

The Acorn



The Newsletter of the Springfield Oaks Homeowners Association

<http://www.springfieldoaks.org>



President's Corner

by Dave Adkins

Greetings from your Homeowners' Association board of Directors! The Board has been quite busy in its work to improve the neighborhood. We have reestablished various committees (grounds and landscaping, architectural review and neighborhood watch, among others) to carry out various projects in the neighborhood. The Board needs volunteers for our committees. Come out to our monthly meetings to learn about what's going on in our neighborhood and how you can help.

The Board is please to announce that it is starting a "Springfield Oaks Yard of the Month" contest to recognize those who take an active role in maintaining an attractive front yard. The Board may award prizes to those residents that stand out from the crowd. Residents are invited to submit nominations to our acting landscaping committee head, Carlos Almodovar at ccalmo2004@yahoo.com. Winners must not have outstanding architectural review violations and must be current on monthly assessments. Sponsors are sought for this contest.

The parking areas will soon be painted. Residents will be advised as to when vehicles should be cleared from the parking areas. This process will be over fairly

quickly and the spaces will look better than they have in years!

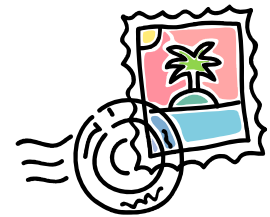
The Board is considering the purchase and installation of new playground equipment. We seek assistance with this project, as well as other efforts to maintain the common areas.

Finally, please remember that visitor-parking spaces are for the short-term use of those visiting the neighborhood. Long term parking in these spaces may result in tagging and towing of vehicles. Thank you.

Newsletter Information

By Elena Psarakis

If you have any information you would like to share with the community, please send your articles to



Armstrong Management to be included in the newsletter. Vivian Drake volunteered to write a Lawn Care column each issue and we are looking for other informative columns. The next deadline for articles is 1 September. The newsletter will be published quarterly.

For updates on various committee meetings, please see www.springfieldoaks.org. If you are interested in advertising see page 11 for pricing information.

Architectural Review

By Diane McCreless

A recent brochure from a local realtor contained an article title “*Sitting on a Gold Mine.*” The article discussed several reasons why homeownership is among today’s best investments. However, the article echoed the caution being heard recently from business publications such as *Money Magazine*, *Forbes*, and *Smart Money* that real estate may be experiencing a “*Bubble*” similar to the stock market bubble of a few years ago. Fortunately, the Northern Virginia area is experiencing an excellent “*seller’s market*” which is being driven by location and historically low mortgage rates. However, as we have experienced in the past, real estate prices move up and down with fluctuations in interest rates and in the economy. When the inevitable contraction occurs in the real estate market, prices shrink and buyers become pickier and look for the best quality homes and neighborhoods for their hard-earned cash.

As residents of Springfield Oaks, we have not worried about the “*curb appeal*” of our neighborhood in the last few years because the market was so good that we did not have to compete with other neighborhoods. As a result, our neighborhood has lost some of its sparkle and shine. Participation in our Homeowner’s Association had fallen, and the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) had not issued any ARC reminders to homeowners in several years. This spring the ARC passed out flyers door-to-door to remind all residents of the ARC guidelines and how to get projects approved. Later the ARC conducted a neighborhood walk-through, and issued notices to 180 homes covering a whole range of problems. Please understand that our goal is to work together as homeowners and members of the

community to make our neighborhood a place where others will want to live. If you did get a letter, and you have already taken care of the items outlined, then let us know. If you are planning to make any changes or



enhancements to the exterior of your property, please consult the Springfield Oaks Homeowners Architectural Standards to see if your project requires review by the ARC. The idea is not to intrude on your home improvement projects, but rather to maintain the standards, which keep our community attractive. A copy of the SOHA Standards may be obtained from Armstrong Management at 703/385-1133 or via email at communications@armstrong.net. In addition, a copy may be accessed by going to the association website: www.springfieldoaks.org and click on the documents section. For your convenience, attached is the Architectural Control Form for requesting approval of your home improvements.

The ARC meets once a month and homeowners are welcome to attend. We are happy to address any questions and listen to comments and suggestions. The date and time of the meetings will be posted on the Springfield Oaks website listed above. Thanks for your cooperation in making our community beautiful.

SPRINGFIELD OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL FORM

SUBJECT: Modification, Alterations and Additions

TO: SPRINGFIELD OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

C/O Armstrong Management Services, Inc.
6074 Franconia Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22310

FROM: Name _____ Unit # _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

Approval is requested to make the modification, alteration or addition described and depicted below (or on additional pages, as necessary). (Please include such information as dimensions, materials, color, design, location, etc., in sufficient detail to allow a decision.) **A HOUSE SURVEY (WITH PROPERTY LINES) IS ALSO REQUIRED. ALL INFORMATION MUST BE INCLUDED FOR THE COMMITTEE TO ACCURATELY REVIEW THE APPLICATION.**

DATE RECEIVED: _____

ARC COMMITTEE USE: APPROVED _____ DISAPPROVED _____

NEED MORE INFORMATION _____ SIGNATURE _____

TITLE _____

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: APPROVED _____ DISAPPROVED _____

NEED MORE INFORMATION _____

SIGNATURE _____ TITLE _____

Painting your home?

By Carlos Almodovar

Before you spend money on paint or get a painter, please pay attention to the following, our "Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions", states:

page 13, ARTICLE VI, PROTECTIVE COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS 7. No person shall paint the exterior of any building a color different than the original color of said building without the proposed color being approved by the Board of Directors of the Association, or by an Architectural Review Committee approved by the Board.

The Springfield Oaks 1983-88 authorized color codes for your home are the Colonial Color Scheme from McCormick Paints, therefore it is important to make sure the color used matches these color codes. To use any other color/code, please refer to the article in this newsletter regarding the process for seeking architectural committee approval



An easy way to determine the appropriate color for repainting your home is to go to your nearest McCormick Paint Store, or any other store selling McCormick paints, and looking at their Colonial Color Scheme and selecting one that matches the color grouping for your home (for example, color of your shutters, door, window trim, etc.). Because all brands of paint do not share the same color codes, another option would be to buy a sample of the McCormick paint (1

qt.) so that it can be matched exactly to the color codes with other brands.

Taking a chip of old paint to the paint store to match the color is not recommended as it will result in your buying the faded color instead of the original one. For your convenience, the nearest McCormick Paints store is located at 7950 Woodruff Ct., near Braddock Rd., Port Royal Rd., and 495 in Springfield (by the Wakefield Recreation Center) -- phone 703 321-8750 (Marvin) or you can also check the Colonial color chart by contacting Carlos Almodovar, Board Member, at 703 569-8454 or ccalmo2004@yahoo.com.

VA Automobile Registration

Enforcement

Information



As part of our enforcement efforts, keep in mind that Springfield Oaks rules also require that all automobiles display proper registration/inspection/tax stickers. As part of its website, Fairfax County has a neat on-line reporting tool for autos that do not display current tax stickers, which we encourage residents to use. The form, which does not ask for your contact information, can be found at the following website.

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta/taxevaders/>

The Landscaping and Grounds

Committee

By Carlos Almodovar

The Landscaping and Grounds Committee (L&GC) is still looking for volunteers to work on community projects such as tree and flower planting, building borders (carpentry experience desired, but not required), mulching, brush clearing, tree trimming, and painting the swings' and slides' steps, pressure washing the picnic tables/benches at the playgrounds and maintain the basketball court in safe condition.



In addition, the L&GC seeks to enlist "green thumbs" and residents with stone, block, brick, paver design/construction ability. We also need people to monitor contractor's work and report damage done to the common grounds. We are also happy to announce that new playground sets will replace our two 20 year old ones and that tentatively, the Alban Road tot-lot area will be relocated at the corner of Springfield Oaks Dr. and Canyon Oak where a community park is being planned. Finally, residents are reminded that BBQ sets, blocks/pavers, firewood, garbage, construction material and personal items are not permitted to be placed on common areas. We kindly ask everyone for their cooperation and understanding on this matter as it interferes with the fire rescue, utility, and landscaping crews.

Trash and Garbage Restrictions

A reminder to all that the trash is not allowed to be stored in public view until the day of pick up... pursuant to **SOHOA**

Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, ARTICLE VI, PROTECTIVE COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS, Section 6. "Trash and garbage containers shall not be permitted to remain in public view except on days of trash collection. No accumulation or storage of litter, new or used building material, or trash of any kind shall be permitted on any lot"., (page 13).

Trash must not be put out until it gets dark the night before or the morning of pick up. No trash should be in public view except Mondays and Thursdays, and recycling on Fridays. Repeat violators could be fined at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Displaying of trash devalues our neighborhood as well as encourages animals to getting into the trash and littering the neighborhood. If you see litter around your area, please care enough to pick it up. Even if it does not belong to you, caring about how your area looks encourages others to do the same. Please place trash on curbs, and not on the grass so the grass in these areas is allowed to stay green and grow.

Lawn Care Corner

By Vivian Drake

To help make your lawn look its best, the following lawn and garden tips will help you learn more about your lawn's requirements and how to get the most out of it. A little bit of effort can go a long way to preventing more work needing to be done as well as increase your home's value. We have some creative neighbors in Springfield Oaks who have gone in together to share a contract with a professional lawn care company to reduce individual costs and receiving appropriate and timely lawn treatments throughout the year making several lawns look good. This is done by collecting from their neighbors their share of the bill one time a year. You may want to check with

your neighbors to see if they would be interested in joining in with you for lawn care in your area.

Mowing your lawn properly is critical to the health and appearance of your lawn. Do not cut lawns less than 3 inches. This will avoid putting grass under stress as well as helps shade the soil for the best growth. If you mow often enough, you may leave lawn clippings to add nutrients back into the soil. Make sure your blade is sharp to avoid turning the tips of your grass brown.

It is important to water your lawn regularly to maintain color, resilience and proper root development. Apply enough water to wet the soil to approximately 1-2 inches of water per week. Morning watering is preferably because night watering could encourage disease and insect development.

Thatch is a layer of partially decomposed stems and roots that build up between the grass blades and soil in your lawn. This protects the grass. However, if there is too much thatch, it can prevent air, water and fertilizer as well as harbor disease and insects. Core aeration is a process that prevents thatching and should be done early spring or fall by removing small plugs from your lawn to allow more air, moisture and fertilizer.

With a proper balance of pH level of your soil, your lawn is healthier and fertilizations are more effective. Soil pH is controlled with lime or sulfur. This can be done by early/late, spring, summer and fall fertilizations providing a long-lasting, deep-green lawn.

In the case of a drought when the root systems weakens, a proper combination of nitrogen, phosphorous, potash, iron and micronutrients help improve the root system

over the winter and prevent less threat of weeds.

At times, you may find that your lawn needs reseeding or seeding in areas. This is best done early spring or fall. When new grass grows, it is important to make sure it is watered daily until new growth begins.

Pruning should be done in the early spring before new growth or after flowering blooms fall. Any shrubs that have been damaged or diseased should be removed.

Mulching is important in the spring and fall to retain soil moisture and temperature damage to shrubs. When you mulch around the base of shrubs, leave an opening near the base to prevent smothering and for proper drainage when watering.

Any local store that sells fertilizers will be willing to teach you what is needed for that month. It is important that application instructions are followed. Be sure to keep family and pets off the lawn until the fertilizer has been watered into the soil.

TIP FOR THE COMMUNITY:

*To keep our community green and beautiful, please remember the following:
Make sure your children ride their bikes on the sidewalks and not on the grass.
Do not allow your children to climb the trees on common lawn.
Walk pets only near common lawn and not near resident lawns.*



Crime Prevention Survey of Springfield Oaks

By Anthony Conte

In early June, PFC Doug Coulter (Crime Prevention Officer of the Fairfax County Police) conducted a crime prevention survey of the Springfield Oaks Community. During his survey, Officer Coulter noted that our community has been fairly well maintained, but noted that there are areas that need improvement.

Officer Coulter suggested bushes and shrubs should be trimmed back from windows, doors, and other entryways. Overgrown bushes and shrubs present cover for a burglar while attempting a break-in. Trimming your bushes and shrubs will allow others in the community a natural surveillance of your homes.

Furthermore, he suggested proper lighting around your home, such as a flood light on at night time with the feature of a second flood light being activated by motion. As indicated in the past newsletter, some additional lighting might require approval from the Architectural Review Committee.

Additionally, Officer Coulter pointed out items such as wood, ladders, bricks, and metal objects, which are left outside, can be used to force entry or break windows to gain access to your homes.

During his survey, he also pointed out that occupied and empty homes need to be kept up and well maintained. Poorly maintained

properties become targets for criminal activities.

These are a few suggestions and observations made by Officer Coulter during his assessment of our community. If you are interested in a home security survey of your property, you can reach Officer Coulter at douglas.coulter@fairfaxcounty.gov or at the Fairfax County West Springfield District Station: 703.644.5026.

Additional information regarding Fairfax County Police activities and Crime Prevention can be obtained at www.fairfaxcounty.gov. To sign up for "The West Springfield SHIELD" Newsletter, use the following email: wspnewsletter@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Fairfax County uses the Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN) to inform the county residents of major emergencies and crisis. For further information, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean/ to learn more about CEAN or to sign up to receive these alerts.

Springfield Oaks Picnic

By Coreen Harney

We had another fantastic picnic this year on the basketball court! It was a great opportunity to visit with old friends and meet new neighbors. The food was terrific, with BBQ pork and chicken, coleslaw, lemonade, and cakes from Poncho's.

The kids had a great time with our three clowns, who kept the kids busy with face painting, sand art, balloon sculptures, and magic tricks. The Lorton Fire Department showed up, too, giving kids a close-up look at the fire trucks. And we were happy to have some of the local police officers come by to have a bite to eat and visit with us. Be sure and join us next year!

Parking/Streets Committee

by Elena Psarakis

As Chair of the Parking/Streets Committee, please let me know if you have any concerns about paving, parking, street cleaning, sidewalks, lighting, etc. so the Committee can address them. I joined the Committee earlier this year to help contribute towards our community's progress in addressing our needs.

The Committee has received many complaints about the lack of adequate parking and the need for enforcing visitors' parking regulations. Parking spaces located within the Association's common areas are a limited resource. The Association has the authority to enact and enforce rules and restrictions to provide the framework within which people can live in harmony in a shared living/ownership environment. We have already begun to address the issue concerning abuse of visitors' parking and have seen a great improvement in the availability of visitors' parking. Basic rules for visitors' parking are as follows:

- Vehicles will be ticketed if parked in any visitors' parking space over two consecutive days during the week or three days in case of a weekend.
- Repeat violators will be towed in lieu of a second ticket.
- If a vehicle is ticketed, it will be towed within 24 hours. If your vehicle has been towed, you may contact Armstrong Management at (703) 385-1133 or call Fairfax County Police.
- If a vehicle is double parked or parked in a fire lane, you will be towed immediately without notice as per the Fairfax County Fire Department. We have to have easy access in and out of the development.

- Vehicles parked in non-parking area will be towed immediately without notice.
- Residents may have unauthorized vehicles towed from their numbered reserved parking spaces. Please make sure to tell your guests where to park to avoid their being towed.
- A resident may park their vehicle in a visitors' parking space to accommodate their guest with their assigned parking space or if they are visiting someone elsewhere in the community. However, this is not for parking a third or fourth vehicle of a resident.
- Vehicles without a current county sticker or vehicle tag will be towed immediately. Residents must register vehicles with Virginia and Fairfax County within 60 day of move in.
- If there are any extenuating circumstances with guests using visitor parking beyond these restrictions, it should be brought before the Parking Committee prior any parking and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The Parking Committee can be contacted via Armstrong Management.
- Anyone wishing to appeal a Notice of Violation or towing of a vehicle may make a written appeal to the Board of Directors. The appeal must be postmarked within ten calendar days of the postmark date of the notification letter or the date of the adverse action and may be considered at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board will review each case on an individual basis.

If you have any questions, or feel that a vehicle is in violation of the visitors' parking guidelines and has not been addressed, please bring it to this Committee's attention. We are looking for volunteers to serve on this Committee. Thank you for your support.

Meeting Schedules

Agenda for Parking/Streets Committee Meeting

Thursday, August 11, 2005, 7 p.m.
Kingstowne Library, Telegraph Road

- Approve minutes for June 2, 2005, meeting
- Discuss parking rules/violations
- Develop procedure to approve/disapprove requests for visitor parking extensions
- Assign Committee members to cover visitors' spaces
- Update on street/number painting
- Discuss paving areas near mailboxes
- Street lights review
- Discussion on garage owner parking spaces
- Update on new Committee activities/issues
- Open for suggested topics from Committee members/owner input

Owners are encouraged to share their views with the Committee at these meetings during the "Owner Input" agenda item, time

allowing, or to e-mail/write their questions, concerns or observations to the Committee at the address listed in the Directory section at www.springfieldoaks.org.


Next Board Meeting

Next scheduled board meeting is July 26, 2005, 7:00 P.M., Garfield Elementary School.

Generally, regular business meetings of the Association are held at 7:00 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the month, except for December. Owners are encouraged to share their views with the Board at these meetings during the "Owner Input" agenda item, time allowing, or to e-mail/write their questions, concerns or observations to the Board at the addresses listed in the Directory section of the website

Volunteers needed!

The Association needs more volunteers! If you are interested in joining a Committee of the Association, please fill out the [committee volunteer sign-up form](#) and return it via e-mail or fax to the management agent.

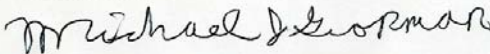


Dear Springfield Oaks Residents:

I Michael Gropman an independent associate with Capital Choice Financial Services, am here to provide the level of service you expect and deserve. Please feel free to call me anytime. My phone number is (703)569-0799.

Capital Choice is a full service agency, providing financial solutions for you and your family at all stages of life. I welcome the opportunity to serve the members of our community. Please feel free to contact me at the number listed above or via e-mail mgropman@cox.net

Sincerely Yours,



Michael Gropman

CAPITAL Choice Financial Services, Inc. is a network of independent business men and women, representing various life and health insurance companies.

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Purchasing or Refinancing?



Tina Cavallaro

"Your Neighborhood Loan Officer"

301.831.4053

tcavallaro@broadstreetmortgage.com



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Fieldstone Mortgage Company has corporate offices at 11000 Broken Land Parkway, Suite 600, Columbia, Maryland, 21044. Broad Street Mortgage Co. is a registered trade name of Fieldstone Mortgage Company.

Sleeping under a palm tree, strolling on endless beaches, floating in a turquoise sea...Escape to paradise on your next vacation! Please contact me and I'll be happy to help with all your vacation plans. The whole world awaits you!

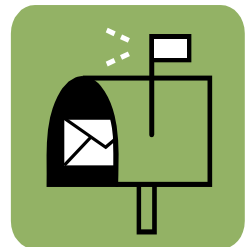
Stephanie Hald, Travel Agent/Consultant
Specializing in Cruises and Land Packages



E-mail: stephanie@odysseytravelinc.com
Alternate e-mail: sehald@yahoo.com
Telephone: 301-831-0197
Website: www.odysseytravelinc.com ...for an epic adventure!

(Picture of Megan's Bay, St. Thomas, USVI, taken by David Hald, Feb. 2004.)

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\$10 for 1/8 page each issue
\$20 for 1/4 page each issue
\$40 for 1/2 page each issue
\$80 for Full page each issue

Springfield Oaks Directory/Information

Board of Directors

Dave Adkins
Carlos Almodovar
Greg Budnik
Shawn Davison
Mike Gropman
Doug Wilson
Ken McCreless

Committees

Please contact management for meeting schedule for meetings.

Committee	Name
Architectural Review	Diane McCreless
Budget	Coreen Harney
External Affairs	Greg Budnik, acting--looking for a new chair!
Landscaping & Grounds	Carlos Almodovar, acting--looking for a new chair!
Streets & Parking	Elena Psarakis
Neighborhood Watch	Anthony Conte
Newsletter	Elena Psarakis
Social	Coreen Harney

Officers of the Association

Dave Adkins	President
Ken McCreless	Vice President
Michael Martin	Treasurer
Coreen Harney	Secretary

Management Firm

E-mail communications@armstrong.net

Include the name of the community; i.e., Springfield Oaks, in the message

Armstrong Management Customer Service	3949 Pender Drive, Suite 205 Fairfax, VA 22030	Work 703-385-1133 Fax 703-591-5785
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Miscellaneous

Fairfax County Police non-emergency	703-691-2131
Dominion Towing	703-978-0092
AAA Rainbow Trash	703-818-8222
Trash pickup	Monday and Thursday and by appointment. Call to schedule a day for free large trash item pickup.
Recycling pickup	Friday