARC files of modification applications and the early "baseline" pictures of each home and determined that it appears that most of

these newly discovered modifications do, in fact, appear to be unapproved. At the January ARC meeting, Steve advised that the full committee will re-examine all of this information and set about getting the records updated for those of the sixteen found to actually be in compliance. After that, the committee will determine an approach to alert the remaining homeowners, who do have unapproved modifications, and offer to assist them in filing and submitting the required applications in order to update their ARC files. The January ARC meeting was set for Tuesday, the 26<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00PM, at the home of Steve Chronister, 6828 Averbach Ct. The ARC meetings are always scheduled for 7PM on the last Tuesday of the month.

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 a spirit of cooperation, please help the ARC reach its goal of **Complete Compliance!**

**Thinking about some changes for the upcoming spring planting season? or some changes to outdoor structures? or some changes to the appearance of the front of your house or yard?**

**These all require prior approval  
give Steve a call  
at 428-1828**

**Remember:  
Manor  
Pride!**

**VINT HILL MANOR  
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**  
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*May no soldier go unloved.  
May no soldier walk alone.  
May no soldier be forgotten,  
until they all come home.*