



Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

COMMUNICATOR

Bi-Monthly Publication of the Communications Committee

Administration: (301) 474-4161 • Maintenance: (301) 474-6011

E-mail: mgmtoffice@greenbelthomes.net • www.ghi.coop

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Message from President	2
Contact Information	2
Board Highlights	3
Fall Gardening Ideas/Tips	4
GHI Bright Ideas	4
GHI Homes Hold Value	5
Ad Hoc Yard line Comm.	5
Companion Animal Com.	6
Who's Who at GHI	6
WSSC Project Update	7
Rain Barrels at GHI	7
Submit Pictures Info	8
It's A Date	8
Maintenance Schedule	8

REPLACEMENT RESERVE PROGRAM: QUESTIONS YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK (PART 1)

BY: SUZETTE AGANS

GHI's Board of Directors established the replacement reserve fund several decades ago to pay for future replacements of very expensive components such as roofs, windows, electric baseboard radiators, water heaters and vinyl siding on frame homes. For example, GHI staff hired contactors this year to replace slate roofs and copper gutters on 42 brick homes at a cost of \$534,000. Within a few years, replacement of all slate roofs will be completed.

The funds to replace the roofs came from the Replacement Reserve Fund, specifically for masonry homes. Each of the three categories of homes (masonry, frame and larger homes) has its own funding plan since the replacement costs for components vary for each home category. Members make contributions to the replacement reserve program based on the type of unit that they reside in.

What is GHI's replacement reserve program?

The replacement reserve program is included in your coop fee. GHI's monthly coop fee is comprised of 3 main categories of expenses: 1) property taxes; 2) annual operating expenses; and 3) replacement reserve contribution. Some members have additional fees for additions, garages, etc.

Why does GHI need a replacement reserve program?

By maintaining a replacement reserve program, GHI has adopted one of the best practices in the community association industry. This program ensures that funds are collected in advance to avoid borrowing later to pay for component replacements. It minimizes sharp fluctuations in the operations' budget and unexpected hikes in monthly fees to cover major replacement expenditures. It also equalizes the contributions of old and new owners towards the replacement costs of major items in a unit. For example, every owner will pay a share of the replacement cost for a roof that will be replaced when it is 25 years old if he/she lives in the unit during that time.

How about the Addition Maintenance Reserves Program? What is that?

This program is primarily for members who have additions on their units and agreed to join this program (571 additions are in the program; 188 are not). This program is currently designed to replace certain items in an addition, e.g., roofs, windows or siding of a particular type. Routine maintenance and repairs that are done on additions by GHI maintenance staff are charged to the Maintenance Program.

In a future Communicator... A recap will be provided of the July meeting hosted by the Finance Committee with the Buildings Committee and the Board to discuss the recent professional review of GHI's Replacement, and Additions Maintenance Reserves Programs.



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

**All Members
Welcome!**

**Great food (incl. vegetarian
fare) and entertainment.**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY SYLVIA LEWIS

OFFICERS:

Sylvia Lewis
President
(301) 474-3635
revs.lew@verizon.net

Errol Mazursky
Vice President
(202) 332-3320
(571) 262-9101
errol@elpnet.org
eflynn23@yahoo.com

Suzette Agans
Treasurer
(202) 460-1532
suzflower@yahoo.com

Ed James
Secretary
(301) 345-8479
edjames@greenbelt.com
edward.james@gmail.com

DIRECTORS:

David Morse
(301) 938-2909
Voxfatui@aol.com

Diana McFadden
(301) 474-6787
Bowregard2003@yahoo.com

Luisa Robles
(301) 313-0409
luisafrobles@gmail.com

Ed Hickey
(301) 220-1966
Ronnie_ed@verizon.net

Patricia Novinski
301.982488
novinskip@aol.com

October is Co-op Month,

and what better place to celebrate it than in Greenbelt? Since 1938, co-ops have flourished in our town. Our coop memberships spread beyond GHI—many of us are also members of the Greenbelt Consumer Cooperative (better known as the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket), the Greenbelt Federal Credit Union, the New Deal Café, and perhaps we are current or past members of the Co-op Nursery School. If you volunteer with the *Greenbelt News Review* you are members of that co-op too. Yes, Greenbelt is a Co-op Town. But we are not the only ones. Throughout the United States it is estimated that two in every five people belong to a co-op. Cooperative enterprises are not only small and local, such as the ones in Greenbelt, they can also be Fortune 500 businesses. Nationwide Insurance, for example, is a co-op! So are Land O'Lakes, Ocean Spray, Sunkist, ACE Hardware and the Associated Press!



In 1995, at its 100th anniversary meeting, the International Cooperative Alliance adopted a "Statement of Cooperative Identity" and updated its Principles. The Statement defines a cooperative as "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise." Cooperative Principles include: Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Member Economic Participation; Autonomy and Independence; Education, Training and Information; Cooperation Among Cooperatives; and Concern for Community.



Cooperative enterprises keep our town vibrant and strong. Because of their shared concern for the community, I believe they will be even more important in the future. More than 15 years ago, at an international Cooperative Congress in Tokyo, Sven Book noted the tie between cooperatives and the environment, saying, "The next century needs the contributions of cooperative organizations as a people-based international countervailing power for economizing the natural resources of the world and hence protecting the fundamental needs of coming generations!"

The co-ops in Greenbelt will be joining together to celebrate Co-op month in October. Be sure to read the *Greenbelt News Review* to get up to date information on events that are being planned.

Farmer's Market
Sundays 10 am—2 pm
Roosevelt Center



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 May and June, the Board of Directors took the following actions:

- Elected the following officers: Sylvia Lewis, President; Errol Mazursky, Vice-President; Suzette Agans, Treasurer; Ed James, Secretary.
- Approved charters for the Buildings Committee, Green Ribbon Task Force, and Ad-Hoc Yard Line Committee.
- Agreed to the posting of the original drawings of GHI on the AIA website in connection with the final report on the AIA 150 Blueprint for America Project.
- Referred a request for a skylight at 36H Ridge Road back to the Architectural Review Committee for further consideration.
- Forwarded consideration of boiler room conversion to the Buildings and Marketing Committees and asked staff to conduct a member survey of the impacted courts.
- Approved yard plats for 5 Court Plateau Place.
- Approved 10 new memberships and made 5 changes to mutual ownership contracts.
- Entered into the following contracts:
 - **Hearn Insulation & Improvement Company:** slate roof and gutter & downspout replacement at 6A and 6B Ridge Road at a cost not to exceed \$28,969.
 - **Hearn Insulation & Improvement Company:** to clean gutters on 745 GHI homes at a cost not to exceed \$11,309.50.
 - **Magnolia Plumbing, Inc.:** repairs of underground sanitary sewage and storm drain utilities at eleven sites for a bid not to exceed \$48,917.
 - **Magnolia Plumbing, Inc.:** drainage system improvements at two locations for a total not to exceed \$9,103.

Did you know?

GHI has several resources for home and garden. The following items can either be borrowed for free or at minimal cost:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| • Pole extension brush | • Straw |
| • Garden weasel | • Ladder |
| • Medium gray exterior paint | • Leaf bags |
| • Stratford brown exterior paint | • Damp rid |
| | • Smoke alarm |

Items that are sold to members:

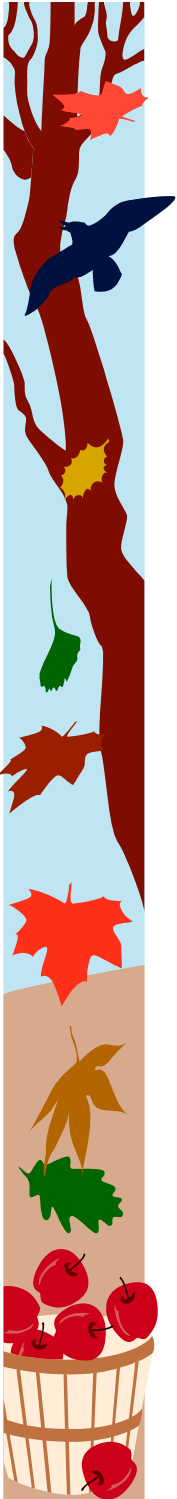
- Grass seed (\$2 a bag)
- Hunter green paint (\$35 a gallon, \$8.75 a quart)



FALL GARDENING IDEAS AND TIPS

BY: BENJAMIN BOYES, GROUNDS TEAM MANAGER

There may be a tendency to stop gardening late in the season, but some tasks are vital for the health of your plants and will prevent unnecessary spring work. Fall is the absolute best time of the year for lawn aeration, seeding, fertilization and for installing new trees or shrubs. Some pruning and trimming is also best done at this time.



Plants set in the ground in late September or October begin to establish a strong root system early to better withstand summer droughts – the most stressful period of the year. Only cool season grasses such as bluegrass, fescues and ryegrass should be seeded now. Aeration is normally done prior to the seeding as it allows a greater movement of water, nutrients and air, which stimulates root growth.

Summer- and fall-blooming shrubs and some perennials and trees need to be pruned in the autumn. Daylilies, peonies, iris and daisies do best if trimmed back late in the year. Black-eyed Susans and coneflowers have seeds that will attract and feed birds and should be left until spring to cut back. Butterflyweed and sedum also add beauty to the winter landscape, so it would be better to wait to prune them. Ornamental grasses die back in the fall and can be cut back or left if one desires it in the winter landscape. Trees need to be pruned to remove dead, broken or diseased sections or to cut them away from man-made structures.

Fertilizing in the fall is important for lawns but not essential for other plants because it could stimulate late season growth when these plants are becoming dormant. Leaf removal is necessary throughout the autumn. Rain-soaked leaves left on the lawn will kill the grass. Leaves must be bagged and kept in your serviceside yard for the city to pick up. Call 301-474-8004.

Starting in late September with the onset of more rain, cooler weather and fewer pests, these gardening activities will have the greatest impact.

GHI BRIGHT IDEAS



Shanna Pearson of Ridge Rd. has some ideas to facilitate a program to make our homes more energy-efficient. These include providing guidelines and options for members to implement “green” renovations and get credit on their co-op fee, bulk purchasing of solar

panels, and harnessing energy from a community compost pile. Shanna’s suggestions have been given to the SDP and the Buildings Committees to consider as they explore alternative energy sources and discuss options for energy-efficient upgrades in our homes.

Have a Bright Idea?
Send it to
Sylvia Lewis at
revs.lew@verizon.net

Greenbelt made *Mother Earth News* in the latest newsletter.

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Nature-Community/2008-08-01/Great-Places-Greenbelt-Maryland.aspx>

GHI HOMES HOLD THEIR VALUE

BY: GHI MARKETING COMMITTEE

GHI homes continue to sell at a steady pace with no appreciable loss in resale value. To assist members in the sales process, the Marketing Committee holds Sellers' Seminars each spring and fall. If you have questions about selling your occupancy rights, the GHI Marketing Committee will be hosting its next Sellers' Seminar on **Tuesday, Sept. 23, at 7:00 p.m.** in the GHI Administration Building. This seminar is designed to answer some of the most often asked questions about selling a GHI membership. You will be able to ask questions of the committee and realtors about the current market.



To further assist members, an open house will be held on **Sunday, October 12 from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. in Roosevelt Center.** Committee members will provide a table and hand out information to assist potential buyers including lists of homes for sale, information about GHI and the Greenbelt community, and maps of the area. Sellers may open their homes on this day to be viewed by interested buyers. Selling members and realtors are encouraged to provide fliers about units for sale. They may also wish to place signs and balloons for easy identification.

All realtors or selling members who will be participating in this event should send notification in writing to Kathie Linkenhoker in the GHI Contract Processing Department. You may fax your information to 301-474-4006 or e-mail Klinkenhoker@greenbelt homes.net by October 9. This ensures that an accurate list of homes will be available for prospective buyers.

To greet new members and encourage their participation in the many volunteer activities offered by GHI, new member socials are held four times each year. The next social will be held on **Tuesday, October 28 at 7:00 p.m.** in the GHI Administration Building. All members are welcome, particularly those who have moved to GHI. This is an opportunity to ask questions about the cooperative, meet committee members and GHI Board members, and learn the functions of these groups.

The Marketing Committee welcomes members to join in marketing our homes and our community. If you think you may be interested in joining this committee, please call Barbara Havekost at 301-474-6369 or e-mail blhavekost@yahoo.com

YARD LINE FAQs COMMITTEE

BY: YARDLINE COMMITTEE

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

The Yard Line Committee (YLC) has been receiving questions from members about the yard line certification process. In this and future issues of the *Communicator*, we will share questions and answers with members. These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are also posted on the GHI website at www.ghi.coop/YL/FAQ.htm.

Q What is the Yard Line Committee?

The YLC is an ad hoc committee created by the Board in 2004 to conduct a court-by-court review of all units' yard lines and to recommend plats to the Board for certification.

Q What is a plat?

A plat is a drawing that shows the unit and its yard lines, including dimensions. In applicable cases, it shows where GHI property ends and other property begins.

Q Why is the Yard Line Committee updating plats?

Presently, some units have plats with no dimensions. Some units have more than one plat, each showing different dimensions. Some units have no plats at all. This confusing situation affects all members, particularly those who wish to put up a fence, a shed, or an addition. The Board has charged the committee with the task of recommending, for board certification, a plat for each unit of GHI. To fulfill this charge, the committee seeks to reconcile previous plats with current usage.

Get Involved! Join a Committee!

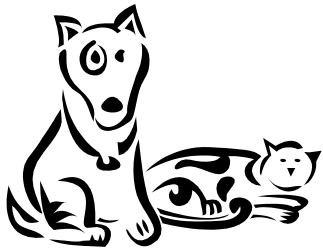
- To join a committee, call Member Services 301-474-4161 ext. 138 and ask for an application form or download a Personal Data Form from the website at www.ghi.coop by clicking on Committees.
- To be a Court Liaison, call Member Services 301-474-4161, ext. 138.
- To run for office, contact the Nomination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

COMPANION ANIMAL COMMITTEE

NEW SUPPORT GROUP FORMED

"Our Companion Animals bring so much unconditional love and joy into our lives during their time with us, that upon their passing, it is very normal to feel tremendous sadness, loss, and grief, just as we feel when a friend or relative has passed on."

These are the words of Michele L. Tornabene, MSW. Michele is a licensed clinician with 10 years of experience who will provide facilitation of a grief/loss support group provided by GHI and its Companion Animal Committee (CAC). These support meetings will be held every first Monday of the month between 7:30 and 8:30 pm in the GHI library on a drop-in basis. Feel free to come at any point during your grief process when you feel that you need additional support, whether or not the death of your loved one is recent or in the past.



It is not unusual to need support at various times since the nature of grief is cyclical. The five stages of grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance) occur randomly

and not necessarily in order, lasting for various time frames. As Michele stated, "The group is a place to offer emotional support to one another and normalize the feelings of the grieving process." No matter what stage of the grief process you might be in, the grief/loss support group will provide you with comfort and/or understanding. Please come and support each other and reduce possible feelings of isolation. The meetings are here for you.

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.

WHO'S WHO AT GHI

BY: BRENDA C. LEWIS, SPHR



Eldon Ralph, CPE, CMCA, CEng, PCAM

He wouldn't like all those initials published behind his last name, but we think members should know that Eldon Ralph, former Director of Physical Plant Operations and newly promoted Assistant General Manager of GHI, has made some major accomplishments in his personal and professional life. Since joining GHI in April 1997, Eldon has led the maintenance and technical services departments to new heights, fulfilling his then stated goal of providing "high-impact leadership."

Born in Guyana, South America, he received his undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering at the University of the West Indies, and pursued a Master's degree in Plant Engineering/Maintenance Management at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in England. He also has a Certified Diploma in Accounting and Finance. What are those initials after his name? CPE is Certified Plant Engineer, CEng is for Chartered Engineer, and CMCA and PCAM are certifications in community association management, with PCAM being the Community Association Institute's highest professional designation.

Eldon lives in nearby Silver Spring with his wife, Maureen, who works for FDA. His daughter Janelle just completed her doctorate in Physical Therapy, and his son Dexter is a graduate of the University of Maryland with a degree in Business Administration. They enjoy spending time in their wooded backyard, with Eldon making BBQ ribs and everyone appreciating nature.

If you thought Eldon does not have time for hobbies, you would be right. However, he plays the piano, computer chess and would love to have more time for

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

gardening. Since November 2005 he has been a member of Toastmasters International. He has earned the Advanced Toastmaster Bronze and Competent Leader designations. At present, he is an Area Governor with responsibility for six local clubs. He has entered four speaking contests, winning first place at the District 36 Humorous Speech Contest and placing third (twice) at the District 36 International speech contests.

When asked about the future, Eldon refers to GHI's aging physical plant, where systems will need major replacement programs in the next five to 10 years. Said Eldon, "It is most important for the Board, staff, and members to work together on formulating rehab strategies and keeping members well informed during the planning process."

Eldon's goals are to apportion his time, achieve a proper work/life balance and learn to slow down. When asked what makes him the most proud, he points to his two children. He states he is successful at GHI because of his support staff, especially their commitment to hard work and teamwork.

PROJECT UPDATE: WSSC REPLACEMENT OF WATER SUPPLY PIPING

GHI and City of Greenbelt staff met with officials of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) on Thursday, July 3, to discuss the status of the project for replacement of water piping that will affect a significant portion of our masonry homes.

GHI was informed that the design of the overall project is nearing completion. Actual work is expected to start during the spring of 2009. WSSC postponed a meeting (that should have been held in July 2008) with Greenbelt residents until it has fully ascertained the various items in yards and common areas that will likely be disturbed by the project.

GHI has agreed to let a staff member accompany WSSC officials on inspections of every yard and common area that will be impacted by the project. The inspections will enable WSSC to determine the scope of the restoration work e.g. decks, sheds, plants etc. that must be restored after the new piping is installed. After this assessment, WSSC will be in a better position to provide information to members about yard restoration issues at a public meeting.

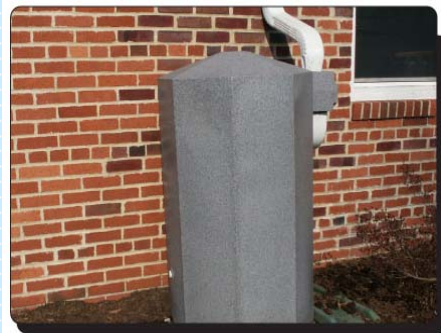
Members will continue to receive updates as the project planning phase progresses.

ORDER YOUR RAIN BARREL TODAY!

GHI orders 132-gallon granite colored barrels from a supplier in Canada. The next order for 132-gallon barrels will be placed as soon as the Technical Services department has 24 order requests on hand. It currently has 18 order requests. The minimum order lot size is 24 barrels to reduce shipping costs. The current cost of a 132-gallon barrel is \$250 inclusive of shipping costs.

The black 75-gallon barrel is ordered from a Maryland supplier. The minimum order lot size for 75-gallon barrels is six (6). There is currently one (1) order request on file. The current cost of a 75-gallon barrel is \$195.

For more information on rain barrels and other details, visit <http://www.ghi.coop/rainbarrels/index.htm> or contact Rean Seecharran, Technical Services, at (301) 474.4161, ext. 143.



It's a Date September/October 2008

Sept 1	Labor Day—Holiday	CLOSED
Sept 9	Ad Hoc Yard Line Committee Sustainable Design Practices	8:30-10 AM 7:00-9:00 PM
Sept 10	Member and Community Relations Committee ARC Comm	7:00-8:00 PM 7:30 PM
Sept 11	Board of Directors	7:30-9:30 PM
Sept 17	Finance Committee Woodlands Committee	7:00-8:00 PM 7:00-8:30 PM
Sept 23	Marketing Committee Sellers' Seminar	6:30-7:00 PM 7:00-8:00 PM
Sept 24	Companion Animal Committee	7:30-9:00 PM
Sept 25	Board of Directors	7:30-9:30 PM
Oct 1	Member and Community Relations Committee	7:00 PM
Oct. 5	Annual Picnic	12:30-4:00 PM
Oct. 8	ARC Comm	7:30 PM
Oct. 9	Board of Directors	7:30-10:00 PM
Oct 12	Open House	12:30-4:00 PM
Oct 14	Sustainable Design Practices	7:00-9:00 PM
Oct 15	Woodlands Committee	7:00-8:30 PM
Oct 23	Board of Directors	7:30-10:00 PM
Oct 28	Marketing Committee Coffee Social	6:30-7:00 PM 7:00-8:00 PM
Oct. 29	Companion Animal Committee	7:30 PM

GHI Maintenance Schedule

2008	
May-Sep	Community Beautification Inspections
Sep-Oct	Townhouse Furnace Replacement
Sep-Oct	Garage Door Replacement: 45 Ridge, 1 Gardenway
Oct-Nov	Fall Concrete Repairs
Nov-Dec	Fall Gutter Cleaning
2009	
spring	WSSC Water Supply Repairs (tentative)
Apr-Sep	Slate Roofs & Copper Gutters
May-Aug	Trim Painting
May-Jun	Spring Gutter Cleaning
May-Jun	Spring Concrete Repairs
Jul-Aug	Underground Utility Repairs
Jul-Sep	Parking Lot Repairs

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 Brenda Lewis at blewis@greenbelthomes.net.

When submitting pictures, please submit them in the following formats: JPEGs or TIF file format, at least 250 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.

Maintenance Department Notice

Maintenance reception desk is **CLOSED** for lunch between 1-2 p.m. daily.

You can reach the main front desk reception for emergency calls during that period of time.

IMPORTANT: ABOUT 2008 COMMUNICATOR SUBMISSIONS

Here is the 2008 schedule of deadlines for submission of articles, photographs, and announcements 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

November/December Monday, September 22

January/February 2009 Monday, November 17