



# GHI Court Socials: Keep It Simple and Have Fun

By Susan Harris & the Member Outreach Committee



The GHI court party season is here, with some courts holding regular get-togethers and others having their yearly cook-out. We've surveyed members and found several raving about the effects of these meet-ups, which often include not just one court but others nearby, especially if the court is small. One court boasts potluck suppers, music, "even a piano brought outside and a contra dance." Count me in!

Lore Rosenthal is a big fan and says, "I would recommend that EVERY court plan a yearly picnic or potluck."

But many more courts are less social, and we heard from members who'd love the chance to get to know their neighbors and just have fun.

So here are tips for court and multi-court social events, from the members enjoying them already.

- "Simple, simple, simple." No RSVPs required. Just pick a date and location and tell folks to show up with something to share.
- Court get-together occasions include members moving in or out and kids' birthdays (drop-in for snacks on the playground). For Halloween, neighbors meet for candy-giving with wine or chili for the grownups. Casual "Happy Hours" are held on the occasional Saturday night.
- Get the word out by phone or pre-made email group, or print flyers to hang on door knobs.
- One organizer notifies neighbors which previously agreed-upon date the party will be held on, after checking the forecast. If the weather doesn't allow you to be outside, consider a progressive party that moves from house to house on the hour; each house offers one food item.
- Nearby courts and "friends of the court" are often invited.
- Hosts often rotate.
- Locations are members' patios and decks, or a common area. Members bring tables and chairs. In some locations, city-owned picnic tables are reserved for the event.
- Usually members contribute whatever food or drink they choose, so it's truly potluck.

All it takes is one member to get the ball rolling. So if YOUR court or the courts nearby aren't socializing at least yearly, you can change that, and pass the role on to someone else the next year if you'd like. Just remember to keep it simple!



Plateau Place members party in the summer and have a progressive holiday party in the winter. (Photo Credit: Gretchen Schock)



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## Members Encouraged to Spay/Neuter Their Companion Animals

By Kris White, Chair, Companion Animal Committee

This year the Companion Animal Committee's special educational campaign addresses the importance of spaying/neutering companion animals. Every year, millions of cats and dogs of all ages and breeds are euthanized or suffer as strays. These high numbers are the result of unplanned litters that could have been prevented. Still some people are reluctant to spay/neuter their companion animals.

In addition to preventing unwanted litters of animals, there are other reasons to spay/neuter. It provides health benefits for companion animals. For females, it helps prevent uterine infections and breast cancer. Spaying your companion animal before her first heat offers the best protection from these diseases. Neutering your male companion animal helps prevent testicular cancer, if done before six months of age. Neutered males also are less likely to want to roam, less likely to mark in the house, and less likely to be aggressive with other animals.

The cost of your companion animal's spay/neuter surgery is much less than the cost of having and caring for a litter. In Prince George's County, residents pay a smaller annual fee for their county licenses if the companion animals are spayed/neutered (\$5 versus \$25).

Resources for low cost spaying/neutering include the Prince George's County SPCA which offers spay/neuter clinics quarterly and issues vouchers for low-cost sterilization through participating veterinarians. (Call 301-262-5625 and choose Option #6 to find out more about free and low-cost spay/neuter). Another resource is Spay Now which has a branch in Laurel, MD (to learn more, call (301) 483-7080 or go to <http://spaynow.com/>).

GHI is a great place for companion animals to call home and you can help ensure that our pets live healthy and happy lives here.

## Member Announcements Annual Meeting Election & Bylaws Results

Our 2014 Annual Meeting was held on May 15 with 140 members casting ballots. Congratulations to our new GHI elected Board and Audit Committee members:

- Board Members: Frank DeBernardo (131 votes), Ed James (127), Diana McFadden (125), and Susan Ready (127).
- Audit Committee Members: Anna Bedford (135 votes), Ben Fischler (134), Jonathan Gordy (127).

The newly elected Board members are all incumbents and will serve 2-year terms. The newly elected Audit Committee members were incumbents except for Anna Bedford, and will serve 1-year terms. The following four members were also elected to the Nominations & Elections Committee to serve a 1-year term: Kandis Boyd-Wyatt, Stefan Brodd, Teresa Henderson and Tom Jones.

The membership also approved the following Bylaws changes.

- *Article IV, Section 8: Nominations and Elections* which will streamline the election process when there is no contest for the N&E Committee positions.
- *Article VIII, Section 11: Expenditure of Funds and Contracts* clarifies the language used regarding multi-year contracts.
- *Article VIII, Section 11: Expenditures of Funds and Contracts* adjusts multi-year contract dollar limits for inflation.
- *Article VIII, Section 11: Expenditure of Funds and Contracts* more accurately reflects current Human Resources terminology and practice used in determining GHI employees' compensation.

Thank you to all of the members who attended the meeting and who cast ballots. Our coop relies on member participation!

## 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.

July		
4	--	OFFICE CLOSED* ( <i>Independence Day</i> )
7	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
8	8:30 am	Yard Lines Committee
9	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
10	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
14	7:00 pm	Member Outreach Committee
14	7:30 pm	Marketing Committee
15	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
16	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
17	6:30 pm	Investment Committee
17	7:30 pm	Finance Committee
18	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
23	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
24	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
26	11:00 am	Pre Purchase Orientation
28	7:00 pm	Communication Committee
29	8:30 am	Yard Lines Committee

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

## 2014/2015 BOARD OFFICERS

### Steve Skolnik, President

sdskolnik@gmail.com  
301-503-0815

### Susan Ready, Vice President

suready@verizon.net  
301-345-1612

### Chuck Hess, Treasurer

Chuckhess1040@netzero.com  
301-474-3670

### Ed James, Secretary

edward.james@gmail.com  
301-345-8479

## Can You Help GHI Celebrate Labor Day?

The Member Outreach Committee is exploring ways to organize a midway booth or plan a parade entry in this year's Labor Day Festival. More volunteers are needed to make GHI's participation a success. Contact Frank DeBernardo to help! (240-432-2489 or email:

[FDeBernardo@aol.com](mailto:FDeBernardo@aol.com)).