

Seneca Whetstone Homeowners Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 2825 • Gaithersburg, MD • 20866-2825

Board of Directors

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President.swhoa@gmail.com

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Architectural Chair

Sharon Gorsuch

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[\(smg0011@verizon.net\)](mailto:smg0011@verizon.net)

Architectural Committee

Sharon Gorsuch

Stephen Allen

Sue Wildermuth

NEWSLETTER: Fall 2012

IMPORTANT DATES:

Yard Sale: October 6, 2012 – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Rain Date – October 7, 2012
(Dumpsters will be on the M-83 right-of-way!)

Board Meetings: September 24, 2012 7:00 p.m.
December 3, 2012 7:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting: January 10, 2013 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Location – TBD

President's Message:

Fellow Homeowners:

For those who are not aware, a new Board was elected and took office after a delayed Annual Meeting that was held on June 14, 2012.

With limited time, we are trying to understand what may have been left undone from the first half of the year to ensure that the HOA continues to function properly. I have incorporated information from previous Newsletters herein that I thought were important reminders, so that much of the information may be familiar though no less important.

Treasurer, Robert Morse is spending many hours putting our Association's legal obligations and finances in order. Sharon Gorsuch and the ACC Committee have finished an initial walk through of the community to assess compliance with HOA covenants and to encourage beautification efforts.

Please let us know of any issues or concerns you have or if you have any interest in helping the Board in any capacity, either this year or next. You could also seek to be on the Board at the upcoming Annual Meeting on January 10, 2013.

Thank you all for being patient as we work to make our Community better.

Stephen Allen

P.S. Please take the time to fill out the **Community Directory Form** on the last page of this Newsletter and return it to a member of the Board to ensure that we have your contact information for future Notices and for inclusion in a planned Community Directory update.

Thanks!

Quick Highlights:

Yard Sale – 10/6/12

A Fall yard sale is scheduled for Saturday, October 6th from 9:00am to 1:00pm with a rain date for Sunday, 7th at the same times. Two (2) dumpsters will be provided on M-83 to Homeowners Only to allow for disposal of unsold or other items. An ad will be put in the Gazette and our big sign put out on the corner of Arrowsmith Drive. As a reminder to all, **dumpsters are not to be used for yard waste or construction debris**. Please remember to recycle or donate any items that are not broken. If you are participating in the sale and are not on Game Preserve Road, you are encouraged to put out your own directional signs at crossroads in the community so visitors can find your treasures. If you have any questions, call or email Sharon (301-926-1502) or smg0011@verizon.net.

Annual Leaf Collection

A date for this year's annual leaf collection has not yet been determined. Notice from the Board will go out once a date has been set. In the interim, **please dispose of your leaves properly along with other yard waste and do not rake them into the street**. If you have done so already, please bag and recycle them to avoid a mess. Thank you.

No Annual Picnic Scheduled this Year

We apologize for not having the time to prepare and/or schedule a community picnic in the short time since we have been elected to the Board. Those of us who may remain on the Board for next year will try to hold a picnic in the Spring or early Summer.

Treasurer's Update

I'd like to offer my thanks to the previous Treasurer, Winn Gaynor, for both his past service and his recent assistance in getting the new treasurer off to a good start. To date, and with the previous Board's assistance, all of the necessary P.O. Box, bank account accesses and accounting software licenses have been transferred and the transition has proceeded smoothly. Which is to say: Members dues are being received and deposited in a timely fashion and the Association's financial obligations are being met.

The Association has so far this year, after two rounds of dues notices, taken in \$18,645 against a projected target for 2012 of \$20,295, representing a participation rate of slightly less than 92% of the Association's members, and considering other factors such as payments received against previous years' balances.

As a general reminder, dues are used to offset the expense of services which the community actively utilizes and collectively benefits from, e.g. trash pickup, lawn service for common areas, the annual leaf pickup, etc. Prompt payment in response to dues notices reduces both the expense to the Association of having to send follow-up notices and ensures that the Association stays financially sound ongoing forward through the financial year.

For those members who have not yet paid their 2012 dues, a third round of reminder notices will be going out in the mid-September timeframe targeting these individuals and specifically including those

with multiple years' dues outstanding. Please note the Board reserves the right to seek legal redress against those who become seriously delinquent on their accounts and/or who do not respond to the Board's communications regarding this issue. If you find yourself in this category, please contact either the Treasurer or another member of the Board so that a payment schedule can be arranged and legal action can be avoided.

Lastly, and in addition to the ongoing collection of dues and payment of bills, I have also been actively engaged recently in bringing the Association into financial compliance regarding its' (a) Federal and State tax filings and (b) various Maryland Property filings, all of which were somewhat in arrears. This has been, understandably, a rather time-consuming task but I'm hopeful that the bulk of the items which I've been looking at can be fully addressed in time for the next annual meeting which will, as previously noted, be on January 10, 2013.

Architectural Control Committee Update

The ACC is an integral and important part of your HOA. The responsibility of this committee is to ensure homeowners follow our covenants and bylaws in regards to any changes to their property. This would include, but is not limited to, color changes or anything on the outside of your home, replacing or installing entry doors, garage doors, fences, additions or renovating the exterior of your home. You can also check the covenants online for a complete understanding of your covenant obligations.

Please remember that you are required to submit an Architectural Improvement Application. Before you start a project, you can find this form online or calling ACC Chair, Sharon Gorsuch at 301-926-1502. I have found the easiest way to download this form is to Google Seneca Whetstone HOA and then click on Architectural Improvement Application. Replacement of or maintenance that keeps everything the same does not require an application. You may also want to chat with your neighbors in advance about any changes desired especially those that may have some impact on them. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call any of us on the committee, we would be happy to assist you in this process.

Our Homes Need Baths Too!!!!

The ACC did what we affectionately called a "walkabout" in the beginning of July and noticed a chronic case of algae/grime on roofs and homes. Powerwashing is probably a maintenance chore that some of us will have to contend with yearly. We suggest talking to neighbors and/or hiring a company that will give you a group rate or going in on a power washer rental. Either way, it needs to be done to keep your house and our community in mint condition.

Take Pride in Your Home & Community

Trash and recycling receptacles should not be put out until the evening before a scheduled pickup and must be stored out of sight except on pick-up days when they are put at the curb. Please keep your trash cans and recycling bins in your garage or behind a fence that will completely shield them from view at all other times.

The covenants require all homes to have shrubbery on the street side of their homes neatly trimmed to a height of no more than 3 feet.

The community requires all properties to be maintained in a neat and attractive manner so as not to detract from appearance of the community. What does this mean to you? In a nutshell, it means to keep your property in the condition you would have it in if you were getting ready to sell it. It's called curb appeal. It means keeping your lawn mowed, keeping your driveways free of clutter, keeping mulched beds cleared of weeds, storing bikes, mulch bags, etc., out of site. It means that cars, trailers, and boats should not be left in driveways for any extended period of time. It's a dirty job but someone has to do it. I call it pride in ownership and your neighbors will applaud your efforts!!!! It is also called being a "good neighbor".

Holiday Decorations

It has been suggested we remind homeowners to please take down holiday decorations within a reasonable amount of time once the holiday is over.

Speed and Parking in the Neighborhood

Residents are once again reminded that the neighborhood speed limit is **25 mph**. As it is now September and school has recently resumed it is especially important when driving through the neighborhood to on the alert for children who may be on their way to or from any of the several school bus stops located in the community. More generally, and as always, please be on the alert for children riding bicycles, skateboards, or go carts in the street or who may otherwise dart out into traffic from behind parked cars while playing in a front yard. Obviously none of us would wish to be involved in an accident involving a child. Should speeding continue to be a problem in the neighborhood then the Board may request radar enforcement of the speed limit from the Montgomery County Police as has been done in the past.

In a related comment, the Board is asking that residents **not** park vehicles on the street unnecessarily as this inhibits the free flow of traffic through the neighborhood and creates potential safety hazards for transiting residents, especially at the crests of hills. The Board has received a number of complaints of late (including at the recent June Annual Meeting) regarding this practice and the resulting "choke points" which have resulted on our streets. In light of these reports, the Board is asking residents to, please, be respectful of their neighbors' convenience and safety and is encouraging them to refrain from the practice of parking on community streets unnecessarily. A couple of minutes of forethought when parking in the garage or driveway upon returning home in the evening or a couple of minutes of shuffling cars when leaving in the morning seems a small price to pay so as not to inconvenience one's neighbors or put neighborhood children at risk who, as previously noted, may dart out into traffic from behind a parked car.

Also, the Board wishes to advise residents that the long term storage of unused vehicles on residential property (e.g vehicles which are either (a) inoperable or (b) unregistered) is a violation of current Montgomery County Code unless the vehicle is (a) garaged or (b) otherwise concealed from adjoining properties. Disabled, dysfunctional, and/or unregistered vehicles may **not** be left on neighborhood streets at any time nor may they simply be parked in the owner's driveway. Such vehicles, if reported, are subject to being towed at the owner's expense and the owners fined.

Lastly... The Board has noted that several members have parked or are parking trailers of various types in their driveways or in other locations on or in front of their properties. Per the Covenants of the Association and the Policies for the Parking of Conventional Vehicles (eff. 11/29/2005) such vehicles may only be stored on the back lots of members' homes and, then, only after first obtaining the written approval of the Board. Also, per Montgomery County Code, such vehicles may not be parked on residential streets for periods in excess of 18hrs unless (a) they are being actively loaded or unloaded or (b) are present in support of work being performed on the property (e.g. by a contractor). In light of the above, the Board would normally ask to have these vehicles/trailers removed or relocated, however, it has recently come to our attention that the parking of trailers on a

member's property may be allowed under Montgomery County Code (as revised in 2009 and potentially taking precedence over the Covenants). At the current time the Board is investigating this question with the hope of having a resolution in the near future. In the interim, we ask for the patience of the Association's members while we review the question.

Communicating with the Board

Following a recent Board meeting, the Board elected to approve the implementation and use of a set of generic email addresses to represent the various officers of the Association. These new email addresses, e.g. President.SWHOA@gmail.com, will be passed to new Board Members as the Board changes over time; hence, will provide both (a) a consistent point of access to Board Members as well as (b) a current and searchable email history of all communications to/from the Board. When communicating to the Board in the future, therefore, the Board requests that members use the following email addresses in place of our current and/or previously published personal email addresses.

Stephen Allen	President.SWHOA@gmail.com
Rupert "Rocky" Rockhill	VicePresident.SWHOA@gmail.com
Robert Morse	Treasurer.SWHOA@gmail.com
Sherwin Wells	Secretary.SWHOA@gmail.com
Sharon Gorsuch	ACC.SWHOA@gmail.com

Future communications sent to our personal email addresses will be forwarded to the new "generic" addresses for archiving and will be responded to from the applicable new address(es). Association letterheads and related documents will be updated to reflect the new email addresses for ease of reference/access as soon as practically possible.

General Reference Items:

Seneca Whetstone Website and Governing Documents of the Association

It has come to the attention of the Board that not every member of the Association is in possession of a complete set of the Association's governing documents, i.e. the Letters of Association, the Bylaws and the Covenants and any subsequent Policy documents enacted by previous Boards. Since all owners should have received these documents at the Closing, we are at a loss as to why some members did not receive personal copies as required. Be that as it may, all members wishing to review these and other Association documents can find and download them from the Association website at: www.neighborhoodlink.com/Seneca_Whetstone (That's Seneca_Whetstone).

Dog and Pet Obligations

Please remember that Montgomery County law requires pet owners to clean up the mess left by their pets. You can be fined \$100 if someone files a complaint. Pick up the poop. Or, let your dog do its business in **your** yard. The rest of us don't want to deal with it and should not have to. Thank you.

Montgomery County Code, Sec. 5-203 (a)(2): An owner must not allow an animal to damage or defecate on property outside of the owner's property. An animal may defecate on public property or the common area of property in which the owner shares an interest if the owner immediately removes and disposes of the feces by a sanitary method approved by the Director.

Also remember to keep your dog(s) leashed unless they are in sight and trained to immediately respond to verbal commands as a courtesy to oncoming pedestrians. It would also be a nice gesture to indicate if your pet is friendly when nearing others or to create some distance.

SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY

Please be advised that the Maryland registry is at <http://www.dpscs.state.md.us/onlineservs/sor/>. The National Registry of Sex Offenders is at <http://www.nsopr.gov/>. The California Megan's Law List is available online at www.meganslaw.ca.gov. The lists are available for individuals to check and take whatever precautions they feel are necessary for personal protection or protection of their children and/or family. As a disclaimer, please know that it is not the SWHOA's responsibility to check this list, or to publish any information from it.

Additional Websites

www.crimereports.com

(Note: This website identifies the location where the police incident report was completed which may differ from where the incident actually occurred.)

www.usaonwatch.org

Important Telephone Numbers

Abandoned Vehicles	301-840-2454
Animal Control	240-773-5960
Consumer Affairs	240-777-3636
County Call Center	240-777-6000
Housing Code Enforcement	240-777-3785
Landlord-Tenant Affairs	240-777-3609
Police (non-emergency)	301-279-8000
6th District Police	240-773-5700
Fire (non-emergency)	240-683-6520
24-Hour Bioterrorism Hotline	240-777-4200
Snow Removal	240-777-6000

See <http://www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/MCGAppPortal/Services.aspx> for a more complete listing of available services.

Neighborhood Watch Reminder

Pete Flandrau (10828 Eberhardt Dr., pflandrau@msn.com) has been the continuing coordinator of the Neighborhood Watch for Seneca Whetstone. We have 132 homes in the community including the townhouses on Badger Dr. The following individuals/households have volunteered to be Block Captains. They are listed with the corresponding addresses for which they are responsible. The Block Captains are asked to act as the contact for their neighbors regarding security and safety issues. It is extremely helpful for homeowners to provide their Block Captain with updated contact information (telephone and email). So that a correspondence email list can be created for the entire neighborhood to provide alerts about recent incidents.

Please note that there is currently a need for volunteer block captains to cover the following homes:

- *Jericho Dr: 19137, 19133, 19129, 19125 and Gatlin Dr: 19213;*
- *All of Arrowsmith Drive and Badger Drive; and*
- *Steve Adelmann needs a replacement for his Game Preserve Road area until June 2013.*

Jim Akin- 10833 Game Preserve Rd. Carolyn_moorhead@yahoo.com
Game Preserve Rd: 10852, 10849, 10848, 10845, 10844, 10841, 10837
Donovan Ct: 10708, 10704, 10701, 10700

Fred Stout- 10820 Game Preserve Rd. fred.stout@xo.com (*may not be active*)
Game Preserve Rd: 10832, 10829, 10828, 10825, 10824, 10821, 10817, 10816, 10813, 10812, 10808. *Either Jim or Fred is taking responsibility for 10705 Donovan Ct.*

Pete Flandrau- 10828 Eberhardt Dr. pflandrau@msn.com
Eberhardt Dr: 10801, 10805, 10808, 10809, 10812, 10813, 10817, 10821, 10824, 10825, 10828, 10829, 10833

Jay Long- 10800 Game Preserve Rd. jalong@bechtel.com
Game Preserve Rd: 10804, 10740, 10736, 10733, 10732, 10728
Gatlin Dr: 19200, 19201, 19204, 19205

Walter Jones- 10704 Game Preserve Rd. (**need new email address**)
Game Preserve Rd: 10724, 10720, 10716, 10712, 10708

Steve Adelmann- 10705 Game Preserve Rd. Stephen.adelmann@lmco.com (**will resume duties June, 2013**)
Game Preserve Rd: 10700, 10701, 10713, 10717, 10721, 10725, 10729

Angela & Matt Jackson- 19217 Jericho Dr. mattangela20@aol.com
Jericho Dr: 19200, 19201, 19204, 19205, 19208, 19212, 19216, 19218

Winn Gaynor- 19209 Jericho Dr. wgaynor@dcscorp.com
Gatlin Dr: 19216, 19220, 19221, 19224, 19225, 19228, 19229, 19232

Carolyn Wright- 6 Longworth Ct. chwright10@verizon.net
Longworth Ct: 1, 2, 5, 9, 10
Jericho Dr: 19120, 19140

Jim Casey- 19105 Jericho Dr. caseyx6@msn.com
Jericho Dr: 19121, 19117, 19116, 19113, 19112, 19109, 19108, 19104, 19101, 19100

