

Skyline Lakes Property-holders Association

www.skylinelakes.org

President's Letter

Greetings to all of you. As we enter the 2012 holiday season I wish each of you a blessed and wonderful time with family and friends. With the leaves down at Skyline Lakes, it's a good time to visit the development for cool weather hiking and enjoying the beautiful vistas there.

I wanted to report several positive events from the past quarter. First, as reported to the general membership at the 15 September annual meeting, the Burns v. SLPA law suit that hung over all of us for several years is over. The circuit court judge dismissed plaintiff's suit definitively and plaintiff chose not to appeal to the Virginia Supreme Court. The case is closed. Next, the development survived Hurricane Sandy in good shape and was spared serious damage to roads or culverts. In fact, on the last day of the storm it produced the first snowfall of the season with 3-6 inches throughout the development which was immediately plowed. Coincidentally, SLPA's road maintenance contractor from last spring was scheduled to lay additional gravel on select hills and turns as part of a fall touch-up. The rain/snow from the storm helped soften the road bed for the gravel which was laid 3-4 November. Finally, during the September annual meeting Board members Joyce Richards and Doug Southers were reelected and Jimmy Painter was elected in his own right after his appointment in 2011 to complete Andy Levin's resigned position. During the Board's 7 October organizational meeting, the Board President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary were reelected. In a separate action, Board member Andrew Kent was elected Chairman/Maintenance and Improvements Committee to replace Regina Austin who stood down after several years of faithful and successful service.

The Board held its annual budget meeting on 28 October when it accepted the Treasurer's FY 2012 financial report and approved the 2013 budget--details of which are contained in this newsletter. The Board also voted unanimously to approve a \$1/lot increase in the 2013 lot assessment fee to cover one-half of the anticipated two per cent rate of inflation projected for 2013. The 2013 fee will be \$88/lot. This action allowed the Board to pass a balanced budget. The assessment increase will cover higher SLPA insurance and utility rates next year. The rest of the anticipated inflation increase will be covered by ongoing efforts to renegotiate lower gravel and culvert pipe costs for road maintenance, and from savings on contractor fees the Association paid in the past for brush trimming. Given recent equipment purchases, the Association can now do this work itself at considerable savings. Overall, it was important to avoid a deficit and cover anticipated inflation yet balance those needs with the financial impact of an increase on the membership. I believe we achieved those goals with this new budget. Please note, the Board considered and voted against a \$2 fee increase out of concern for its impact on SLPA's membership.

Best regards,

Eugene Skotzko, SLPA President

SLPA FY2013 BUDGET

Approved 10/28/2012

FUND SOURCES FOR FY '13 BUDGET

Lot Assessment FY'13 (based on 480 lots @ \$88/lot)	\$42,240.00
Totals	\$42,240.00

EXPENSE

M & I Expense	\$33,049.00
Machinery, Purchase (Capital. Investment)	\$0.00
Accounting	\$1,300.00
Legal Fees	\$150.00
Supplies	\$50.00
Rental fees	\$111.00
Postage and Shipping	\$175.00
Utilities - electricity	\$582.00
Printing and Reproduction	\$50.00
In-house publication (Newsletter)	\$1,000.00
Insurance	\$4,693.00
Charitable contributions	\$100.00
Misc. Expenses	\$205.00
Collection Expense	\$100.00
Corporate Memberships	\$175.00
Totals	\$41,740.00
Contingency provisions - emergency fund	\$0.00
Capital Contribution - equip. replacement	\$500.00
Totals	\$42,240.00

Note: Assessment increase is only enough to cover the increases in insurance and electricity costs

A memorable day

The Annual Meeting for 2012 occurred on a beautiful early fall day. September 15th brought sunshine, balmy temperatures in the 70s and a good turnout of members of the Skyline Lakes community. While ballots were being counted for election of three members to the 2013 SLPA Board of Directors, President Gene Skotzko reviewed business that had been addressed by the 2012 Board. Following that, in the absence of Treasurer Crystal Liebenow, Assistant Treasurer Jane Skotzko distributed copies and presented the Financial Report. Then, when the meeting was opened for new business, questions were raised and answered and some good discussions took place. Perhaps the most interesting item of new business was brought by Loie Lee who presented a beautiful jar full of some twenty odd kinds of fall flowers from our roadsides and talked about several, including a few edibles. With the announcement of the election of Jimmy Painter, Joyce Richards and Doug Southers to the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

But that was by no means the end of the camaraderie and the pleasant afternoon. Members quickly dispersed to gather potluck dishes and then reassembled at the Skotzko's home. Crystal Liebenow was caring for her granddaughters in Pennsylvania so her company was missed but Regina Austin stepped into Crystal's cooking shoes to prepare a turkey and fixings. She didn't stop with just that Thanksgiving fare either! Her venison and sausage "meatloaf" with generous large chunks of venison, brought sighs and raves from everyone who tasted it. This rare treat

could well have been a dish that was part of colonial American Thanksgivings. Other warm side dishes, salads, and desserts made for a great potluck meal with community members lingering and laughing and telling tales of “the old days” and fearsome wildlife that is with us yet.

Community composition of Skyline Lakes

Bill Haycraft posed one interesting question during the Annual Meeting when he asked if Skyline Lakes membership still consisted of about 3/4 out-of-state lot owners. Board Secretary Jane Harrington responded that she didn’t believe it was anywhere near that high but she agreed to check and report results in the next Newsletter. The count actually proved to be quite different from what Bill had stated. Using the Newsletter address list for counting, it was found that only 81 out of 230 “owners” (i.e. addressees, which could be an individual, a couple, an estate or a corporation) were from outside Virginia. More than half of those 81 from out-of-state, 43 owners, live fairly close in Maryland. The remaining 38 from out-of-state were distributed as follows: AZ (2), CA (6), DC (6), DE (2), FL (7), LA (1), MN (1), NC (2), NJ (1), OR (1), PA (2), SC (3), TX (2), VT (1) and WV (1). Within Virginia, 70 of the addresses were for Page county owners and 79 elsewhere in VA (but those 79 included addresses not too far afield in towns like Rileyville, Front Royal, Linden, New Market, Timberville, Grottoes and Elkton.

So current counting contradicts Bill Haycraft’s recollection. However, it should be remembered that Bill and his wife Estelle were among the early owners in Skyline Lakes. They hail from Chester, MD and still come back to the Blue Ridge with some frequency. So it’s quite possible that, when the Haycraft’s first bought their properties, the number of owners was smaller with a higher proportion of out-of-staters closer to that of Bill’s memory. Since then more properties were purchased from the developer and several have changed hands over the years giving us the distribution of addresses reflected above.

REMINDER: Help SLPA earn in-kind work hours credit to receive Firewise grant funds

We are lucky to have a current grant from the Firewise fire hazard mitigation program. However, as you may remember from articles in the May and August Newsletters, Skyline Lakes doesn’t get those funds unless they earn them by in-kind work effort. Hopefully, many of you have been putting in time clearing brush, downed limbs, trees etc. from your properties and from roadsides in the community. Your work hours should have been logged on sheets available in the bath house.

But don’t quit now! With the leaves down and undergrowth having died back – not to mention the bugs finally being gone – fall and warm winter days are a good time to keep working. Your hours can still count up until 1 March 2013. (If worksheets are no longer available/accessible in the bath house, contact Crystal Liebenow or Andy Kent for copies.) Every hour’s effort counts and it’s at a significant hourly rate of almost \$20 per hour. So put in some more hours when you can and be sure to get all work sheets tallying your efforts to Orv Lee (1028 High Knob Road Front Royal, VA 22630, if he can’t be found at their cabin on Tracey Drive) no later than the end of February. Oh yes, and there’s a bonus in it for you, too: much of what you cut may be good kindling and/or firewood.

Motions passed at the 7 October 2012 SLPA Board meeting:

- That the campaign to digitize Association records be begun by the Board authorizing purchase of a scanner and an external hard drive for storage (approximate costs \$200 and \$150 respectively) and designation of former treasurer Jane Skotzko, who has volunteered, to do the work.
- That the funds from inappropriate tax on common areas in prior years, which have been rebated to SLPA by Page County (\$1305.29), be used for roadside clearing this fall to avoid downed limbs or trees obstructing roadways this coming winter.

Motion passed at the 28 October 2012 SLPA Board meeting:

- That Property Owner's Association fee be raised by one dollar for 2013, from \$87 to \$88 per lot.

2013 SLPA Board of Directors

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