



Somerset News

May 2015

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Board of Directors

President ~ Willis McCloud
 Vice President ~ Earl Burton
 Treasurer ~ Patrina Kandul
 Secretary ~ Charlotte Jordan
 At Large ~ (vacant)

President's Corner

By Willis McCloud



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Spring is one of my favorite seasons here in Somerset and I'm sure it's one of yours. The flowers, warmer temperatures, and spring time events all make last winter's cold days and nights quickly fade into the distance. Spring cleaning is a ritual around the world and one that many of us take part in here in the community. If you are cleaning out your home and need a large item like furniture or an appliance(s) picked up please call American Disposal at 703.368.0500, or 866.884.8700, or email at info@adsimail.com. Two hazardous items sometimes left on the curb that should be disposed of properly are below.

- Computer and television monitors. Most monitors are currently considered hazardous waste when they have lived their life and are ready for recycling or disposal, including cathode ray tube (CRT), liquid crystal diode (LCD), and plasma monitors. Electronic devices. Includes computers, printers, VCRs, cell phones, telephones, radios, and microwave ovens.
- Latex and oil based paint, including aerosol paint cans.

These and other hazardous items should be disposed of at the Prince William County Landfill on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM or at an alternate authorized disposal location. A comprehensive list of hazardous materials, hours of operation, and other information is listed on the PWC landfill's website: <http://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/publicworks/trash/Pages/Household-Hazardous-Waste.aspx>.

Spring is also a time for us to assess where we are as a community in relation to the tasks set forth in our Somerset Strategic Plan for 2015, as well as assess the economic health of the Association. This year's projected strategic plan task list is below.

- Quarterhorse Tree Plan – Install 8 Elm trees in the front of the community.
- Bench Area Upgrade – Extend the brick path over to the bench area and install a garbage can.
- Siding Replacement – Install new siding on the last 7 buildings within Somerset.
- Patch, Seal, and Stripe streets and parking lots – Project designed to extend the life of the pavement throughout the community.

In regards to the economic health of the community, we continue to take

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steps to improve our fiscal position. We are fully funding our reserves, soliciting competitive bids from vendors, and reducing unnecessary expenses where possible. One area that continues to present a challenge is unpaid assessments. A relatively small number of residents are responsible for a large percentage of this debt. This deficit not only impacts the Association's ability to fund current and future projects, but also lessens our ability to qualify for Federal Housing Association (FHA) recertification required every two years. Our recertification is due later this year. Failure to achieve this recertification will significantly impact the ability of prospective buyers to obtain FHA loans to buy homes in Somerset, thus reducing the number of people who can buy your home. Please contact Stacy

Panuzio, our manager, at 703-707-6404 or spanuzio@capitolcorp.com to ensure your account is current.

Lastly, several months ago some residents began parking along the Westridge Drive side of the community next to the asphalt trail. These owners have also been walking through the mulch bed to their nearby homes. Although not illegal, this is clearly not authorized or encouraged by the Association. Parking in this area presents an unnecessary safety hazard to passing motorists on Westridge, blocks the line of sight for drivers exiting Quarterhorse, and results in the destruction to landscaping you've paid for in that area – not to mention the additional cost of replacing damaged foliage.

The Association is working with Westridge, Prince William County,

and VDOT to address this problem. To date we have gained approval to install an additional marked crosswalk near the intersection of Quarterhorse and Westridge, adjacent to the Somerset sign that will restrict parking near that area. We are also seeking approval to install no parking signs in the area near that crosswalk. We continue to research other solutions to restrict parking along Westridge and to prevent foot traffic through the tree buffer. As we research those solutions we are asking residents to park in their authorized locations only and to stop walking through our landscaping. Doing what's good for the community, even when it conflicts with personal concerns, is part of being a good neighbor. Fortunately, we have a lot of good neighbors.

All the best! ☀

Neighborhood Watch

By Willis McCloud



The following article is reprinted by permission of the Waco, Texas Police Department:

SUMMER TRAVEL (On The Road Again)

School will soon be out and vacation time will be here before you know it. Travel and trips are the agenda for summer adventure! Here are some safety tips to help you avoid serious problems while you are on your trip or vacation.

HOME:

- Stop mail and newspaper delivery or have a neighbor collect them daily.
- Lock all windows and doors before you go.

- Leave a key with a trusted friend or relative in case of an emergency.
- Have someone place your trash out and place it back on collection day.
- Ask a friend, neighbor, or relative to check your home daily and to occasionally park their car in your driveway.
- Put some lights, radio and TV on automatic timers.
- Secure lawn furniture, bicycles, etc. while you are gone.

YOURSELF:

- Make a record of your credit card and travelers check numbers. If possible make a photocopy of them.

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- Clean out your wallet/purse. Don't take anything you don't need; like extra credit cards.
- Make sure you have enough prescription medication to last on your trip.

ON THE ROAD:

- Don't carry large amounts of cash. Use traveler's checks or credit cards whenever possible.
- Make sure your vehicle is in top running condition.
- Carry your cell phone, car insurance, and other documents needed for your trip/vacation.
- Plan your trip/vacation route and don't forget maps/GPS!
- When stopping enroute, conceal valuables from sight, preferably in the trunk. If you stop overnight, remove luggage and other valuables from the car.

IN YOUR MOTEL:

- Don't leave luggage unattended. Check your baggage with the staff if you can't go to your room immediately.
- While away from your room for extended time, place your valuables in the motel safe-deposit box.
- When returning to your motel late in the evening, use the main entrance of the motel.
- Be observant and look around before exiting your car.

- Use all auxiliary locking devices while in your room; don't leave the room door propped open.
- Familiarize yourself with fire exits.
- Check with motel staff about security measures provided.
- Don't open the door until you know whom it is; call the front desk to confirm claims of being a staff member.
- Report suspicious activity to motel management.
- Check twice before departing so you don't leave any possessions behind.

IN THE AREA:

- Learn about the area you are visiting. Ask motel staff about areas to visit and areas to avoid.
- Carry your purse and wallet in a secure way; don't let your purse dangle and put your wallet in a front pants pocket.
- Be aware of persons acting suspiciously.
- Make sure everyone in your group knows the name and address of your motel.
- Carry only cash that you need, and bills in small denominations. Don't flash your money, jewelry, or video equipment.
- If members separate, have a prearranged location and time to check in. ☀

From the ALC

By Greg Hodgson



After a long and seemingly endless winter, spring has finally arrived. We hope you all have been enjoying this beautiful weather!

The long-awaited Quarterhorse Lane tree project has nearly been completed, as the eight zelkovas have been planted. These additions will add to Somerset's

beauty by creating a tree-lined street at the front of our community and providing some screening for units in buildings 20 and 21. The board decided to extend the existing irrigation system by installing sprinkler heads at each of the new tree locations. The irrigation work will be completed in the very near future. This decision was made because the estimated cost for the contractor's hand watering services during the critical first year was roughly the same as the

cost for the irrigation system. The additional sprinkler heads will also provide us with tangible assets which will afford flexibility in the future.

Originally, the Quarterhorse project also included three Nellie Stevens hollies at the corner of building 19 and three on the hill behind building 10. Due to budget constraints and the fact that we needed to replace two

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unit trees which were removed this past fall, the hollies were not planted this spring.

Depending on the amount of remaining 2015 funding, some or all of these trees may be planted in the fall. However, it's more likely they will have to wait until next year or beyond.

We are now on our third landscape contractor in the last five years. The goal and hope is for a long and mutually beneficial relationship with our newly selected service provider, Environmental Enhancements. The ALC and management began monitoring their work with the

very first mowing. As with any new contractor, it takes some time to become familiar with the property and to understand our expectations. While they got off to a little bit of a rocky start, they were made aware of our critiques and have made corrections. We will continue to monitor their work throughout this year. If you have any issues with their work, please contact management so any problems can be addressed promptly.

The ALC has a request for each resident parking a vehicle in the parking lot: Please try to refrain from parking in a manner in which the front or back of your vehicle extends over the grass.

Parking like this creates an obstacle for the contractor and prevents them from mowing those areas. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Lastly, we hope you'll agree that the grass has looked better than it has for several years. Considerable money was spent bringing the turf up to an acceptable standard. Please help us keep it in good shape by not allowing your pets to relieve themselves in the same area over and over again, as this kills the grass. And as always, please clean up after your pets! Again, your assistance is appreciated. ☀

Manager's Message

By Stacy Panuzio, CMCA, AMS, PCAM

A little consideration goes a long way. Read the following tips from *eHow.com* on how to be a good neighbor beyond just a smile and a wave.

- Welcome any new neighbors with a personal note or pop by for a personal introduction.
- Make sure that the outside of your home—along with the grounds—is well-kept and complies with our association's CC&Rs.
- Be mindful of noise—loud music, barking dogs, power tools—that may disrupt the neighborhood beyond a reasonable hour.
- If you have a pet, please refrain from allowing it to defecate in a neighbor's yard. Please also be reminded that all pet waste should be properly scooped and removed from the grounds at all times.
- If you have a large party, consider your neighbors when directing your guests where to park, end the party at a reasonable hour and invite your neighbors to join in the fun.

- If you happen to own a garage unit, please refrain from parking surplus vehicles in surface lot spaces. Open spaces should be used for visitors and guests, not for parking surplus vehicles on property, as we have a severely limited number of open spaces.
- Return anything you borrow from your neighbor promptly, in the same condition they lent it to you, and express your thanks.
- Replace anything of your neighbor's that you, your children or your pets break or soil.
- Respect your neighbor's privacy.
- Offer to take care of mail pick-up, plants or pets while your neighbor is on vacation. ☀

Grilling

Per Prince William County ordinance and Somerset's governing documents, the use of open flames is not permitted on decks or balconies. This includes the use of charcoal and gas grills.



Please understand that this is for everyone's safety. Thank you for your cooperation.

Real Estate Beat

By Willis McCloud



The following information details the Prince William County Housing Market for April 2015 and is provided to assist owners in making key purchasing and selling decisions.*

- Units Sold: 586. Active inventory: 1,918.
- Median Sale Price: \$335,000.
- Days On Market: 44 Up 5% Vs. Year Ago Up 6% Vs. Year Ago Up 6% Vs. Year Ago Up 29% Vs. Year Ago.
- Units Sold: There was an increase in total units sold in April, with 586 sold this month in Prince William County versus 562 last month, an increase of 4%. This month's total units sold was higher than at this time last year, an increase of 5% versus April 2014.
- Active Inventory Versus last year: The total number of homes available this month is higher by 111 units, or 6%. The total number of active inventory this April was 1,918 compared to 1,807 in April 2014. This month's total of 1,918 is higher than the previous month's total supply of available inventory of 1,700, an increase of 13%.
- Median Sale Price Last April: The median sale price for Prince William County Homes was \$315,000. This April, the median sale price was \$335,000, an increase of 6% or \$20,000 compared to last year. The current median sold price is 6% higher than in March. Median sale price is the middle sale price in a given month. The same number of properties are above and below the median.
- New Listings 1,268. Current Contracts 803. Sold Vs. List Price 98.4%. Months of Supply 3.3 Up 10% Vs. Year Ago Up 11% Vs. Year Ago Down -0.7% Vs. Year Ago No Change Vs. Year Ago.
- Months of Supply In April: There was 3.3 months of supply available in Prince William County. The amount of supply is similar compared to a year ago. Months of supply is calculated by dividing current inventory by current sales and indicates how many months would be needed to sell all of the inventory available at the current rate of demand.

- New Listings & Current Contracts: This month there were 1,268 homes newly listed for sale in Prince William County compared to 1,155 in April 2014, an increase of 10%. There were 803 current contracts pending sale this April compared to 723 a year ago. The number of current contracts is 11% higher than last April.
- Sale Price to List Price Ratio: In April, the average sale price in Prince William County was 98.4% of the average list price, which is 0.7% lower than at this time last year.
- Days on Market This month, the average number of days on market was 44, higher than the average last year, which was 34, an increase of 29%.

*Information included in this report is based on data supplied by MRIS and its member Association(s) of REALTORS, who are not responsible for its accuracy and does not reflect all activity in the marketplace. Information contained in this report is deemed reliable but not guaranteed and should be independently verified. ☀

Board Briefs

The Board voted on the following items at the February meeting.

February 2015

- Approved termination of Gutter King's contract due to their non-responsiveness.
- Approved resident's request to temporarily utilize a POD.
- Approved amount of counter-proposal to an owner's proposed payment plan.
- Approved suspension of late fees on an account, contingent upon the owner's adherence to the agreed upon payment plan.
- Approved waiving the late fees, but not the admin fees, on two accounts.
- Approved waiving the dryer vent cleaning violation assessment, but not the admin fee, on an account – pending receipt being received by management.

Secretary's Minutes

By Charlotte Jordan



The Board of Directors (BOD) needs your help. Our BOD is charged with protecting, preserving and enhancing the common assets of our community. Not an easy task considering the difficulty we have getting homeowners to take an active role in community affairs. But if our BOD is to do its job and help protect our property values, then you, the homeowner, should do everything you can to assist the board in accomplishing their goals. After all, if our Board does its job well, we all benefit!

In order to help the BOD protect our property values, please consider the following helpful reminders:

- Obey the governing documents (CC&R's, Rules & Regulations, Architectural Guidelines).
- Attend Monthly Board of Director meetings when possible.
- Report violations of our governing documents.
- Participate in our Annual Meeting either by attending or sending in your proxy.
- Communicate with the Board in writing, through the management company.
- Take pride in our community.

If we all do our part, then it will be much easier for the Board of Directors to do theirs! ☀

Treasurer's Notes

By Patrina Kandul

Why Does Our Community Need a Reserve Fund?

Equipment and major components (like fences, sheds,

roofs, asphalt, etc.) must be replaced from time to time, regardless of whether we plan for the expense. We prefer to plan and set the funds aside now. Reserve funds aren't an extra expense—they just spread out expenses more evenly. There are other important reasons we put Association monies into reserves every month.

Reserve funds meet legal, fiduciary, and professional requirements. A replacement fund may be required by:

- Any secondary mortgage market in which the association participate.
- Virginia statutes, regulations, or court decisions.
- Somerset governing documents.
- Reserve funds provide for major repairs and replacements that we know will be necessary at some point in time. Although a roof may be replaced when it is 25 years old, every owner who lives under or around it should share its replacement costs.

Reserve funds minimize the need for special assessments or borrowing. For most Association members, this is the most important reason.

Reserve funds enhance resale values. Lenders and real estate agents are aware of the ramifications for new buyers if the reserves are inadequate. Many states require associations to disclose the amounts in their reserve funds to prospective purchasers.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) requires the community association to disclose its reserve funds in its financial statements. ☀

Upcoming Meetings

ALC

- June 2
- July 7
- August 4
- September 1

Board

- June 9
- July 14
- August 11
- September 8

Residents are welcomed and encouraged to attend association meetings. Meetings are held at the Westridge Clubhouse and begin at 7:00 PM.

Somerset at Westridge, A Condominium

Management Company: Capitol Property Management
3914 Centreville Road, Suite 300, Chantilly, VA 20151
Manager: Stacy Panuzio; 703-707-6404; spanuzio@capitolcorp.com
After Hours Emergency: 703-401-1918
Somerset Website: www.somersetatwestridge.org
Board of Directors: bod@somersetatwestridge.org
Architectural Landscape Committee: alc@somersetatwestridge.org

Westridge Swim & Racquet Club

Management Company: Legum & Norman
12764 Quarterhorse Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22192
General Manager: Debbie Carter; 703-590-1600; GM@westridgeva.org
Westridge Website: www.westridgeva.org

Additional Contacts

Emergency Police, Fire, Ambulance: 911
Police Non-Emergency: 703-792-6500
Washington Gas: Emergency, 703-750-1400; Non-Emergency, 703-750-1000
Dominion Virginia Power: 1-888-667-3000
Towing: Dominion Wrecker Service; 703-590-0994
Trash: American Disposal Services; 703-368-0500