



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

© 2010 - Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

INSIDE

President's Message	2
Board Contact Information	2
Board Highlights	3
New GHI Garage Policy	4
Homestead Tax Credit	4
Update: Community Upgrade Program	5
Become a GHI Ambassador	5
GHI Annual Picnic	6
MAC Name Change	6
Fall Yard Care is in the Bag	7
Leaf Bag Pick-up	7
TreeMendous Maryland Program	7
It's a Date	8
Maintenance Schedule	8

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO GROW A COOPERATIVE

Peace Corps Spirit Thrives in Greenbelt

BY ANNA SOCRATES

Imagine a place where people walk to the town center, spend time outside, and know everyone...and everyone's business. This describes the GHI community and Tokey Boswell's Peace Corps posting in Tormelin, Guinea. It's no accident that about thirty RPCVs (returned Peace Corps volunteers) make GHI their home, for GHI embodies simplicity, sustainability, and involvement—values that RPCVs nurtured in postings as diverse as Russia (Suzette Agans and Jeannette Grotke), Brazil (Deirdre Blackmore), Honduras (Zach Feris and Heather "Saida" Coady), and Guinea (Tokey and Eileen Boswell).



Suzette and Jeannette

After a post-Peace Corps stay in GHI while job hunting, Suzette Agans resolved to buy here one day. Tokey and Eileen Boswell actively searched for a community that shared Peace Corps principles, where they could live sustainably and reduce their carbon footprint. They found it in GHI. Newcomers Zach Feris and Saida Coady concur with these values, and quickly bonded with like-minded people sharing similar interests. Perhaps RPCV Deirdre Blackmore put it best: "When I first saw Greenbelt, it just made sense to me; I could walk everywhere!"

Eileen sees altruism and involvement as a way of life and not just useful in-country tools that are later packed away with the *Lonely Planet* guide and the hiking boots. She and the other RPCVs work in nonprofits, teaching, and government service, as well as actively volunteering. Suzette's USDA community development position increases "social capital in distressed rural areas of the United States." Deirdre has built Habitat for Humanity houses all over the world. In his spare time, Zach works to foster sustainable agriculture. Tokey contrasts his experience in Guinea and his life here by noting that we have the freedom—along with the responsibility—to become involved in our communities because our involvement delivers a real impact. GHI benefits from this "can do" spirit. Tokey and Suzette are GHI Board officers, Eileen Boswell and Errol Mazursky play visible roles in the Web Redesign Working Group, Jeannette Grotke volunteers with the Yard Line Committee, and Mary Ernsberger, another RPCV, is active with the Buildings Committee.

Continued on Page 6

GHI's Annual Community Picnic

will take place

Sunday, October 3

from 1:00-3:30 p.m.

at Hamilton Place.

Details on page 6.



Have an idea for a story?

Send GHI your story ideas.

See page 8 for details.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY SUZETTE AGANS

GHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS:

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

Tokey Boswell
Vice President
(319) 331-2144
tokeyray@netscape.net

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

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

DIRECTORS:

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

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

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

Patricia Novinski
(301) 982-4488
novinskip@aol.com

Irv Wartell
301-345-1195
yorkies@peoplepc.com

Greener Greenbelt Initiative: The Final Report

Five years ago, GHI members began to express their interest in sustainability, and the Board responded by creating the Sustainable Design and Practices Committee and the Green Ribbon Task Force. The task force spearheaded a huge planning effort called the Greener Greenbelt Initiative (GGI).



The GGI's purpose was to plan for GHI's Centennial in 2037 in a sustainable manner. Many volunteers contributed significant effort and time to make this initiative happen. For two years the Board and Green Ribbon Task Force collaborated with the American Institute of Architects of the Potomac Valley chapter (AIA-PV) on this complex planning project.

Over those two years (2006 and 2007), an enormous amount of input was received. That input is summarized in the insert with this newsletter which describes the progress made since the GGI Charrette planning effort in 2007. To learn more details and the goals and objectives of the GGI, see www.greenergreenbelt.org.

October Is Co-op Month!

The following co-ops in Greenbelt will be holding events throughout the month to celebrate National Co-op Month:

GHI, *Greenbelt News Review*, Greenbelt Federal Credit Union, Greenbelt Co-op Nursery School, Greenbelt Consumer Cooperative (better known as the Co-op Supermarket), and New Deal Café. Read the October issues of the *Greenbelt News Review* for details.

Communicator Staff

Ann-Marie Saucier: Editor/Layout
Kristi Fletcher: Copy Editor
Marat Moore: Editor
David Morse: Editor
Anna Socrates: Editor
Brenda Lewis: GHI Staff Support

Questions? Contact 301-474-4161 ext. 152 or
blewis@greenbelthomes.net

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 at 7:30 pm, except during the summer when meetings are held once a month. Please check the calendar on page 8 or the GHI website for details. With the exception of executive sessions, all meetings are open to the membership.

During May and June 2010, the Board took the following actions:

Policies

- Approved a rule change to Section XV.B.13 of the *Members' Handbook* to prohibit harboring agricultural or farm animals within GHI, as defined by Prince George's County law.
- Approved a Garage/Storage Lot Delinquency Policy effective August 1, 2010.

Expenditure

- Expenditure of \$5,300 to Oyster, Imus & Petzold to survey and prepare new plats for adjusting the property line along Crescent Road between Eastway and Gardenway.

Contracts Initiated

- Roof repair to five attached garages for an amount not to exceed \$8,844 – Crowley Construction.
- Repairs of underground sanitary sewage and storm drain utilities at 18 sites for a cost not to exceed \$131,887 – Magnolia Plumbing, Inc.
- Drainage system improvements at one location for a cost not to exceed \$10,807 – Magnolia Plumbing, Inc.
- Repair to parking lots for a cost not to exceed \$74,620 – CPE, Inc.
- Additional slate roof repair at 14 homes for a cost not to exceed \$179,784 – RRH & Associates.

Other Items

- Elected the following officers of Greenbelt Homes, Inc.: Suzette Agans, president; Tokey Boswell, vice president; Ed James, secretary; and Sylvia Lewis, treasurer.
- Approved 12 new memberships and two name changes to mutual ownership contracts.
- Approved yard plats at 2 Westway, 8 and 10 Crescent Road, 20A-F Hillside Road.
- Adopted the May 13, 2010 version of the GHI Board Action Plan.
- Established the summer schedule for Board meetings.

CORRECTION: Information in the July/August *Communicator* Board Highlights was incorrect. The Board of Directors did NOT approve a rule change to allow security bars on windows and doors. The rule change insert was accurate. Thanks to the many wonderful members who obviously read every single word!

NEW DELINQUENCY POLICY FOR GHI GARAGE RENTAL

BY JOE PERRY



The Board of Directors has established a policy to address situations in which members are seriously delinquent in satisfying their financial responsibility to the cooperative and are renting garage and/or storage spaces. Members who are seriously delinquent will lose the privilege of renting garage and/or storage spaces from the cooperative.

The policy specifically requires a member who receives an M-3 late letter (as described in GHI's delinquency procedure at www.ghi.coop) to vacate all rented garage(s) and any storage space(s) within 30 days of the date of the M-3 late letter. Items that remain after the 30-day period will be removed by GHI or a contracted party at the member's risk and expense. Members who lose the privilege of renting garage and/or storage space from the cooperative will not be eligible to rent again until after demonstrating timely payment of all fees due GHI for a period of six (6) consecutive months. After that time a security deposit may also be required. This policy took effect on August 1, 2010.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, feel free to contact the Finance Department at 301-474-4161.

Financial Help Available for Home Improvements

The Maryland Department of Aging is promoting a pilot loan program for senior citizens. **See the Insert in this issue of the Communicator for details and eligibility requirements.** The program assists eligible members to make accessibility-related improvements that allow them to remain in their home as they age.

HOMESTEAD TAX CREDIT

BY SYLVIA LEWIS, TREASURER



The Homestead Tax Credit puts a cap on the percentage that real estate taxes on a home can be raised, regardless of the tax assessment on that home. Until now GHI automatically has received this credit for all its members.

Now GHI is required to notify the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation when a new member purchases a GHI home. The purchasing member will be required to individually apply for the Homestead Tax Credit but will not be eligible to receive it until the next year. The credit will then be based upon the most recent tax assessment of the home. This could mean a significant increase in the real estate taxes that the new member will have to pay compared to the taxes previously paid for that unit.

During the coming year GHI management will be contacting ALL members during the coming year and asking them to complete an application for the Homestead Tax Credit. If your GHI home is your primary residence, and it has been owner-occupied for at least a year, AND YOU COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM, you will continue to receive the credit as before. This new state requirement applies to all homeowners in Maryland. GHI members will receive their forms from GHI and MUST return them to GHI management. At this time current members do not need to do anything until they hear from GHI.

Please contact me if you have questions at revs.lew@verizon.net or call 301-474-3635.

Updates for Member Handbook: Companion Animals

Recently, the Board of Directors adopted the recommendation of the Companion Animal Committee that agricultural or farm animals are not suited for our community. Included with this newsletter is a newly revised page to the rules and regulations governing companion animals for your information and inclusion in your handbook. For your information, the change is a new paragraph *13. Please remove page 72a-05 from your GHI Members' Handbook and replace it with the new page 72a-10.

BUILDINGS COMMITTEE UPDATE: COMMUNITY UPGRADE PROGRAM

At the 2010 GHI annual meeting, Jim Cohen (Chair of the Buildings Committee) informed members about a proposed Community Upgrade Program involving:

- Replacement of windows and doors.
- Replacement of waste water pipes and vinyl siding on frame homes.
- Sealing and insulation of floors in attics, above crawl-spaces, and in the walls of block and frame houses.
- Improvement of indoor ventilation by installing exhaust fans in bathrooms, and
- Replacement of baseboard heaters with alternative heating and cooling systems.

The community upgrade will not proceed unless the GHI Board of Directors is certain that the advantages of the improvements outweigh the costs, and the membership must vote to approve funding for a community-wide project. GHI proposes to conduct a pilot program in order to test the benefits of the proposed improvements and determine their cost. In a pilot program, several rows of each type of home will receive the improvements that GHI has determined are most worthy of consideration. To make the process more manageable, GHI will limit the pilot program to seven rows of houses (two brick, two frame, and three block). The criteria for selecting the preliminary list of rows are as follows:

1. Rows should have four occupied units/none for sale.
2. All units in the rows should have baseboard heating systems.
3. Rows should have at least one and no more than three heated additions.

The Buildings Committee established a preliminary list of rows meeting the criteria described above. Letters were recently sent to members in those rows, seeking their participation in the program. A row of houses will only be selected if all of the members in the row agree to participate. The Buildings Committee hopes to embark on the first phase of the pilot program this fall, by collecting baseline data on pre-existing conditions in the rows of homes, e.g., indoor temperatures, humidity levels, and energy usage before the upgrades are implemented.

COME BE A GHI AMBASSADOR AND HELP BUILD A STRONGER COMMUNITY

BY TOKEY BOSWELL

Inside this issue you will find a community flyer to share with family and friends. The best spokespeople for GHI are you and other satisfied GHI residents. You know firsthand the many benefits that we enjoy as part of this historic community. Residents can enjoy the parks, playgrounds, community programs, churches, services and events; a town center with stores, restaurants, library, pools and fitness center and theatre--all within walking distance. GHI members get prompt, thorough maintenance service with one easy call.

GHI is served by public and private schools, a library and community-based arts and educational programs for growing families and members of all ages. GHI is conveniently located with easy access to the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, the Beltway, Route 1, and Kenilworth Avenue.



Please distribute the community-wide flyer to your co-workers, family, and friends. Bring them to the community-wide open house event taking place October 10 from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. On that day, prospective buyers will be able to compare many of the GHI homes available on the market and select the one that best meets their needs.

Get the most benefit from being a GHI member by volunteering to serve on a GHI committee. There are committees to meet a variety of interests and talents.

STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE: GHI's boat and RV storage lot has space available. Plan now for the coming winter. Spaces are \$25 per month; canoe/kayak racks are \$5 per month.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO GROW A COOPERATIVE

Continued from Page 1

The Peace Corps is a life-enhancing experience and RPCVs forge lifelong friendships. Jeannette and Suzette became fast friends after their pre-posting orientation, a connection that eventually brought Suzette to GHI.

Tokey and Eileen Boswell corresponded, started dating, and eventually married after Eileen became a liaison for volunteers and traveled to Tokey's village bearing beer, chocolate, and letters from home. Deirdre recently returned to Brazil and reconnected with old friends. And Zach described Peace Corps as the best way for a Kansas native to meet, fall in love with, and marry someone from New Jersey.

For more information, see www.peacecorps.gov. Tokey and Eileen Boswell would be happy to talk to anyone who is interested in Peace Corps volunteering or who makes Guinean rice and sauce.

COME TO THE GHI ANNUAL PICNIC!

GHI's annual community picnic will take place **Sunday, October 3,** from 1:00-3:30 p.m. at Hamilton Place.

For food-planning purposes, members are asked to call 301-474-4161 and let the receptionist know how many will attend from your household. Unfortunately, last year the food ran out before everyone could taste the delicious food that the Cozy Restaurant is known for. So our advice is two-fold: let the office know how many to prepare for and come early while the food is plentiful to enjoy a relaxing day with friends and neighbors.



MAC NAME CHANGE - READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Member Activities Committee (MAC) is the Member and Community Relations Committee's new moniker. The Board decided that this new name better fits the role of this group of member volunteers since they plan and arrange special GHI functions and coordinate GHI participation in community affairs.

Specifically, MAC organizes the annual spring luncheon to honor all GHI committee member volunteers who donated their time and energy throughout the year, organizes the House and Garden Tour, and coordinates GHI's Labor Day Festival booth and parade float. The committee also organizes an annual picnic for the entire membership's enjoyment. And don't forget the spring yard sale.

Currently, MAC is seeking additional members to help with these fun-related activities. By the time you read this article, we will be in the middle of or just concluding Labor Day festivities; however, there is still the fall picnic scheduled for October 3. Think about joining us and becoming an active partner in a fun-related way. MAC usually meets evenings on the first Tuesday of the month for about an hour or so. If you are interested in joining this group of friends and neighbors, contact the GHI Member Services Office at 301-474-4161.

Remember the old recruitment poster of Uncle Sam? Well, we want you! You will be amazed at the feeling of accomplishment derived from being an active member of your housing community and in helping to keep the spirit of cooperative living alive and well.

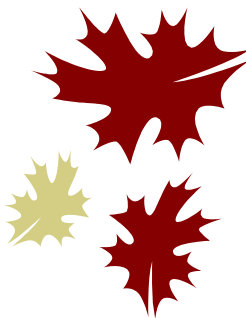
Winter Is Coming: Weatherization Assistance Available

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), operated by the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, assists eligible members with the installation of energy conservation materials in their homes. See the insert in this issue of *The Communicator* for details and eligibility requirements.

FALL YARD CARE IS IN THE BAG

BY MATT BERRES

The weather is getting cooler, the days shorter, and the trees will soon be changing color and dropping their leaves. There is no denying fall is here. Now is a great time to get your yard ready for next year. Check out these quick garden tips.



1. **Planting.** The cooler weather is perfect for planting bulbs, shrubs, and trees. Most garden stores have a wide variety of flowering bulbs on sale now. Don't forget those fall blooming flowers such as chrysanthemums and New England asters too.
2. **Pruning.** It is also the right time to trim those lower tree limbs and prune shrubs for better form. Privets, viburnums, forsythias, and many other branching shrubs can benefit from a rejuvenating pruning. Remember any trees over eight feet are GHI's responsibility. Call the GHI Maintenance Office for more information.
3. **Mulching.** A good layer of mulch will help flowerbed areas over winter and improve soil quality. Free shredded mulch is available at the Northway fields. Or you can simply rake fallen leaves in bed areas. Remember don't apply mulch more than two to three inches deep.
4. **Leaf Removal.** In many cases the best way to remove leaves is to use a lawn mower to shred the leaves into your lawn area. This adds valuable organic material that improves the soil. Yard waste can also be composted in your yard. Composting information is available at <http://ghi.coop/Woodlands/links.htm>

The City of Greenbelt also offers free leaf pick-up service for all GHI members. Leaves should be raked into PAPER bags or plastic bins labeled "Yard Waste" and put on the SERVICESIDE entrance for pickup. The city enables GHI to supply 10 free paper

bags to each unit this fall. Bags can be picked up from the GHI warehouse building.

Leaves or yard waste in plastic bags will not be collected. Also please do NOT rake your leaves into GHI common areas or woodlands, or to the street curb. Large leaf piles pose a fire risk for wooded areas and make extra work for GHI staff.

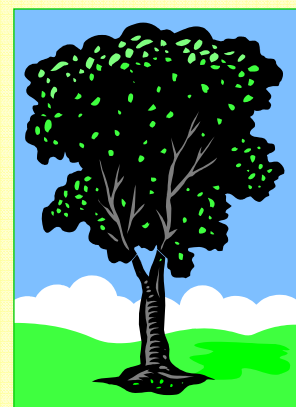


Free Leaf Bags for Fall Season

The city's leaf collection program generally begins the last week of October. The city provides GHI with a supply of environmentally friendly yard bags at no cost to assist members with their fall leaf collecting. Members may pick up a supply of these bags (10 per unit) from the GHI warehouse Monday through Friday (when the office is open), 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., and on Saturdays in November from Parkway Garage #16 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Members must place the filled bags in the serviceside yard for city pick-up. The city will not remove yard debris stored in plastic bags.

Special Plant Purchase Program Available to GHI Members

TREEMENDOUS PROGRAM TREES AND SHRUBS ORDER FORM, INSERTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.



Return completed order form to GHI by Friday, September 17th. Plant photos and more info available at www.ghi.coop.

It's a Date: September/October 2010

Sep 1	Sellers Seminar	7:00 pm
Sep 2	Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm
Sep 6	Labor Day - GHI Offices Closed	
Sep 7	Member Activity Committee Pre-Purchase Orientation	7:00 pm 7:15 pm
Sep 8	Architectural Review Committee	7:30 pm
Sep 9	Investment Committee Finance Committee	6:45 pm 7:30 pm
Sep 15	Woodlands Committee Marketing Committee	7:00 pm 7:30 pm
Sep 16	Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm
Sep 20	Communications Committee	7:00 pm
Sep 21	Yard Line Ad Hoc Committee	8:30 am
Sep 22	Buildings Committee	7:00 pm
Sep 25	Pre-Purchase Orientation	11:00 am
Sep 29	Companion Animal Committee	7:30 pm
Oct 3	Community-wide Annual Picnic	1-3:30 pm
Oct 5	Member Activity Committee	7:00 pm
Oct 7	Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm
Oct 11	Columbus Day - GHI Offices Closed	
Oct 12	Yard Line Ad Hoc Committee	8:30 am
Oct 13	Architectural Review Committee	7:30 pm
Oct 14	Investment Committee Finance Committee	6:45 pm 7:30 pm
Oct 18	Communications Committee	7:00 pm
Oct 20	Woodlands Committee	7:00 pm
Oct 21	Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm
Oct 27	Buildings Committee Companion Animal Committee	7:00 pm 7:30 pm

GHI Maintenance Schedule

2010	
Oct-	GDC garage door replacement
Oct-Nov	Fall concrete repairs
Nov-Dec	Fall gutter cleaning
2011	
May-Sep	Community beautification inspections
May-Aug	Trim painting
May-Aug	Replace frame home porches
May-Jun	Spring gutter cleaning
May-Jun	Spring concrete repairs
Jun-Sep	Slate roofs/copper gutters & downspouts
Jun-Jul	Addition roof repairs
Jul-Aug	Underground utility repairs
Jul-Sep	Parking lot repairs

Maintenance Department Notice:

Maintenance reception desk is **CLOSED** for lunch between noon and 1 pm daily.

You can reach the main front desk reception for emergency service during that time.

Have a Safe Halloween from everyone at GHI and the Communicator Staff



COMMUNICATOR SUBMISSIONS: What are you thankful for?

The newsletter staff are doing a story about what GHI members are thankful for in the next edition of the *Communicator*. If you would like to share yours, send to Brenda Lewis at blewis@greenbelthomes.net (do not submit to individual committee members) no later than September 20.

September 20 is the due date for articles for the November/December 2010 issue.