



Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

COMMUNICATOR

Bi-Monthly Publication of the Communications Committee

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LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEMBERS TO RUN FOR GHI OFFICE

BY: ROBIN EVERLY, CHAIR, N&E COMMITTEE

While the country focuses on this year's presidential election, it's time for GHI to focus on its elections for Board of Directors, Audit Committee, and Nominations and Elections (N&E) Committee. Participating and being involved in the inner workings of your housing cooperative is a rewarding and important way of keeping our cooperative financially strong and a place where people want to live.

With the Greener Greenbelt Initiative, GHI is preparing for its future. By being part of one of our elected committees, you will have an opportunity to impact that future. There are four open seats for Board of Directors, three for the Audit Committee, and five for the N&E Committee. Our N&E committee is going to make a real effort this year to have a full slate at the annual meeting as well as the Board of Directors and Audit. If you already serve on one of GHI's volunteer committees, the N&E Committee will be contacting you in the near future. However, any member at least 21 years of age may serve in an elected position and we encourage you to apply. It is easy to get on the ballot. Simply fill out the consent to serve form and file it with Dorothy Lauber, Secretary of the Corporation; or a member of the N&E Committee. Or you can submit a nomination by petition, with 10 members' signatures, to the GHI office by 5 p.m. Friday, May 9. Descriptions of the duties for the positions, forms, and other N&E members can be found on the GHI website at <http://ghi.coop/about.htm>.



Continued on page 5.

GHI COMMUNITY YARD SALE

Date: June 14, 2008
Time: 8:30 am- 12:30 pm
Where: Front Lawn -- GHI Office Grounds

COST TO RESERVE A TABLE IS \$10.00
CONTACT: GHI - 301-474-4161

• SUBMIT • YOUR GHI PICTURES

- Including but not limited to:
- Community Related
 - Surrounding Areas
 - GHI Events and Neighborhoods

Questions about submitting and picture formats? Contact the GHI Main office at 301-474-4161.

2008 ANNUAL MEETING ON MAY 15

The Nominations and Elections Committee (N&E) reminds members that the annual meeting and elections for the GHI Board of Directors, Audit Committee, and N&E Committee are approaching. It is easy to get on the ballot. See the website at <http://ghi.coop/n&einfopackage.htm>. This year's committee is Deborah Cooley, Robin Everly, Marjorie Gray and Andrew Nitz. Please feel free to contact them for additional information.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY SYLVIA LEWIS

"Life is something like this trumpet. If you don't put anything in it you don't get anything out. And that's the truth."
- W.C Handy



Signing our Mutual Ownership Contracts (MOCs) made us members of GHI and entitled us to the benefits that this membership bestows. But there are additional benefits that come to those who believe that belonging to GHI goes beyond signing the MOC and obeying the cooperative's rules. These bonus benefits can be making new friends, developing a skill, exercising an uncovered talent, increasing awareness of the community and making a positive difference.

We all have interests, knowledge, experience or skills that GHI can put to good use. Do you like to plan parties, greet newcomers, or design parade floats? Do you care about the woodlands, playgrounds and open spaces? Do you have knowledge of building maintenance or sustainable design? Do you like numbers and budgets? Are you interested in the legislative process? How about promotion and marketing? Whether you are an extrovert or introvert, young or old, intellectual or intuitive, Democrat, Republican, Independent or Green, there's a way to receive those extra benefits of membership. Become a Court Liaison or run for an elected office such as Board of Directors, Audit Committee or Nominations & Elections Committee.

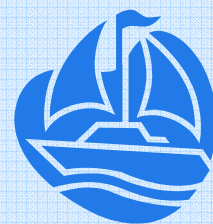
Perhaps your current family or work situation doesn't allow you to volunteer right now. You can still make a difference. If you think of a way GHI could improve the way it operates, let us know. GHI needs your suggestions and ideas. We will be publishing positive, practical suggestions in the *Communicator* and special recognition will be given at the Annual Meeting for ideas that are implemented. See the article "Bright Ideas" on page 4 for two suggestions I received from members within the last two months.



Let's follow W.C Handy's advice, breathe air into that trumpet and blow our horns!

- To join a committee, call Member Services 301-474-4161 ext. 138 and ask for an application form or download a Personal Data Form from the website at www.ghi.coop by clicking on Committees.
- To be a Court Liaison, call Member Services 301-474-4161, ext. 138.
- To run for office, contact the Nomination and Elections Committee (see article on page 1).
- To submit a "Bright Idea" e-mail me at revs.lew@verizon.net or at mgmtoffice@greenbelthomes.net or call me at 301-474-3635.

Do you have a boat or trailer that you would like to store in GHI? Call 301-474-4161, Ext. 136 to arrange to rent a spot in the GHI Boat and Trailer Lot.



**Wear WHITE at
NIGHT**
So Drivers Can SEE You.

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BOARD MEETING AND HIGHLIGHTS

The GHI Board Meetings are held in the Board Room of the GHI Administration Building. Meetings are usually held twice a month on Thursday evenings, except during the summer when meetings are held once a month. Please check the calendar on the GHI website for details. With the exception of executive sessions, all meetings are open to the membership.

During December and January the Board of Directors took the following actions:

- Approved an Investment Policy as prepared by the Investment Committee
- Directed the Communications Committee to redesign and combine GHI's two websites into one website
- Entered into the following contracts:
 - Travelers Property and Casualty Company in the amount of \$396,722 for renewal of GHI's Business Owners Insurance Package
 - Atek Pest Management for a period of three years, commencing January 14, 2008, to provide pest control service for an amount of \$59,260
- Approved renewal of the current Forest Conservation Management Agreement with Maryland Department of Natural Resources for a period of five years to February 2013
- Approved yard plats for 3 Court Research Road
- Approved an exception for reconnection of storm drain runoff to existing underground storm drains at 5G-K Ridge Road
- Authorized the Artifacts Committee to transfer all inventories from the garage to Community Forklift after February 2, 2008
- Announced Sarah Hedley, 57S Ridge Road, winner of the quarterly EZ-Pay drawing
- Approved 4 new memberships and authorized changes to 7 mutual ownership contracts

GIVE US YOUR "BRIGHT IDEAS!"

BY: SYLVIA LEWIS



Phil Brandis was frustrated! He was trying to bring his green GHI Owners' Manual up to date but didn't know if he was missing some of the revised pages. There was no way to check.

Then he had a bright idea. Why doesn't GHI, once or twice a year, when sending rule revisions, include a sheet noting all the page numbers with the date of the last revision. He called me to vent his frustration and propose his solution. GHI is adopting Phil's idea – such a sheet is being produced and will be updated and distributed on a regular basis.

Phil had another concern. What was he supposed to do with new policy sheets that sometimes come with the rule changes? They don't have page numbers or dates but the instructions are to insert them in the Owners' Manual. Where in the Manual are they supposed to go? How do we know which is most current? Management is working on ways to address these concerns.

Anna Socrates had just moved into GHI. She threw a party to show off her new house to her friends. The problem was several of her friends never showed up. They either couldn't find Greenbelt, or found Greenbelt but were confused by the unusual configuration of courts and super blocks. At a New Members' Social, Anna asked me why we didn't have a map of GHI streets and courts on the web site. GHI is now looking at ways to meet this need.

Have a Bright Idea?

Send it to Sylvia Lewis at

revs.lew@verizon.net

or email mgmtoffice@greenbelthomes.net

GHI PEST CONTROL SERVICE: CHANGES YOU SHOULD KNOW.

Based on current regulations from the Maryland Department of Agriculture Office of Plant Industries and Pest Management, any pest control activity within Greenbelt Homes, Inc. must be conducted by an applicator licensed with the Department in the appropriate pest control category.

Occasionally, GHI members request immediate service for the control of some pests such as bees and wasps. Historically, GHI's maintenance staff has treated those pests within the requested time-frame instead of waiting on our pest control contractor to do so. However, this service is no longer permitted, since GHI does not have a certified applicator to treat insect pests.

GHI employs a certified pest control contractor for all pest related services such as inspecting and treating for ants, termites, roaches, yellow jackets and wasps, etc. The contractor makes a weekly service call to GHI throughout the year and will be the only avenue for GHI to provide pest control services for its members.

**To schedule a pest inspection,
please call GHI maintenance at
301-474-6011.**



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Below are important deadlines for the May 15 Annual Meeting:

SCHEDULE OF DEADLINES NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE For Annual Meeting on May 15, 2008

	DEADLINE
To place an item on the agenda by petition for censure or removal of a member of the Board or an elective committee	Midnight, Tues. Apr 1
To place an item on the agenda by petition for specific proposition	Midnight, Fri. Apr 11
Notice of meeting and agenda to be mailed to the membership, including any specific proposed action received in petitions, if applicable, and reasons	Between Fri. Apr. 25 & Mon. May 5
Candidates must turn in to GHI or the N&E Committee their consent form with their biographical sketch (150 words maximum) for publication in the May 8 <i>Greenbelt News Review</i>	Mon. May 5
List of nominated candidates from the N&E Committee to the Board Secretary to be publicly posted by 8 pm	Mon. May 5
To appear on the official ballot, all nominations by petition and all written consent-to-serve forms must be in the hands of Secretary Lauber, 9-M Ridge Road or filed at the GHI office by close of business	Fri. May 9
Proxies must be received at the corporation office by close of business or by Board Secretary Dorothy Lauber, 9M Ridge Road	Fri. May 9
	Midnight, May 10
Application for absentee ballot from Director of Member Services	Between 5 pm on Mon. May 12 and noon on Wed. May 14
Return of absentee ballots to GHI's Director of Member Services	3:30 pm Wed. May 14
Annual Membership Meeting at Community Center	Thurs. May 15, 7:30 pm
Voting for N&E Committee seats (during the meeting)	Thurs. May 15
Voting, Board & Audit Committee seats (upon recess of meeting)	Thurs. May 15
Polls Open at GHI for Board & Audit Committee Seats	Fri. May 16 between 7-10 am and 5-8 pm

* - Reference item 6 - Article IV, Section 8d of the Bylaws states... "The official proxy form may be obtained only by a member submitting a written request, over his or her signature, to the Secretary or to the business office of the Corporation. The form will be sent to the member by mail unless requested in person by the member."

Greenbelt Homes, Inc. Board of Directors
2008 Meeting Schedule

March 13	7:30 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting
March 27	7:30 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting
April 10	7:30 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting
April 24	7:30 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting
May 8	7:30 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting
May 15	7:30 p.m.	Annual Member Meeting
May 22	7:30 p.m.	Regular Board Meeting

2008 Events Calendar

Sponsored by the Member & Community Relations Committee

Date	Event
Apr. 13	Committee Appreciation Luncheon
Jun. 14	GHI Annual Community Yard Sale 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Jun. 22	House & Garden Tour Noon until 4:00 p.m.
Aug. 30- Sept. 1	Labor Day Activities Info. Tables, Booth, & Float
Oct. 5	GHI Annual Picnic 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Note: Dates are subject to change. Check www.ghi.coop and click on the calendar on the right side to verify the dates.

Reminder!

**2008 MONTHLY CO-OP
FEE BREAKDOWN AND
FORM 1098 FOR TAX RE-
CORDS**

In December 2007, a letter showing the monthly co-op fee breakdown for 2008 was mailed to members. In January members received a colored sheet of paper (substitute 1098) indicating the amount of the real estate taxes paid in 2007. Please be sure to keep the substitute 1098 with your tax records. The Board of Directors authorized a \$10 charge for replacements.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact the Finance Committee or the Finance Department at 301-474-4161.

**Reminder that
Taxes are due by
Tuesday, April
15, 2008.**



2007 Index of Changes to the GHI Members Handbook



- January/February 2007:** **Section XIV. Parking** (pp. 70ai-06/70b-05)
 Section XXI. Fireplaces and Wood Stoves (pp. 85-04/86-06)
- March/April 2007:** **Section VI. Yard Line Descriptions** (pp. 40-06/41i.06 and p. 42.i-06/42a.i-06)
 Section X. Improvements, Alterations and Additions
 (pp. 55-06/56-07; 57-04/58-07; 63-90/63a-07; 63b-07/63c-07; 63j-07/63k-07)
- May/June 2007:** **Section IX. Storage Sheds** (pp. 52-07/53-07; 54i-07)
 Section X. Improvements, Alterations and Additions (pp.63bi-07/63ci-07; 63j-07/63k-07;
 63l-07)
 Section XXIII. Rain Barrels (pp. 88-07/89-07)
- July/August 2007:** **Section VII. Fences** (pp. 49-06/49a-07)
 Section X. Improvements, Alterations and Additions (pp. 62.a-07/62b-07; 63-90/63aii-07)

HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR BATHROOM TILES

BY: GHI MAINTENANCE DEPT.

Why Re-Grouting and Re-Caulking is Necessary

According to GHI regulations, members in frame and masonry homes are responsible for re-caulking and re-grouting ceramic tiles in their bathrooms. What are caulk and grout? **Caulk** is a putty-like sealant applied around the tile edges, e.g. where the tiles and a bathtub meet. **Grout** is the thin mortar between the joints of ceramic tile.

If proper care is not taken of the grout and caulk in a bathroom, they will crack over a period of time. Water will be able to seep through defective joints of the ceramic tile, causing them to loosen and fall as the wallboard behind them becomes wet and breaks down. Water can also leak through defective caulking. Water damage to walls, floors and ceilings of your home can subsequently occur and result in the growth of mold. You should closely inspect the tiled surfaces in your bathroom at least once per year. If you notice that the grout or caulk is cracked, chipped, loose or missing, it is essential to do the necessary repairs immediately, since delay can result in extensive damages that may be more costly to repair.

Tools and Materials

You will need the following **tools and materials** for re-grouting and re-caulking ceramic tiled surfaces: a grout removal saw, a rubber float for applying new grout, an old screwdriver, an old toothbrush, a sponge, grout (a non-sanded grout with latex additive for application to bathroom walls and to floors where the tile joints are 1/16 inch or less), and a tub/shower caulk that matches the color of the grout. These materials (except for the toothbrush) can be obtained from a local hardware store such as Home Depot for a total cost of under \$50.

Re-Grouting and Re-Caulking

The most tedious chore in re-grouting tiles is to remove the old grout by scraping the grout removal saw across the grout lines. You should also scrape away any old or defective caulk between the

wall tiles and bathtub, at an inside corner where two walls meet, between floor tile and the bathtub/shower stall, between floor and wall tile, between floor tile and a cabinet toe kick, and around plumbing valves, sinks and faucets. This can be done by using the screwdriver. After the old grout and caulk have been scraped away, use the old toothbrush to clean out any residue and leave the areas to completely dry out, preferably for 2 hours.

Mix the grout with the latex additive, according to directions on the packet. Use the rubber float to spread the grout over a workable section of the tile by pushing the grout diagonally across the joints to force it down into the gaps. Once the joints are packed with grout, scrape the excess grout off the surface of the tile with the grout float. Hold the float at a sharp angle and again use diagonal strokes to keep from digging grout out of the joints. Clean up the excess grout with a damp sponge and a couple buckets of water. Wipe as much of the grout as you can off the surface of the tiles using circular strokes. Keep rinsing the sponge so that it stays clean. After the grout has hardened, you should re-caulk by filling the required joints completely, then smoothing them out with a damp rag or wet finger.

GHI's Maintenance Department will re-grout and re-caulk your bathroom on a fee-for-service basis if resources are available or recommend companies that could be hired by you to perform this service. Contact GHI Maintenance for more information at 301-474-6011.

GHI Scheduled Maintenance 2008 Projects

(approximate dates, subject to change)

May	Community Beautification Inspections
May	Trim Painting
May	Spring Gutter Cleaning (limited)
May	Spring Concrete Repairs
June	Slate Roofs & Copper Gutters
June	Underground Utility Repairs
July	WSSC Water Supply Repairs (tentative)
July	Parking Lot Repairs
Sept	Townhouse Furnace Replacements
Oct	Fall Concrete Repairs
Nov	Fall Gutter Cleaning

It's a Date March/April 2008

Mar. 5	Member and Community Relations	7:00 PM
Mar. 11	Yardline	8:30 AM
Mar. 12	ARC	7:30 PM
Mar. 13	Board of Directors	7:30 PM
Mar. 19	Woodland Committee Finance Committee	7:00 PM 7:00 PM
Mar. 20	SDP	7:00 PM
Mar. 25	Yardline Committee	8:30 AM
Mar. 27	Board of Directors	7:30 PM
Apr. 2	Member and Community Relations	7:00 PM
Apr. 9	ARC	7:30 PM
Apr. 10	Board of Directors	7:30 PM
Apr. 16	Woodlands Committee Finance Committee	7:00 PM 7:00 PM
Apr. 17	SDP	7:00 PM
Apr. 24	Board of Directors	7:30 PM

GHI HOME SALES REMAIN STRONG

BY: MARKETING COMMITTEE

Every month the media seems to bring more bad news about the [housing market](#). This is untrue for our housing cooperative. Homes that sold recently do not show declining prices. GHI's market is still strong. What matters is that GHI offers affordable, well-maintained homes in a vibrant community.

If you are a seller, simply placing a For Sale sign in your front yard or even placing your home on the Multiple Listing Service is not enough to attract a buyer. You've got to be aggressive and make your home stand out like a shining star. Whether you plan to hire an agent or sell your home yourself, consider the Marketing Committee's recommendations on how to prep and stage your home. Learn how to prepare your home, which repairs are absolutely required and how to price your house competitively to sell in the shortest period of time. A list of homes that sold recently and their prices is available at the GHI office.



Spring is the best 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. The greatest number of buyers actively search for new homes in April, May and June. This is the best time to hold an open house, both after one of the GHI Orientations and on May 3 during the Community- Wide Open House sponsored by the Marketing Committee. Orientation dates are available online at www.ghi.coop. Careful planning and sprucing up your home will send buyers scurrying for their checkbooks.

IMPORTANT: ABOUT 2008 COMMUNICATOR SUBMISSIONS

Here is the 2008 schedule of deadlines for submission of articles, photographs, and announcements are due for the Communicator newsletter. **Please submit this information, no later than the due date, to Brenda Lewis at blewis@greenbelthomes.net and not individual committee members.**

We need to start enforcing our deadlines because the last few issues we have been scrambling to get the newsletter to the printer. As you know, we are all volunteers. Please help us to avoid this situation with future issues. Thank you! -Robin Everly, Chair

Communicator 2008 Issues	Articles Due By
May/June	Monday, March 17
July/August	Monday, May 19
September/October	Monday, July 21
November/December	Monday, September 22
January/February 2009	Monday, November 17



GHI Community
Wide Open House

May 3

For more information, contact GHI Main office at 301-474-4161 or www.ghi.coop