

- Blue Mountain Newsletter -

Our Thirty - Sixth Year of Publication

Blue Mountain Property Owners' Association-----Spring 2010

President's Corner

There are a few things going on that you should know about. One is an update on the situation up on Tomahawk Way.

Previous newsletters have reported on problems and negotiations with Shenandoah Farms over their extensive and abusive use of Tomahawk Way and how its maintenance is funded.

On July 1, Warren County will be taking over the responsibility for operation of the Shenandoah Farms Sanitary District . The reasons are many and I should not go into the details here. But the county apparently agrees with Shenandoah Farms that they can no longer manage it effectively themselves . Why do we care?

The agreement that the original developers had on the maintenance split on Tomahawk does not extend to the county therefore we restart our relationship on a clean sheet of paper. My discussions thus far with the county have not indicated that they are disposed to revisit the problem. If we have to, I intend to go to the wall on this issue. It is bad enough to have hundreds of cars tearing up your roads every day but to have to subsidize this travesty is beyond the pale.

Deer Lake: We suspect that the grill to keep debris out of the large overflow pipe at the lake somehow ended up about twenty feet down the pipe with a lot of debris on top of it stopping up the pipe.

(Continued, Pg 3, Col. 1)



Executive Board

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1st VP	
Nynette Rourke	635-6381
Treasurer	
Pete Plourd	636-3657
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Greg Young	703-625-4241
Directors:	
Chuck Campbell	635-3848
Jack Davis	622-2642
Jon Morrison	540-454-1326
Jeff Rash	703-989-9478
Tim Winfield	540-878-1375

Email the board at:

bmpoaboard@yahoo.com

Board meetings are held at the Lodge the 2nd Mon. of each month at 6 p.m. Property owners are welcome and encouraged to attend. Check for updates or cancellations at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bmpoaboard/messages>

Call For Nominees to the BMPOA Executive Board

Board members serve two-year terms. All nine board members, as well as Chairman of the Nominating Committee are up for reelection or replacement in 2010. The Bylaws state:

"The property owners are invited, and will be notified by mail annually, to submit candidates. All such nomination must reach the Chairman of the Nominating Committee by July 1."

Please mail nominations to: BMPOA, P.O. Box 114, Linden, Va. 22642. Or, email nominees to the Nominating Committee at jstuard1@aol.com. All nominees will be reviewed by the Board and then submitted for a vote at the annual meeting in August.

TWO COPIES OF YOUR 2010 RECREATION AREA PASSES ARE IN THIS ENVELOPE

Change in Tax Billing

Effective in 2010, in response to citizen concerns, Warren County has changed the billing cycle for both Real Estate and Sanitary District Taxes from once a year on Dec 5th to two equal installments due June 5th and Dec 5th of each year. This does not change the tax rate or the total amount of taxes due each year. It is just an attempt to make it easier for property owners to meet those tax obligations.

If these taxes are collected by your mortgage company you might not notice the change. However, if you pay these taxes directly we wanted to alert you to the change.

Roads Report

The record snows of 2010 required a record amount of plowing. Following long-standing policy, Jim had contractors attempt to plow the snow down to a level that exposes some gravel to provide some traction for members. But this sometimes results in a need for more costly road work later.

We were fortunate to have a growing number of contractors to clear culverts and ditches and repair potholes so that we could apply more gravel early. By the time this newsletter reaches you we should have completed all major road work and will have turned our attention to keeping potholes filled and keeping culverts cleared throughout the year. I believe this is the earliest we will have completed all major work. Our few paved roads also took a beating this year mainly as a result of all the rain and runoff this spring which washed out some of the edges of the roadbed. These will need to be repaired as well to avoid more costly repairs later.

Because of the record-breaking snowfall we had to spend \$44,960, or about 1/3 of our total 2010 budget just for snow plowing. The board is trimming expenses and making adjustments in an attempt to get by without having to borrow money or recommend a raise in Sanitary District taxes.

Jeff Rash, Roads Chairman
Pete Plourd, Treasurer

DSL Internet Update

Rockbridge Global Village (RGV) reported that it is near an agreement with two property owners to place needed DSL equipment near the top and the bottom of the mountain. When finalized, RGV will start the installation process which will take at least three months before service becomes available. Another company, CenturyLink of Virginia, recently indicated that they will be expanding DSL service to the top of Blue Mountain, specifically up to Hightop Road and Freezeland Road and the intersection of Indian Lookout Path and Freezeland. The estimated timing is the third quarter of 2010.

Additionally, Clearlink Wireless has had some success experimenting with setting up Wireless High Speed internet – including to the Lodge and some surrounding homes. Please check out their website at www.yourclearlink.com or call them at 540-905-7971 for more information.

Tom Lally 540-636-1522

“Snowmegaddon” 2010

NOAA reported that Blue Mountain received 37” of snow during the storm of early Feb. A few days later we got another 4” with high winds which drifted snow up to 6’ deep over many roads that we had just plowed. This could have been the storm of the century.

To keep members informed, Jim McManaway had a series of situation reports sent out to the 185 members for whom we had an email address. That approach clearly was appreciated by members who helped by letting us know of conditions in their specific location including power outages and emergency situations. Based on feedback from you, our contractors did a remarkable job dealing with this highly unusual situation. Some of those contractors worked days and nights straight in high winds and dangerously cold situations to fix, keep fueled, and operate their equipment. A few appreciative members struggled on foot through waist deep snow to bring food and hot drinks to a few of those contractors who want you to know it was greatly appreciated.

Some of you reported that our roads were reopened earlier than the streets in Front Royal. I could easily fill a page of this newsletter with emailed expressions of thanks from members. But this one says it all:

*“Jim,
I would like to submit that you, the plow crews and the POA have done an outstanding job in this difficult, historic situation. Neighborhoods in more affluent NOVA communities have not had the ongoing road attention nor the ongoing communication that we have had on Blue Mountain. To whomever needs to be thanked, please pass along our sincerest appreciation for the heroic efforts that have been expended on our behalf as residents.”*

In alphabetical order, the contractors who were out there day and night and who are deserving of our special thanks and appreciation, are: Jerry Chilcote, Barry Kingery, Jerry McDonald, Pete Plourd, Jeff Rash, Brian Schebish, Matt Steele, Wanda Williams, Tim Winfield, and Garth Woodruff.

We suspect that some members did some voluntary plowing but we are not aware of who they were. If so, we want to thank you as well. Throughout this storm and its aftermath this community took a deep breath, kept its cool, hunkered down, and pulled together to get through it. We may have more challenges ahead but it is now clear that, together, we can prevail.

Jack Davis Newsletter Editor

President's Corner (Cont. from Pg.1)

Before the water level got high enough to overflow the spillway, it lifted the dock off its sliding pipe anchors and the dock floated from its moorings. We are fashioning devices to try to hook on to and pull out whatever is stopping up the pipe so that the overflow system is working again and return the lake to its proper level. Then we will reset the dock on its anchor pipes before it can be used again.

On the other side of the coin, the weather has been beautiful for several weeks, Trillium is blooming, and the green curtain is coming down. Neighboring houses are disappearing in the leaves and you feel that you are on the mountain all by yourself. A great feeling and what we bought into this place for. Henry had a pretty good idea when he visualized this as a three season get-away. If you can make it through the winter, spring is certainly worth it.

Missy tells me that the Lodge is becoming the wedding chapel of Blue Mountain with weddings outside by the cliff and receptions catered inside with beautiful views of the valley and the sunset. Weddings plus other private and community events are beginning to increase the use of the Lodge. Jon Morrison et. al. have done a great service to us all by refurbishing the building over the last several years. Respectfully: James McManaway

From The Lodge

The 2010 season at the BMPOA Lodge on Cliff Road began May 1 and will continue through late October. While a number of dates have already been booked, there are still many dates available for property owners interested in using the facility to host social events (weddings, family reunions, parties, etc.). The setting is spectacular and the fee is a modest \$250 of which \$200 is a refundable cleaning deposit. (Lodge Use, ABC, and contract documents can be viewed and downloaded from <http://www.bmpoa.org/> then go to 'Recreation' then 'Lodge'). Property owners who anticipate booking the Lodge should contact me to make an appointment to visit it and see what is available.

I am continuing to compile information to assist those hosting events at the lodge. If you are a licensed caterer, event planner, etc., feel free to send me information about the services you offer and I will provide it to others. I can be reached at: Mon-Thu (703) 532-4481, Fri-Sun (540) 635-7630, Cell (540) 622-4966 or, email me at: happybooker1@verizon.net
Missy McManaway

Wildfire Mitigation Funding for 2010

In April, I applied for a \$25,000 grant from the Va. Dept. of Forestry to chip deadfall that we pile up next to our roadways and to trim low limbs overhanging our roads so they can better serve as firebreaks and not endanger firemen or damage their trucks and equipment.

If the grant is approved, there is a catch. We must contribute at least 400 hours, or less than two hours per dwelling, piling up deadfall to get the full amount. I will provide more details in the summer newsletter.

The amount of combustible fuel load on the ground is still huge. The average property owner has over two acres, and most of that is woods, which is a serious challenge to keep free of deadfall. Our Va. Wildfire Mitigation Officer continues to warn us to put first priority on clearing combustibles and deadfall (including piles of firewood) a minimum of 30 feet from structures expanding outward as much as you can.

Jon Morrison said at a board meeting last year, "It is not a matter of if we are going to have a forest fire up here, it is just a matter of when." And he is correct. The more hours of your "in-kind" effort you document to me, the more money I can get from the state to help minimize the risk and damage from a forest fire. As soon as you do some work, and before it gets forgotten, let me know your hours of "in-kind" effort, an address of the piles you created, and whether you used a chain saw. Email jstuard1@aol.com or, leave a message at 622-2642.

Jack Davis, Firewise Project Manager

Covenants Enforcement

Thirty two covenants violation were mailed to property owners last fall. The Covenants Enforcement Committee will conduct another survey in October to determine which ones have not been corrected and which ones may need to be turned over to the county for enforcement.

In April, we posted on our website (www.bmpoa.org) specific guidance for settlement firms to help ensure that new property owners are aware that they are purchasing property in a deed-restricted community with protective covenants and bylaws.

If you plan to make exterior changes or additions on your property, read the covenants and get approval first from Architectural Review Committee.

Thank you again for your patience, understanding, and support as we try to protect property values and keep our community an attractive and safe place to live.

Jack Davis, Chairman.

Blue Ridge Properties
Front Royal, Virginia



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Virginia Real Estate Broker

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