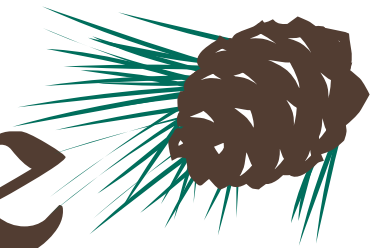


The Needle



The official publication of the Pinewood Lake Homeowners Association • Community Connected

Winter emergency preparedness

By Michael Berger

Even though the first day of winter isn't until December 21, it is never too early to start preparing for the eventual snowfall and icy conditions. The last few winters have given us several major snowstorms. According to the Farmer's Almanac (northeast corridor), "2016 winter will be colder than normal, on average, with slightly above-normal precipitation and near-normal snowfall. The snowiest periods will be in mid-November, late January, mid- and late February, and early to mid-March." Sounds like the kids will have snowmen and sledding in their future!

It is important that we as Pinewood Lake residents are prepared as we head into the winter season.

Here are some tips to keep in mind before, during, and after a snowstorm:

Prior to snowfall

- Stay informed by signing up for email alerts via pinewoodlake@googlegroups.com.
- Move parked cars off streets, if possible. Snow removal vehicles need at least 12-15 feet to pass down a street.
- Purchase rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways.
- Purchase snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
- Be prepared. Have at least a three-day supply of food, water, and medicine.

During and after snowfall

- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive: travel in the day; don't travel alone; keep others informed of your schedule; stay on main roads and avoid back roads.
- If possible, help your neighbors clean the sidewalk on the same side of the street as parked cars to increase pedestrian safety.
- Keep snow cleared from fire hydrants, storm drains and downspouts on your home.

- Clear driveways and entrances.
- Shovel snow into the yard instead of the street to keep snow removal vehicles from recovering the driveway entrance.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. Use caution, take breaks, push the snow instead of lifting it when possible, and lift lighter loads.

In addition, we are working with our snow removal contractor to come up with a public "snow removal plan" that will be shared with residents. It will ensure that residents of Pinewood Lake understand when and how snow will be removed during storms.

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Here comes Santa Claus!



Enjoy the festivities from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. at the PLHA Office on Saturday, December 17. Meet Santa and his elves, eat cookies, drink Mexican hot chocolate, and take a ride on the Christmas float.

After the party – starting at 7:00 p.m. – the Christmas float with Santa and the elves will tour Pinewood Lake, passing out holiday light sticks and candy.

Volunteer elves to ride on the float and activate the light sticks are needed. Apply to the PLHA office; bring your own costume, or at least an elf hat (available on Amazon.com). Donations of home-baked cookies and other edibles for the party are also welcome.

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Holiday office closures

December 26 and January 2 the PLHA office will be closed.
Trash removal is not affected.

Real estate update and more

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Come to the PLHA annual meeting!

7:30 p.m. Dec. 1, South County Cntr., 8350 Richmond Hwy., room 221 C.

PLHA Calendar

Meetings are held at the PLHA office at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise stated.

- December 1 PLHA Annual Meeting
- December 5 Neighborhood Watch, 7 p.m.
- December 6 ACC meeting
- December 15 *The Needle* deadline
- December 17 PLHA Christmas Party
- December 22 Marketing Committee

No PLHA Board meeting

No Maintenance Committee meeting

No Publications Committee meeting

Both Christmas and New Year's day fall on the weekend, and will not affect trash collection.

The PLHA office will be closed December 26 and January 2.

PLHA annual meeting

The PLHA annual meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, in the South County Center, 8350 Richmond Highway, room 221 C (changed from rooms 221 A and B).

From 7–7:30 p.m., you will be able to meet the candidates, and there will be sandwiches and cookies. At 7:30 p.m. the meeting will begin.

Please join us to cast your vote for the PLHA Board!

And remember, if that date and time is not convenient, you can drop off your ballot at the office any time between now and then.

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Tree pickup: January 1–14

As long as your tree is 8 feet or less, it can be picked up at the curb on your regular pickup day, during the first two weeks of January. Please remove all decorations — tinsel, ornaments, lights, and toppers — before recycling.

REMEMBER: If you have a live tree, don't forget to water it! Dry trees can become a fire hazard.

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The Needle

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Monday – Friday: 12 noon – 3 p.m. • Saturday: 9 a.m. – 12 noon

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- Vice President Richard Hall
- Secretary Salvatore P. Simonetta
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Tips for selling your home

by Dany Abebe



Spring is the optimum time to sell a home, regardless of whether it's a buyer's market or a seller's market. Inventory almost always increases in the spring, because the largest number of buyers are actively searching for new homes during the months of April, May and June.

When preparing to sell your home in the springtime, you should focus on how to stand out above the rest and try to increase your potential for success.

Be mindful of the fact that owners and buyers don't look at a house the same way; owners usually can't see their house's faults. You better stop thinking of your property as a home. It's a house, a commodity you want to sell for the highest dollar possible.

Look at your house from a buyer's point of view and make a list of the problem areas you discover. Tackle cleanup and repair chores first, then put some time into projects that make the grounds more attractive.

In the October edition of the Needle, I mentioned the buzz words are "Curb Appeal."

A large percentage of homebuyers decide whether to look inside a house or pass based on curb appeal, the way the house looks on the outside from the street. You can ensure they want to come inside your house by spending some time working on its exterior.

Tackle some curb appeal projects now in the fall, and your property will shine when things get green again in the spring.

- The front yard is key, but do not forget the back yard.
- Rake and dispose of leaves, make sure the bushes are all trimmed.
- Re-mulch or replace stone walkways and paths.
- Remove any dead plants and trees, and aerate your lawn so it will be lush come spring.
- Pressure wash the driveway, the front walk, and the exterior of your home.
- If need be, have the exterior of the house painted and, at the very least, apply a fresh coat of paint on the front door.

For more tips and advice call me at 703-989-0893 or follow me in *The Needle*.

Dany Abebe, Realtor, has been a homeowner in Pinewood Lake since 2003.

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Real estate update Sept. 15 – Nov. 15, 2016

By Maggie Srivastav



Shhh, the scuttlebutt says a recent townhouse broke the \$360k barrier. On the less good news a truly needy townhome sold for well under \$300k. Well-staged refurbished homes are selling well, but if you have an original home in need of upgrades? Not so much.

Recently sold:

- 4332 Cedarlake Court – \$355,000 (\$2,000 seller subsidy—two kitchens) 10/15
- 4309 Amblerwood Road – \$355,000 (\$10,650 seller subsidy) 9/30
- 8144 Lakepark Drive – \$335,000 (\$10,050 seller subsidy) 9/15
- 4402 Longworthe Square – \$329,000 (\$19,370 seller subsidy) 9/22.
- 8057 Saint Annes Court – \$345,000 (\$5,200 seller subsidy) 10/21 End unit.
- 8059 Saint Annes Court – \$329,900 (\$5750 seller subsidy) 9/26

Pending:

- 8103 Oaklake Court – asking \$349,900 – multiple bids
- 4503 Squiredale Square – asking \$279,000
- 8110 Lakepark Drive – asking \$349,900

On the market:

- 7920 Central Park Circle – \$330,000
- 8107 Oaklake Park – \$319,900
- 8180 Fernlake Court (back on market) – \$344,000

...

The Handyman's Tip from Jose Castro: your front lamp

by Gina Toro



This time we are going to talk about the important topic of safety, specifically, the lamp in your front yard. Good outdoor lighting provides better security to you and your vehicles and deters individuals from hiding on your property. But the lamps also require proper maintenance. While walking around the streets of the community I've seen many that have been damaged and in some of the properties, when passing by the lamps, I have noticed some with gas leaks. Pay close attention to this problem as this can lead to a tragedy because gas is a flammable substance. Remember to call on a certified professional to perform the proper maintenance or, in my opinion, better yet, convert the gas lamp to electric.

Let's do it!

...

Board happenings

Board happenings

At its November 10, 2016 meeting, the Board of Directors: Heard a reminder about the Annual Meeting at 7:30 p.m. on December 1 in room 221C of the South County Center.

Received **Committee Liaison Reports**: the ACC has been working with many homeowners to get work approved, Neighborhood Watch will meet with Officer Urps at 7 p.m. on December 5 to discuss home security over the holidays, Haunted Pumpkin was a great success and a big thanks go to the contractor and volunteers who made it happen and participated, and the Maintenance Committee has been working on the grounds maintenance contract bids and on locating an arborist to assess Pinewood Lake's trees and formulate a plan for their maintenance.

Set a tentative date of **December 17 for the Cookies with Santa** event at the Pinewood Lake office. It will begin at 4 p.m. and tractor rides with Santa will take place afterwards at the office.

Heard the **DCCR (Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions) Ad Hoc Committee report**, including asking to be included on the agenda for the Annual Meeting to provide information to the community and seek input from the community.

Approved contacting the Association's attorney with procedural questions on **revising the DCCR**.

Approved the Maintenance Committee's recommendation that the Board award the 2017-2019 **grounds maintenance contract** to RCR Services for \$106,178.00 per year after reviewing the five bids received from different companies.

Reviewed a draft article on **Emergency Preparedness** for the December Needle. The article focuses on snow procedures. Staff and the committee will work with the snow plowing contractor to establish guidelines and best practices for the contractor and residents to improve snow removal procedures.

Established a **Meet the Candidates event** from 7-7:30 p.m. on December 1 in room 221C of the South County Center. The Annual Meeting will begin immediately afterward.

Heard about the limits of the current **general liability insurance policy** as it relates to armed off-duty officers.

Briefly discussed the possibility of hiring **off-duty officers as employees instead of contractors** to get more of-

icers to sign up for shifts in the community. The topic will be reviewed in 2017.

Appointed Sal Simonetta as **2017 Nominating Committee Chair**. Bev Card and Dick Knapp will serve on the committee.

Approved moving any **2017 excess operating income over expenses to the reserve fund** should there be any excess.

Heard the **Assistant Community Manager's Report** on the bridge replacement project still awaiting permit approval, the groundwater study on Birchlake Court awaiting a corrected proposal for final signature, and the ADA-accessible picnic tables being delivered on November 18.

Heard a report from the **Community Manager** about a complaint regarding an alleged auto repair business in the community as well as updates on the tree trimming work around the lake being completed by next week and the retaining wall by the lake and rip rap being completed by the end of 2016. Pilot Project 2 is awaiting a curb cut next week in order to finish stone work; the asphalt path; and plantings, lighting, and railing installation.

Approved a temporary maintenance hire, vacation rollover for the Community Manager, and asking an attorney to meet with the Board in January.

The Board will not have a regular meeting in December unless there is emergency business. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be on January 12, 2017.

If you have any questions about the Board Happenings, please feel free to contact Kirsten Davis at 703-360-6212 or plha@verizon.net.

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facebook.com/pinewoodlake



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Join the Pinewood Lake email group.

To start receiving the ListServ, email plhalistservadmin@googlegroups.com.



Treasurer report

Period ending October 31, 2016, prepared by Nancy Razzino

Below is a chart outlining the total cash balance in the PLHA accounts as of October 31, 2016. The total cash balances for the prior month and for October 2015 are included for comparison.

TOTAL BALANCE	Oct. 31, 2016	Sept. 30, 2016	Oct. 2015
Operations	\$145,940.15	\$130,631.04	\$185,139.80
Reserve	\$2,143,377.62	\$2,188,988.78	\$2,315,460.58
Total	\$2,289,317.77	\$2,319,619.82	\$2,500,600.38
DELINQUENT*	Oct. 31, 2016	Sept. 30, 2016	Sept. 2015
Total balance	\$59,295.79	\$63,243.61	\$60,738.15
90 days or more	\$38,114.44	\$41,141.53	\$35,930.42

*21 accounts over \$1,000, nine of which are over \$1,500.

Delinquent Accounts

The total balance in the delinquent accounts on October 31, 2016 was \$59,295.79. The chart above shows the current balance compared to the prior month and one year ago.

...

Ask the CSL

by Karen Mestemaker

Question: I have a neighbor who likes to feed the wildlife, but I thought that it was harmful to the ducks, geese and turtles. Can you please remind us of the dangers to the wildlife when they are fed bread and crackers by well-intentioned neighbors?

Response: According to the Solitude Lake Management fall publication, the foods we provide to wildlife are not the foods these animals are adapted to eat. Corn, bread and other grain-based foods are high in carbohydrates, which few natural foods are. Wildlife that eat these foods may become unhealthy, or this food may interfere with their ability to process the rest of their natural diet. Some aquatic animals, such as turtles, may become reliant on food provided by humans. As a result, they may stop eating aquatic plants and decaying matter, which can negatively affect the balance of the ecosystem.

Read more interesting details and the complete article at www.solitudelakemanagement.com

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DCCR Committee report

What is a DCCR?

A legal document called the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, And Restrictions.

What is a covenant?

A covenant or architectural standard is a rule governing the use of your property.

Why does Pinewood have a DCCR?

Pinewood Lake is a planned community. In 1969, the builder created these guidelines for our Homeowners Association.

Am I included in our DCCR?

Yes, you signed a deed when you bought your house, which says you accept our governing documents.

How does our DCCR affect me?

It states what an owner may, may not, or must do with their property.

What is the problem?

Many homeowners are concerned about the curb appeal and resale value of our homes. Since our DCCR is outdated, the Board of Directors isn't able to get homeowners to keep up their properties. Broken fences and peeling paint have a direct impact on neighborhood resale values. The Homeowners Association must be able to incentivize homeowners to comply with the Architectural Control Standards to help resale values.

What is the DCCR Committee doing?

They are developing a proposal to help improve the curb appeal and resale value of our homes. **Your ideas are needed.**

The DCCR Committee will speak at our Annual Meeting on Thursday, December 1. The committee members are: Edna Burns, Bev Card, Cidney Jenkins, Jack Kaufman, Brian Palazzolo, and Nancy Razzino. Please share your ideas with them, or better yet, join the committee.

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Neighborhood Watch

Our next meeting will be at 7 p.m. on December 5 with Officer Urps. The topic is Home Security Over the Holidays.

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Frederick Blanchard

September 14, 1935 – August 30, 2016



We lost a community pillar on August 30, 2016. A resident for many years, Fred Blanchard was involved in virtually all significant accomplishments of Pinewood Lake. He was determined to make Pinewood Lake the best community in which to raise our children and enjoy a peaceful and collegial life. His involvement in the various committees was evidence of his desire to maintain and improve our infrastructure. He understood how this would keep our home values on par with the market. Thus, he was a founding member of the Marketing Committee dedicated to the betterment of our association. Understanding the importance of good planning, Fred was instrumental in the development of the Master Plan and other revitalization initiatives. A man of impeccable integrity, we shall miss his insight and counsel. May he rest in peace.

Funeral Arrangements: Wednesday, December 28

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon — Visitation

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m. — Funeral

Greene Funeral Home: 814 Franklin Street, Alexandria, Virginia, 22314, (703) 549-0089

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. — Interment

After a distinguished military career, he will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

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Garden Club unveils plaque for Stephen Papanicolas

by Frank Holub

On October 8, a group of former Garden Club members met at the Memorial Garden on Saint Annes Court to dedicate a plaque in honor of the late Stephen Papanicolas. In attendance were Lone Knapp, Joyce Ramsey, Frank Holub, Brian Palazollo, Roger Reutershan, Dick Knapp and Mary Helen Martinez. Each member in attendance read aloud a portion of a memorial recitation written by Joyce Ramsey. Following the recitation, the plaque was unveiled.

Despite the light rain, the group enjoyed some light refreshments afterwards, from the tailgate of Lone's car. It was a memorable occasion.

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Dare to dream, Dare to change

by Gary E. Woodlin, PhD



In late January our country will inaugurate the 45th President of the United States, Donald J. Trump Sr. Naturally, his stunning victory was unexpected. If we push aside some of the behavior exhibited through the election season it is clear to see, that voters wanted change. Although half of the registered voters stayed home, those who did come out did so in support of their candidate.

There are a number of takeaways from the election of 2016. First, Trump's victory showed us that anything is possible and when others count you out, this should not be a sign to quit. Secondly, perseverance does in fact payoff. This was Mr. Trump's second attempt at his run for the Oval Office, as it was for Secretary Clinton. A lesson, from both of these individuals, is that if you really believe in what you are doing and seek after, go for it. Finally, believe it or not, something President Obama and Mr. Trump have in common, besides both being born in this country, is they represent change. Neither of them had long storied careers in politics.

What does this tell us, individuals desire change, both in their communities as well as their personal life Secondly, both of these individuals beat the odds and did what others told them they couldn't. What is it that you want to do or accomplish, but you are made to believe you can't do it? Dare to dream, go after what you want, at the end, you will have achieved that change you sought.

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New Horizons: donations requested

by Vicki McLeod



When the holidays begin, I am reminded of those who have had bad breaks along the way, but need help from those who have a better way of life.

For the last couple of years I have asked Pinewood Lake to help this home, which houses 8 men and 8 women who have taken the wrong path in life. They have reached out to New Horizons to help turn their lives around.

Please bring unwrapped presents of basic needs, shawls or gift certificates they can use when they are taken on shopping trips. Drop off your donation at the PLHA office by December 17.

We can be a small part of helping New Horizons, which has a great record of recovery.

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Making a difference

by Gary E. Woodlin, PhD

Thank you to all who donated to this year's food drive. Through the generosity of this community and others, we were able to provide 13 Thanksgiving baskets to families in Pinewood and surrounding neighborhoods. Based on the number of family members in each home, the baskets were a blessing to about 70 individuals. Thanks again!



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