



Volunteers: A Driving Force Behind Our Co-op

By Lauren Cummings

Last month's article about Holiday Traditions in Greenbelt reminded me that our co-op was founded by pioneers who "immediately joined committees, clubs and other groups" in order to make Greenbelt great. The spirit of those first residents is still alive today, as GHI remains one of the oldest cooperative communities in the country and the only New Deal community built by President Roosevelt that is still run by its members.

We each moved here knowing that we were buying into a larger piece of a community that needed our ideas, skills, and time. GHI currently has 11 committees that members can join or participate on as a "friend", but many committees are currently lacking an adequate number of volunteers to help. Patricia Novinski (Laurel Hill) has been a GHI resident since 2001 and a board member for the past five years. "Membership on a committee is your opportunity to have a voice. Whether it's weighing exception requests, reviewing guidelines for companion animals, or any other decisions, GHI relies on input from volunteers to produce outcomes which reflect a balance between member needs and administrative requirements."

Member contributions through committees also lessen the cost we would have to pay to employ a staff member to do



Buildings Committee members and a Pilot Program participant examine new door samples.

the same work. Matt Berres, Director of the Maintenance Department, says, "Volunteers help provide a vision for projects but also provide the people-power needed to get things accomplished. For instance, members of the Woodlands Committee organize regular workdays throughout the year to remove invasive plants, improve trails and lead educational hikes in the GHI woodlands so all members can enjoy our forest areas."

Many volunteers contribute a few hours a month to the co-op. Jackie Hackman (Plateau Place) joined the Marketing Committee this year to provide her graphic design expertise to new projects. "Volunteering with GHI is an easy way for me to do what I love with folks that I like," says Jackie.

Other volunteers have stepped up to guide larger projects such as the Pilot Program. Jim Cohen (Northway) has served as Chair of the Buildings Committee since the summer of 2008. "Making our units more comfortable and energy efficient is important for a number of reasons, and I enjoy working with the other committee members and our committee friends on figuring out how to best do this," says Jim.

You may think you don't have enough time to volunteer. Most committees meet once a month for an hour and a half. Many contributions can also be made virtually by working on projects at home and emailing documents around to other committee members.

It's a New Year and we need each of YOU! To learn more about GHI committees or to volunteer, visit www.ghi.coop/content/committees or call Joan Krob, Director of Member Services at 301-474-4161 ext. 138.



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Cold? Mom Always Said, "Put on a Sweater!"

By Susan Walker

Growing up, Mom may have told us to put on a sweater when we complained of being cold. (I like the new fleeced lined flannel shirts even better than a sweater; they are very, very warm.) As the cold air arrives in Greenbelt, it's time to prepare our homes for the winter months. We may heed Mom's advice, but there are also several things members can do to help keep their homes warm and reduce damage caused by freezing temperatures.

- 1) To prevent the pipes from freezing and possibly bursting, disconnect outdoor hoses. Turn off and allow outside faucets to drain (shut off valve is usually located under the kitchen sink). If you have a rain barrel it is recommended that you drain them also.
- 2) Caulk areas around windows and doors that may have small cracks allowing air to penetrate into your home.
- 3) Keep furniture at least six inches from baseboard heaters to allow for better airflow and keep drapes from touching heaters to prevent fire hazards. Also, clean your heaters at least once a year by vacuuming with a wand or nozzle attachment from the BOTTOM of the heater.
- 4) Insulate your attic hatch to prevent loss of heat. "Attic Tent Insulators" can be purchased at local hardware stores and can be installed by you or GHI fee-for-service staff.

More detailed information can be found online at <http://www.ghi.coop/content/tips-and-resources-being-warmer-your-ghi-unit-winter-january-7-2012-workshop-greenbelt> or by contacting the Maintenance Department.

Member Announcements

Kitchen Renovation Contest Winners

The Architectural Review Committee was delighted with the results of the kitchen renovation contest. In total, 32 members submitted entries which included 16 frame homes and 16 masonry homes. Congratulations to the following winners who received a Co-op Supermarket gift card and thank you to all the members who participated.

Frame Homes: 1st Place, Angela & Christopher Stark; 2nd Place, Daniel Hamlin; and 3rd Place, Kristin Fletcher.

Masonry Homes: 1st Place, Eric Leulitte & Xochitl Zamora-Thompson; 2nd Place, Anonymous; and 3rd Place, Richard & Erin Olsen.

You can get inspiration for your own remodel by viewing photos from contest participants at <http://www.ghi.coop/image-gallery>. If you missed the contest, but have photos of your kitchen remodel to include in the photo archive, please send them to Tech Service at rseecharan@ghi.coop.

Additional competitions for bathrooms and additions are planned for the future.

Board Actions Update

Included as an insert with this issue is a list of Board Actions taken from July–September 2013. Full minutes of Board meetings can be viewed at www.ghi.coop/about-ghi/board-of-directors/minutes.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

January

1	—	OFFICE CLOSED* New Year's Day
3	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
6	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
7	8:30 am	Yard Lines Committee
8	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
9	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
13	7:00 pm	Member Outreach Committee
13	7:30 pm	Marketing Committee
15	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
16	7:00 pm	Finance Committee
17	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
20	--	OFFICE CLOSED* Martin Luther King, Jr.
21	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
22	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
23	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
25	11:00 am	Pre Purchase Orientation
27	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
30	6:00 pm	Board Work Session
31	--	OFFICE CLOSED*

* Emergency maintenance service is available outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed. Call 301-474-6011.

Christmas Tree Collection

The City of Greenbelt recycles Christmas trees into mulch. Find a drop off location in GHI at <http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/index.aspx?nid=361>; then place your tree by the small wooden Christmas tree at one of these locations. Collection will take place through the first week in February. Contact Public Works at 301-474-8004 with questions.



Proposed Bylaws Changes

Enclosed with this Communicator issue are recommended changes to four of GHI's bylaws. A task force appointed by the Board of Directors reviewed and created the recommendations to be voted on at the May 15, 2014 Annual Membership Meeting. The Board of Directors has asked for a period of member comments before finalizing the recommendations. Please review the edits (~~strike out~~ = remove current text; **bold font** = new text) and submit your comments to Sheri Swaim in the Manager's Office. You may either submit written comments or email her at: sswaim@ghi.coop.

Comments are due by February 9, 2014.