

Good Riddance to Bad Rubbish Companies

When our community suffered through the AAA trash debacle of March; with schedule changes, missed collections and a complete lack of notification by AAA, plenty of residents asked themselves "Can't anyone get this right?"

Well, the HOA Board asked the same question, then went out and found a company that says that it can. We've discontinued our contract with AAA and, beginning in June, our trash will be collected by Con-Serv Industries (CSI), based in Sterling, VA. CSI currently serves the Wynmar community immediately to our northwest.

CSI is expected to come through our neighborhood on May 27 to drop off new cans. AAA will continue to collect trash until Tuesday, May 31, so DO NOT use the CSI cans until June. Also, please leave your AAA cans on the curb after the May 31 collection so AAA can remove their cans from our community.

The collection schedule with CSI will be as follows:

Trash	Tuesday and Friday
Recyclables	Wednesday

New HOA Board Members

At the Annual Meeting, Mike Parks' one-year term on the Board ended, and the floor was opened for nominations for new board members. James Ricks, of Henry Pond Ct., stepped up to the plate, and was voted in by acclamation. James joins Ed Blansitt, Kevin Corcoran, Jim Jones, and David Schuetz.

We recently learned that Ed was moving out, and on May 16th, he decided it best to resign his position now so that he could help the new Treasurer transition in over the next few months. The Board appointed Mike Parks to fill the remainder of Ed's term.

The Board then selected new officers for 2005-06:

President	Mike Parks
Vice President	Jim Jones
Treasurer	Kevin Corcoran
Secretary	Dave Schuetz
At Large	James Ricks

All board members serve for three-year terms, however, initial terms were staggered in length to ensure that no more than two positions were open at one time. Initial term lengths were based on the total votes received at the first board member election in 2004. Mike's term had been set at 1 year, David and Kevin at two years, and Ed and Jim were in three-year terms. Because Mike took Ed's slot, he has two more years to serve on the Board.

Dues Increase and Annual Budget

Though control of the HOA was formally passed to homeowners last spring, it's taken almost all of the last twelve months for the Board to get a full grasp on our financial situation. And, unfortunately, it appears that we've been paying far too little in dues for the past few years. This is due to several factors:

- * The original budget projections have not been kept up to date
- * The actual dues payments have never matched the schedule set forth in the projection
- * In fact, we're paying less today than Edgemoore had planned to assess in 2000
- * The cost of groundskeeping in the common areas has grown significantly beyond the original budget projections

The Board has made every effort to cut costs where possible, but it's been a rude awakening. Fortunately, we've been able to find a trash pickup company that fits our current budget, though other bids we received were significantly higher. The Board is also concerned that our reserves savings may be underfunded, and hope to contract for a formal reserves study later this year.

The bottom line is that our dues have been kept artificially low for the entire time we've lived here. Why this was done, we don't know -- perhaps it was an honest oversight by the previous builder-controlled Board, or perhaps it was an attempt to make the community appear more attractive by keeping the HOA dues unreasonably cheap. Either way, we cannot continue at the current assessment level without seriously affecting services (for example, dropping trash collection).

Therefore, the Board has voted to increase annual dues by \$120 a year, or \$30 a quarter, meaning that

Dues Increase and Annual Budget (cont.)

the current \$105 payment will change to \$135. This increase will be reflected on your next quarterly invoice, which should be mailed out in June. Unfortunately, this will not be enough to completely cover expenses, and so it's expected that dues will increase again next year, possibly to \$145 a quarter (though the exact number won't be determined until this year's finances are clarified further).

The Board regrets the need to increase so much, so suddenly, but we were left with very little choice. The long-term goal is to settle into a pattern of small increases, every other year or so, but it may take us some time to get there. Further details should be included with this newsletter, and will also be posted to the website.

Community Thefts and Vandalism

Over the past year, we've seen a few disturbing problems in and around the neighborhood. Twice, garages were broken into and beverages stolen (beer, wine, even gatorade). It's believed that the garages were probably left open in these cases. Additionally, last December, a garage believed to be closed was broken into and a more significant theft occurred. Finally, in April, a house was hit with several eggs, ruining the finish on the front door. Also of concern are several incidents of paintball gun use in the park, and more significantly, the use of hatchets to chop down trees in the park, as part of a fort-building exercise.

The Board generally feels that these incidents are typical of any community, and are not overly worried, however, we do urge everyone to be aware of their surroundings and to take reasonable precautions. Be sure to keep your garage door closed when you're not actually in or around it, and especially overnight. If you leave your car outside, make sure it's locked. You should also keep the door leading into the house from the garage locked -- it's not unheard of for someone to break into a car parked in a driveway, and use the garage door opener to get into the garage, and then into the house. Most importantly, don't be afraid to call the police if you see or hear anything suspicious.

Park Trails Update

The trails in the park west of our neighborhood have been officially expanded and improved. A crushed gravel trail now runs along the old stone wall from Henry Pond north to Walney Park, and a mulched trail loop connects to that in two places, running through some nice sections of the woods. Though work is not yet complete (they're still placing mulch), the trails are quite usable now, and are worth a visit. Also, planning is underway for a trail heading east out of Bennet Pond, to connect with the Big Rocky Run trails near the elementary school, but it's not known at this point when that trail will be constructed.

Note that these trails go through some environmentally and historically sensitive areas, and that we shouldn't be spending too much time off-trail, and we certainly shouldn't have anyone building unofficial trails, cutting down brush or trees, or building forts or anything like that in the woods. Please keep an eye out for anyone abusing their access in the park, as if further destruction occurs, we may jeopardize future official trails.

Community Involvement

Want to get involved? Drop us a line! The ARC should be very busy this year, and could use some help, the Board has a lot of issues to be resolved and would certainly appreciate research and organizational assistance, there's a fledgeling Social Committee that needs to get off the ground, and finally, the Newsletter and Website are in need of people to help research and write articles. So if you're interested, we'd all love to hear from you! Send an email to info@preserveatwynmar.org for details (a copy of your message will go to a representative of each committee).

An Inclusive Community

One of the most appealing aspects of our community is the diversity of the families that live here. Our residents come from many different backgrounds and cultures, and each adds to the flavor of life in the Preserve at Wynmar. The HOA Board wants to continue to foster this feeling; please contact the board if we can do anything to make it easier for you, or another member of our neighborhood, to participate more fully in our community.