



Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

COMMUNICATOR

Bi-Monthly Publication of the Communications Committee

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WSSC — WATER SUPPLY LINES AFFECTING THE CITY OF GREENBELT



GHI staff met with members of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC www.wsscwater.com) and City of Greenbelt officials on Friday April 25 to discuss the status of the upcoming major project of the Commission's replacement of water supply lines affecting the City of Greenbelt and a significant portion of the masonry homes in the Greenbelt Homes community.

GHI was informed that the overall project is at 70% of the design phase (at the time of the meeting), and that the Commission's surveying consultant is expected to complete its work by the end of May. Actual work for the project is expected to start during the spring of 2009 at the earliest, not 2008 as previously announced by WSSC.

GHI and the City of Greenbelt have asked WSSC to present its plans at a public town meeting in Greenbelt, once the design has been completed. All residents who are affected by the project will be invited to attend. That meeting is tentatively targeted for July, 2008. Details will be passed along as they become available.

Related to this, GHI staff has investigated the possibility of relocating the electric service cable from overhead to underground locations, in conjunction with the WSSC project to replace water supply piping for masonry units. PEPCO has provided the following information:

- The electric cable cannot be located in the same trenches as the water piping. It must be installed in a separate trench that is at least five feet away from water and sewer piping. Thus, relocation of electrical service wiring must be a separate project and cannot be combined with the replacement of water supply piping.
- GHI would be required to pay for the entire cost of the project. The average cost for relocating electric cable from an overhead to underground location for a residential unit is approximately \$10k.

In view of this information, GHI staff has recommended to the Board that GHI should not pursue that idea further because of the need to allocate limited funds to more urgent physical plant concerns such as improving the insulation in GHI homes.



GHI Annual Members Picnic
Sunday,
October 5, 2008
12:30 pm until
3:30 pm

All Members Welcome!

Great food (incl. vegetarian fare) and entertainment.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY SYLVIA LEWIS

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The newly elected GHI Board has awesome responsibilities. It is responsible to 1,600 member shareholders; it oversees a corporation that has an annual budget of almost \$8 million; it is expected to respect the honorable legacy of cooperative living while increasing the comfort and well being of members and the sustainability of our cooperative.

It is important, as we deliberate on the various issues facing us, that we not lose sight of the purpose of our organization. This purpose is encapsulated in the GHI Mission Statement, a copy of which is displayed in the GHI Board room, serving as a beacon to help us stay on course. The goals set out in the statement are admirable ones: providing quality homes; fostering community; respecting the historical legacy and ideals; maintaining, protecting and enhancing GHI's buildings and open spaces; preserving financial stability and sustainability; promoting diversity and involvement; and educating members regarding their rights and responsibilities. The challenge to the new board, as it has been for every board since the cooperative was founded over 55 years ago, is making decisions that are true to the mission.



Seated: Luisa Robles, Sylvia Lewis, David Morse. Standing: Ed James, Patricia Novinski, Errol Mazursky, Suzette Agans, Diana McFadden and Gretchen Overduff, General Manager.

This is not always easy. Sometimes the goals appear to be in conflict, e.g. respecting historic legacy and providing 21st century quality homes, or enhancing the cooperative's assets and preserving financial stability. One of the results of the Greener Greenbelt Initiative is that we will be concentrating much of our time and energy in the coming year to planning for the long term maintenance and enhancement of our homes. We will also be including sustainable practices in all aspects of our cooperative's operations. We will also be highlighting other aspects of our Mission during the coming year. There will be more education and input sessions giving members increased opportunity to participate. There will be a new emphasis on volunteer recruitment for committee membership and for other activities where members can share their interests and skills.

The greatest asset of GHI is its membership. Members deserve a Board that is hard working, knowledgeable, and does its best to serve the interests of the entire cooperative. But to be truly effective, the Board needs an informed membership that is open to new ideas and readily communicates its opinions and concerns. My hope for the coming year is that both these conditions will exist and working together we will live up to the GHI mission and accomplish great things.

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.

The Board of Directors took the following actions from March 27 through April 30:

- Approved 19 new memberships and approved 1 change to a mutual ownership contract.
 - Entered into the following contracts:
 1. *Hearn Insulation* to perform spring gutter cleaning of GHI frame, townhouse, brick homes as directed by GHI, for an amount not to exceed \$14,832.
 2. *Hearn Insulation* to perform fall gutter cleaning of all GHI homes for an amount not to exceed \$26,141.
 3. *Unifirst* to supply rental uniforms for GHI employees under a 3-year contract effective April 14, 2008 in accordance with their bid pricing.
 - Made the following contributions: City of Greenbelt Emergency Relief Fund - \$800; Cooperative Communications Association - \$100; Friends of the Greenbelt Museum - \$200.
 - Agreed to send letters of support to retain the proposed budget amount to support the National Association of State Foresters for both state and private forestry funding for the fiscal year 2009, as well as letters supporting work programs of the National Agricultural Library and BARC.
 - Denied a request by the member at 4D Laurel Hill Road to keep an existing over-height vinyl shed and directed the member remove the shed by June 1, 2008.
 - Allowed an existing, un-permitted, non-complying privacy screen in the gardenside yard at 6Z5 Plateau to remain for health reasons, with the proviso that the screen will be removed or replaced at resale.
 - Granted permission for the member at 13Q Ridge Road to install a wood picket fence on the gardenside of the home where there were questions raised about placement and style being harmonious with the existing row.
 - Gave permission for the installation of a proposed aerial rigging apparatus in the gardenside yard of 3R Research Road within the time period allowed for temporary structures by GHI rules. (The member must sign a hold harmless/indemnification statement while this apparatus is installed.) This permission is in effect until resale of this unit only.
 - Reaffirmed the Architectural Review Committee's charter and recommended that it continue to be used without change as the operational guidelines for this committee.
 - Denied permission for installation of a proposed privacy screen/fence at 14P Ridge Road.
 - Approved yard plats for 58 court Ridge Road; 1, 3 and 7 courts Plateau Place.
 - Granted permission to the Greenbelt Climate Action Network to install a submetered water line from the GHI administration building across GHI property to the Hamilton Gardens and directed management to prepare a letter of support for this project.
 - Established the standing committee structure for the cooperative as revised and directed that it be published.
 - By consensus, agreed to move forward as planned with the 2008 Community Beautification Program to begin May 12.
 - Encouraged the Finance Committee to continue to work on the issue of reverse mortgages for members.
 - Approved charters for the following committees: Member and Community Relations, Companion Animal, Marketing, Communications and directed that they become the governing documents for these committees.
 - Heard a report from the Companion Animal Committee in which the board was made aware that committee members attended a disaster preparedness presentation in College Park. The Committee became aware of an organization called Noah's Wish that responds to disasters all over the country to rescue companion animals.
 - By consensus agreed to hold a special event at the Community Center for a presentation from the Humane Wildlife Services.
 - Authorized opening of an investment account with Vanguard.
 - Approved the following door prizes to be awarded at the Annual Meeting: Certificate toward co-op fees in the amounts of \$250, \$150 and \$50. Five \$25 gift certificates to the co-op supermarket. Two tickets to the Greenbelt Arts Center. Five \$10 gift certificates to the New Deal Café.
 - Approved the closing of the GHI offices at noon on Friday, April 25th in recognition of staff appreciation.
 - Announced Julie Falkner, 2J Eastway, winner of the quarterly \$200 E-Z Pay drawing.
-

GHI ANIMAL COMPLAINTS

BY: COMPANION ANIMAL COMMITTEE

GHI Member Services Department and the Companion Animal Committee continue to receive complaints of cats being left outside to roam into other members' yards, common areas and the woodlands. GHI Companion Animal Regulations require guardians to supervise and control their cat, dog, rabbit, etc. when outside and to ensure the animal does not cause problems to others. County and city animal control ordinances also prohibit cats running-at-large.



Many humane societies and animal protection organizations can be contacted to obtain vital information detailing the numerous risks to your family's and to your cat's health and safety. There

is also information to help guardians acclimate their cat to life indoors. Please contact GHI if you have any questions or need guidance. Cats do live longer and healthier lives when kept indoors.

**Don't be caught in a dry spell.
Order your Rain Barrel today!**



For more information on rain barrels, approximate costs, and other details, visit www.ghi.coop/rainbarrels/index.htm or contact Rean Secharran at rsecharran@greenbelthomes.net or (301) 474-4161 x143

DROUGHTS & GARDENING

BY: BENJAMIN BOYES,
GROUNDS DEPARTMENT MANAGER

Despite the rainy spring, a summer drought may be on its way. Here are some helpful hints to survive the summer months.

To preserve moisture in *already established gardens* -- Mulches, especially shredded hardwood, absorb water and prevent evaporation. Weeds will compete with and rob your plants of valuable moisture and should be kept to a minimum. If there are no restrictions, watering should be done in the early morning or early evening hours to maximize absorption. The rain barrels used by GHI members are an additional asset in water conservation. Slow (with a sprinkler) deep watering is preferable to standing there with a hose for a few minutes and having the water run off down hill. Our native plants are more drought tolerant and should need less care.



If you are considering installing a *new garden* certain factors should be incorporated into your planning. The high clay content of our soils should be broken up and mixed with a proper amendment such as Leaf Gro. When selecting plants, keep in mind: whether or not they require sun/shade; their height/width; and pest/disease resistance. Plants roots do not grow well in soggy soils or clay soils, so correct these problems before starting your garden.

A very short list of *drought tolerant native plants* includes: rattlesnake fern; broomsedge, gama grass; straw lily; partridgeberry; wild indigo; butterflyweed; wild bergamot, Solomon's seal; bird's foot violet; sheep laurel; witch hazel; sumac; eastern redbud; chestnut oak; and trumpet creeper.

We may see shrubs and trees die in the next year or two from last year's drought. Your garden is a valuable aesthetic and financial resource. The gardening crew at GHI will be more than pleased to assist you to monitor and preserve it.

HAPPY GARDENING!!

WHO'S WHO AT GHI

BY: BRENDA C. LEWIS, SPHR

Benjamin Boyes

The search for a Manager of the Grounds Department (formerly called Landscape Specialist) is over, and Ben Boyes joined the GHI staff on May 6th. After spending 19 years running his own landscape business, he decided he wanted others to have the ownership headaches. He interviewed with some of the larger well-known area landscape firms but did not find a company he wanted to work for until he interviewed with Greenbelt Homes, Inc. His strong focus on customer service and the "neighborhood" feel of the community were driving forces in his desire to work here.



Ben grew up in nearby Rockville, MD in what he recalls as a real community similar to GHI. He graduated from Frostburg State University with a BS degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Management (Biology). Ben has worked for the Department of Agriculture, State of Maryland, and for the US Forestry Service, as well as a suburban plant center as a landscape foreman. His consistent yet varied landscape background should prove beneficial to GHI.

Ben has three children, sons, Matthew and Steven and a daughter, Melissa. They enjoy lots of outside activities such as fishing, hiking and skiing. When traveling, Ben enjoys going to upstate NY or to the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. His travels also include going abroad to the British Isles. Ben wants GHI members to know that he sincerely believes in the give and take of communication, and looks forward to working with each of you.



SPOTLIGHT: MEMBER AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This Committee's mission is to foster community – among ourselves and in greater Greenbelt. Part of the way we do that is to organize activities within the co-op for us, the members of GHI, and another part is to facilitate GHI's participation in City events, in particular the Labor Day Festival. Our activities may be described as fun and social.

Most of our activities are seasonal. The Annual House and Garden Tour is in the month of June, and though it takes place in an afternoon, we start planning the tour months in advance. This year's tour features homes that have implemented sustainable practices, as well as homes that have interesting architectural features, decors, or gardens. As those of us GHIers who have done this tour before know, it is a great way to get ideas for our own homes, a good walk through our lovely community, and a lot of fun chatting with members who open their homes and gardens to us and with members who just happen to touring at the same time and speed as we are. Thank you to all members who have shared their home project accomplishments with us!

At the end of summer is the annual Labor Day Festival, where we have a booth to provide information about the co-op to the rest of Greenbelt (and anyone else who comes to the festival), and a float in the parade. Since we design, construct, and decorate the booth and the float, this activity uses artistic creativity, practical social creativity, a modicum of brute strength, and lots of elbow grease! And, since we staff the booth, a bit of gregariousness and sociability. As you can see, it takes all kinds of people for this project, and we could always use some help! This year's theme will be "It's a Small World After All" and it will demonstrate how diverse our community is. Please see the feature article and plea for help in this issue.

In the fall comes the annual members' picnic. We apologize for not being able to hold an annual picnic last fall. However, there will be a picnic this fall.

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Mark your calendar for October 5. In a sense, this activity is a bit easier because the focus is narrower: food and entertainment! M&CR procures the food, tables, and entertainment, worries about the weather and then chows down and socializes just like everyone else. If you haven't been an "everyone else" before, please look for the picnic announcement this fall and come join us. There is an admission fee of bringing a non-perishable food item(s) that we will donate to our local food banks.

The winter months are quiet ones for M&CR, but we gear up again at the cusp of winter and early spring to host the annual luncheon to recognize committee members, volunteers (people who have worked on committee projects but are not committee members), and our court liaisons. This is an "exclusive" event: to get invited, join a committee or volunteer to work on a project! A great time is had by all.

Then, when the warm weather returns (and sometimes before it leaves again), we organize a community yard sale. Like the House and Garden Tour, this event is perfect for "social grazing," chatting with a member here and another member there, saying "hi" to folks you may not have seen for a while, etc. Plus, as with any yard sale, shoppers may find treasures and sellers gain space at home.

And finally, there is one project that we work on throughout the year -the Court Liaison Program. Is there a neighbor in your court who is always there with a helping hand whenever someone needs it, or perhaps always has a friendly word? Or someone that everyone in your court instinctively turns to for advice or consultation whenever they have an issue with their house, yard, or even GHI? Might that person be you? If you know (or are!) someone like that, please nominate them (or yourself). The Court Liaison helps make sure that all of us GHiers are informed about GHI events and helps us feel as welcome as we really are.

Our current members are: Cindy Cutright (Chair), Kay Cummings, Frank DeBernardo, Ed James, Dorothea Leslie, Barbara Logan, Jane Menis, and Liz Werlwas. Our board liaison is Ed James and our staff liaison is Joan Krob. We have four openings on our committee. Please consider joining us even it is just for a project. We meet the first Wednesday of each month in the GHI Lobby at 7:00 p.m. Hope to see you there!

For more information on any of the items mentioned in this article, or to make suggestions or give other feedback, please contact our staff liaison, Joan Krob, at 301-441-4161 ext. 138 or jkrob@greenbelthomes.net.

SUBMIT YOUR PICTURES



We know we've got talented members out there and we would like some help to show off our beautiful community!!!



We are looking for pictures (showing Greenbelt, GHI, and the surrounding areas) to be used throughout Greenbelt and in GHI publications. Credit will be given.

For details, contact the GHI main office.

When submitting pictures, please submit them in the following formats: JPEGs or TIF file format, at least 300 dpi resolution, and please include your name and address. If you do not have an electronic copy of your photo, please let the GHI main office know and they will assist you with scanning.

Good-bye and thank you to Steve Ruckman

Friday, May 23rd, was the last day of employment for Stephen Ruckman, who resigned his position as GHI's Finance Director after more than five years of service. Steve is joining a non-profit organization in Northern Virginia, where he and his wife are relocating. All of us at GHI wish him well in his new endeavors and thank him for his services to GHI.

"Beginning in 2006, the Greener Greenbelt Initiative (a partnership between GHI and the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects) has involved coop members, civic leaders and design professionals in generating ideas for making "Old Greenbelt" a better place to live, work and play. Refer to the enclosed brochure which highlights the accomplishments of the Greener Greenbelt Initiative and its future activities."



Maintenance Department Notice

The Maintenance Dept.
reception desk is
CLOSED for lunch
between 1-2 p.m. daily.
You can reach the Administrative
front desk for emergency calls
during that period of time.

HELP WANTED

We're looking for members for the following committees:

Finance Committee: Helps to recommend and review GHI's budgets and reserve funds. Determines the financial impact of planned programs. Looking for 2 volunteers.

Community Relations Committee: Works with the Marketing Committee to help members with community related functions and activities.

Communications Committee: Looking for writers and photographers. Writers and photographers don't necessarily need to attend monthly meetings.

Please check the web site www.ghi.coop or the *News Review* for exact dates of meetings since they are subject to change. Also attend a meeting first to see if this is the activity you would like to be part of.

Book Review

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden publishes a wonderful gardening series called the BBG All-Region Guides. The books are reasonably priced (under \$10.00 each) and entirely on a particular gardening topic such as sunny border plants, Japanese gardens, kitchen gardens, you name it.

One of my favorites in the series is entitled "Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants". Suggestions on native alternatives are available on the topic categories of ornamental plants: trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, grasses, vines, etc.

The format is simple and ingenious. The authors try to match up the characteristics you love in the invasives, showy flowers, large leaves, lovely fall color with natives with similar characteristics. An invasive such as English ivy (*Hedera helix*) is featured and then detailed information about native alternatives are listed and described. In the case of English ivy, Allegheny spurge (*Pachysandra procumbens*) and shrub yellowroot (*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*) are suggested.

This book is available at the Greenbelt library and for an additional list of native alternatives you can go to BBG's website at

<http://www.bbg.org/nativealternatives> .



--Robin Everly

Get Involved!

- To apply 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 submit a "Bright Idea" e-mail Sylvia Lewis at revs.lew@verizon.net or at mgtoffice@greenbelthomes.net or call 301-474-3635.

It's a Date July/August 2008

July 1	Greener Greenbelt Initiative	7:00 PM
July 2	Member & Comm. Relations	7:00 PM
July 4	Fourth of July Holiday	CLOSED
July 8	Ad Hoc Yard Line Committee	8:30 AM
July 9	Member and Community Relations Committee	7:00 PM
July 9	Architecture Review Committee	7:30 PM
July 16	Finance Committee/Woodlands	7:00 PM
July 21	Communications Committee	6:45 PM
July 23	Companion Animal Committee	7:30 PM
July 24	Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM
Aug. 4	Greener Greenbelt Initiative	7:00 PM
Aug. 6	Member and Community Relations Committee	7:00 PM
Aug. 13	Architecture Review Committee	7:30 PM
Aug. 14	Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM
Aug. 18	Communications Committee	6:45 PM
Aug. 20	Finance Committee/Woodlands	7:00 PM
Aug. 21	Member Input Session: 2009 Budget	7:30 PM
Aug. 27	Companion Animal Committee	7:30 PM

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 to 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

September/October	Monday, July 21
November/December	Monday, September 22
January/February 2009	Monday, November 17

Farmer's Market Sundays 10 AM—2 PM Roosevelt Center



2008 Events Calendar

Sponsored by the Member & Community Relations Committee

Date	Event
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.

Notary Services Available

GHI has several staff members who can provide GHI members with notary services. Call the main number and ask the reception desk if a notary is available prior to coming to the Administration Building. No charges are made for the services.

GHI Maintenance Schedule

May-Aug	Community Beautification inspections
May-Aug	Trim Painting
July-Sept	Slate Roofs & Copper Gutters 7AB,GH Crescent;4EF Ridge;2E-K Westway
July-Sept	Parking Lot Repairs (major repairs @CR7, SO7, PL4)
July-Aug	Underground Utility Repairs
July-Aug	Summer Concrete Repairs
September	Townhouse Furnace Replacements
September	Garage Door Replacement
October	Fall Concrete Repairs
Nov-Dec	Fall Gutter Cleaning
2009	WSSC Water Supply Repairs (tentative)
Jun—Sept.	Slate Roofs & Copper Gutters
July-July	Spring Gutter Cleaning (limited locations)