

Whitehall Community News

January - March 2008

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**Meetings are held on
the 3rd Monday of
each month at 6:30
pm. All are
WELCOME.**

SPECIAL THANKS AND SINCERE APPRECIATION TO retired Board member LEE HOWARD. Taking time away from his business, Lee served the Whitehall community in many ways during his tenure on the Board, far beyond duties as secretary.

AS IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT, DON ELDRIDGE continues his service on the Whitehall Board. Under Don's stable leadership last year, much was accomplished in the areas of fiscal accountability and property oversight. THANK YOU DON.

AND THANKS TO retired Board member PAM PEARSON for significant contributions during a three year term.



CHANGE the monthly Board meeting start time on your calendar, from 7:00 to 6:30 pm. Homeowners are invited and encouraged to come and stay for the entire meeting. Sessions typically wrap up around 8:00 pm. Bring your questions, issues, and requests to the next homeowners meeting, scheduled for 6:30 pm Monday, February 18. EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

PROPERTY WALK -- Board members have formalized plans to walk a section of the property every month, a day or two before the monthly Board meeting. Approximately 1/4 of Whitehall property will be inspected by the group each month with the intention of walking the entire property at least once every quarter.

The focus for property walks includes landscaping, grounds maintenance, painting, completion of work order requests, quality and thoroughness of repairs, condition of decks and porches, compliance with Whitehall rules and regulations, and potential problem areas. Homeowners are invited to direct the Board's attention to particular areas for inspection during monthly property walks.

President's Corner: An Update



from Ron Weisenfeld

Dear fellow homeowners,

Over the past year the Board has attempted to raise the level of communication within Whitehall. Building on those efforts, I look forward to including a short column in our quarterly newsletter to help keep everyone updated on things that affect our community. There are four issues of particular importance this quarter.

1. Change of Landscape Company

The primary function of the Board is to insure that the money collected from dues is spent efficiently and equitably and to maintain the property so that the investment we have made in our homes is both protected and grows in value. Our fiscal year runs from July through June. With 170 homes contributing \$250 per month we have an annual budget of \$510,000. Over half of those funds are budgeted for utilities and upkeep on our thirty-year-old wooden homes. Another \$150,000 is used to keep the common area landscaping mowed and trimmed and our pool and tennis courts running. Every contract we have is reviewed annually in order to maximize the funds available. Occasionally we have to change providers. This year we changed landscaping companies and that resulted in a potential savings of over \$40,000. I am very confident that Carolina Outdoor Care will do an excellent job. I encourage you to check out their website at www.carolinaoutdoorcare.com.

2. Homeowner Responsibility for Maintenance of Shrubs

Your homeowner dues provide for the landscape maintenance of the common area grounds only. It is the responsibility of each individual homeowner to care for the foundation plantings around their own home. In the past, the landscape company has trimmed shrubs on homeowner property but that has come at a high price and in order to keep this expense down, it has become necessary to require each of us to take the responsibility for our own bushes and flowerbeds. I know there are some of us who either do not want to do yard work or physically can not do it, so it may be necessary get help. Carolina Outdoor Care is available for this service and you may call them at 847-1975 to set an appointment for them to come out to give you a quote.

3. Procedure in Event of Threatened or Actual Dog Attack

We recently had an unfortunate incident involving a dog attack in our neighborhood. Let me take this opportunity to clarify the proper procedure for incidents such as this. The City and County have agencies in place to deal with dog attacks and it is the Board's position that they should be the first people contacted and that they be the ones to handle situations like this. After talking to the Animal Control Board personally, I was advised that Whitehall's Board should not get involved in resolving or interfering in these matters. The proper procedure in the event of an attack or a confrontation with an alleged vicious dog is to contact the Animal Control Board (ACB) with a complaint at which time the ACB will do an investigation and possibly issue a citation. When a dog is reported and the ACB is involved a file on that dog is initiated and a history of behavior can be documented. Vicious behavior must be reported in order to create a history of behavior that will in turn document whether or not this dog should be classified as dangerous.

4. Barking and Leash Law Violations

Other problems concerning pets involve barking and violation of leash laws. Barking can be extremely annoying and the proper procedure for this is to resolve the issue between neighbors. The only recourse the Board has is to conduct a fine hearing based on the nuisance rules at the request of multiple complainants. The other alternative would be to report the matter to the police each time it occurs. The same holds true for unleashed animals. Report the problem to the Animal Control Board and they will come out and remove the animals. Just a reminder, the leash laws apply to cats as well as dogs.

Thank you for your continued support and comments. I would invite each of you to our next homeowners meeting February 18 at 6:30 in the meeting room by the pool. If anyone has any interest in being on the Board this next year or would like to serve on a committee, please call me at 608-9965.

Ron

Ron Weisenfeld
President
Whitehall Homeowners

WHITEHALL HOSPITALITY has expanded as a result of the creative and thoughtful talents of homeowner SHARON WHITE. Sharon proposed an idea to the Board last summer: welcome baskets for new homeowners. She made and presented a sample basket filled with several of the supplies needed on move day, as well as a few little luxuries. Result: HUGE GOODWILL. Cost: practically nothing because Sharon does not charge Whitehall for her time. WHAT A DEAL. Thanks Sharon.

ARE YOU TRYING TO REMEMBER WHEN YOUR HOUSE WAS LAST PAINTED? --- Paint and prep expenditures currently exceed budget, therefore painting for the current fiscal year (July 2007-June 2008) has been temporarily suspended. Painting will resume in July for units 5800-5806. Units 5710-5744 and 5711-5753 are also scheduled for the next fiscal year, depending on availability of funds. As part of cost control oversight, Pat Summers is reviewing paint dates and costs per unit. Once compiled, this information will be available upon request to homeowners.

WHITEHALL TENNIS COURTS --- cost approximately \$ 11,000 a year to maintain. The Board wants your opinion about our tennis courts, specifically, the value of the courts to the Whitehall community and to you personally.

ALEXANDER EXTERMINATING SERVICES has been chosen to provide Whitehall's termite inspections and treatments. The decision to change service providers was based on Alexander's reputation for timely and thorough professional services, comprehensive reporting, and careful follow up. The Board will closely monitor performance and service issues throughout the year.

MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE - The Board and York Properties ask for a lead time of at least 30 days to review and process homeowner requests that involve architectural and landscape changes. Adequate time for review, response, and follow up benefits everyone.

N N N N N

Whitehall funds have recently had to be diverted from other budgeted expenditures to address drain problems exacerbated by homeowners. IF IT'S NOT SOLUBLE, DON'T FLUSH IT. Please do not flush handi-wipes or other non-soluble items down the toilet. AND, do not dispose of cooking grease in the sink. Our 30+ year old property with aging sewer and drain pipes can not handle these products.

N REMEMBER: NO GREASE **N** SOLUBLES ONLY **N**

GUTTER CLEANING has been increased from twice to three times a year. For the foreseeable future, it is cost prohibitive (approximately \$ 4,000 each time) to increase gutter cleaning to four times per year for every home in Whitehall. If you wish to have additional cleaning of your gutters, York Properties will provide cost and contact information.

WHITEHALL RULES & REGULATIONS --- have recently been reviewed and updated by the Board to reflect current life in Whitehall. A complete copy of the updated Rules & Regulations will be posted on the Whitehall website in the near future. The website, located at WWW.WHITEHALLCOMMUNITY.COM, will also soon include forms for maintenance and architectural requests.



THERE WAS A SERIOUS CHIMNEY FIRE in the 5938-5952 Sentinel Drive cluster at 2:00 am on New Year's Night. Fortunately no one was injured. Raleigh City firefighters, EMS personnel, and police were on the scene within two minutes of the 911 call and remained throughout the night to contain the threat to adjacent homes. The displaced residents of 5938-5952 are very grateful to Lee and Audrey Witcher for providing beds, blankets, bathrooms, shelter and comfort.

The dramatic event on New Year's Night underscores the importance of disaster planning and the wisdom of each cluster taking responsibility for the development of a disaster plan. Procedures to ensure that every household is alerted to an eminent danger are central to a cluster disaster plan. A customized plan also takes into account cluster location, street access, proximity of trees and other subdivisions, and the special needs or circumstances of residents.

There are many experienced and qualified chimney sweep services in the Raleigh area. Whitehall residents have consistently reported satisfaction with F. Scott Davis Chimney Sweep Inc. Contacts: 919.562.6952 or www.yourashismine.com. Additional recommendations for chimney sweep service companies may be obtained from York Properties.

For questions or issues to include in our quarterly newsletter, please contact newsletter editor Dianne Reinoso at 878.9787 or dreinoso@bellsouth.net.

NEXT MONTHLY HOMEOWNERS MEETING: 6:30 pm MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18.