



# George Mason Forest Reporter

NUMBER 1

[www.gmfhoa.org](http://www.gmfhoa.org)

WINTER 2011

## 2011 ANNUAL GMFHQA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The annual GMFHQA membership meeting will be held Wednesday, **March 16, 2011, 8:00 PM** at Oak View Elementary School in the Media Center (Library) on Sideburn Road.

This is an opportunity for you to hear first hand what is happening in the GMFHQA community and for you to ask questions, make suggestions and express concerns to the Board of Directors. A report of the accomplishments completed in 2010 and goals for 2011 will be presented. A very important part of the meeting is the election of new members to the Board of Directors. Your presence and participation will impact on how your association is run and will influence the community in which you want to live. If you would like to serve as a member of the GMFHQA board, contact Lori Taylor (703-978-1045) and ask your name be added to the list of candidates for Board member.



## UPDATE OF GMFHQA GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

All property owner associations such as GMFHQA are governed by three specific documents which must be in compliance with the Code of Virginia. The three documents consist of 1) the Articles of Incorporation; 2) the Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions; and 3) By-Laws. The original GMFHQA documents were established by the developer in June of 1979 and are now thirty-two years old. In 1989, Braddock Manor and in 1998 Amanda Place were accepted into the GMFHQA. The Declaration of Annexation and Supplementary Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions stated the annexed developments will be governed under the GMFHQA documents.

Because of the many changes in the Code of Virginia since 1979, as well as changes in technology, our documents are in need of a relook and possible revision. The Board of Directors has appointed a Document Revision Committee to look at GMF's present documents and to consult with an attorney to determine what changes maybe needed.

The Document Revision Committee is composed of six homeowners and a Board of Directors member. They are John Mohn, Chair; Cary Adams; Sylvanus Bent; Clair Orth; Steve Spratt; Sue Rheinart and Charles Cason, Board member.

All property owners receive the GMFHQA governing documents upon purchase of their property and automatically become members of the association with all of the rights, responsibilities and duties of an association member.

**The Articles of Incorporation** designate that GMFHQA is a Virginia non-stock, non-profit corporation.

**The Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CCR)** are a set of rules establishing the individual and collective rights and obligations of property owners within a particular community or sub-division. The CCR define membership; voting rights; property rights; maintenance assessments; common

### GMF BOARD MEMBERS

Tena Bluhm - President	703-978-9468
Nancy Sajjadi - Vice President	703-323-0042
Fred Knowles - Secretary	703-426-8204
Vikki Keen - Treasurer	703-426-1776
Charles Cason	703-978-7784
Susan Job	703-272-7234
Paul Kite	703-425-6314
Margo Lockard	703-978-2163
Frank McHugh	703-978-3219
Mike Miller	703-978-5515
Eric Mondschein	703-426-0403
John Sullivan	703-978-4522
Lori Taylor	703-978-1045

driveways; restrictive covenants; easements; powers and duties of the association; and rights of a mortgagee, creditor or lender in a mortgage agreement.

**The By-Laws** are official rules and regulations which govern a corporation's management. They are drawn up at the time of incorporation. GMFHOA By-Laws set rules for meetings of members; selection, nomination and election of board of director members; meetings of directors; powers and duties of board of directors; election of board officers and their duties; appointments of committees; methods of book and record keeping; annual and special assessments; and procedure for amendment of the original document.

A time line has been established for the Document Revision Committee with consultation from an attorney who specializes in property owners association law to complete the review.

**2011—July** — Present recommendations to GMFHOA Board of Directors

**August to September**— Board review

**October**— Attorney review

**December**—Special GMFHOA member meeting present draft of revised documents to GMF members.

**2012— January to February** — GMFHOA members review

**March** — GMFHOA Annual Member meeting. Members vote on recommendations.

The new documents will then be recorded with the State of Virginia and Fairfax County.

The focus of changes will be on making sure the GMFHOA documents are in compliance with the Code of Virginia and Fairfax County Codes. Periodic electronic GMF Alerts will be sent as well as articles in the GMFHOA Newsletter with updates on the progress of this task.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 2011 GMFHOA CALENDAR

**MARCH 16 ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING**

**APRIL 2 COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP DAY**

**JUNE 4 COMMUNITY PICNIC AND POTLUCK**

**OCT 29 HALLOWEEN PARADE AND PARTY**



## SUMMARY OF GMFHOA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Complete Board minutes are on

the web site [www.gmfhoa.org](http://www.gmfhoa.org)

*The GMFHOA Board meets monthly except in August and December. Summary of October and November 2010 meetings below :*

**A. Latest Treasurer Report:** As of Nov: Operating account: \$15,611.14; Reserve account: \$18,444; CD: \$10,902. The 2011 Budget was approved. Capital Reserve Budget was approved. Board voted no increase in 2011 annual assessment. Assessment amount will remain \$120 annually and notices will be sent out end of January. The 2011 operating budget shows a \$55 deficit, but excess funds from previous years should cover.

### **B. Committee Reports:**

**Grounds Committee:** Lights at both entrances were repaired. Neighborhood watch sign on Tapestry Drive was repaired. A tree in common ground will be removed pending completion of cost estimates.

**Bridges and Trail:** Rip rap will be placed at both north and south bridges support bases where wash out is occurring. Project expected to be completed in spring 2011.

**Publications:** The 2011 Phone Directory was completed and distributed. Errors have been found in some email addresses. A corrections addendum will be distributed.

**Landscaping:** Dying yews will be replaced with nandina at the Tapestry entrance sign. Crepe myrtles will be planted in common area at the site of the curve in Red Spruce Road in the spring.

**ACC Report:** Several applications for external home improvements were received and approved. Any planned change to the external of a homeowners property must to be pre-approved by the Architectural Control Committee. GMF covenants and ACC Guidelines are found on the GMFHOA web site.

**Social Committee Report:** New residents welcomed. Committee asks residents to contact Susan Job (703-272-7234) when a new neighbor moves into the community.

\*\*\*\*\*

## HELPING HANDS NEEDED

Be a good neighbor and check to see if your neighbor needs assistance with clearing their sidewalks and drive ways. Or refer them to the list of students listed in the back of the phone directory who are looking for jobs clearing snow.

## Need Service Providers?

Several residents have expressed a desire to have a "clearing house" of home service providers. Joelle Torreele has volunteered to be the point of contact. Residents can contact her about their experience with a company or individual. This is not an endorsement of the company or individual. If you have a story to tell or are looking for a repair person or company, contact her at [jj.torreele@gmail.com](mailto:jj.torreele@gmail.com)



\*\*\*\*\*

## POLICE ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

At the January meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council for the West Springfield Police district, a VDOT representative discussed snow removal. He requested that cars **not** be parked on the street during a snow storm. Cars parked on the streets prevent the plows from doing the best job they can. He also requested that fire hydrants be cleared of snow. It is in everyone's best interest to have the hydrants visible to fire department personnel in case of emergency.

The police discussed a string of 15 or more burglaries in the West Springfield District (GMFHOA is in the district) within the last three months. The break-ins are into an unoccupied homes by forcing open a door, usually between 5 and 7 PM. Residents should take steps to make their home look occupied and report any unusual activities in the community to the police on the non-emergency line. (703-691-2131). People with alarms should activate them. Some of the homes involved had alarms, but they were turned off. All of the homes involved were single family homes.

\*\*\*\*\*

## REMINDERS

**SPEED LIMIT IN GMF IS 25 MPH**

**SNOW ON WALKS AND LAWNS DOES NOT EXCUSE THE OBLIGATION OF CLEANING UP AFTER YOUR DOG.**

## GMFHOA CLEAN UP DAY IN THE COMMON AREAS

The annual GMFHOA clean-up day is **April 2, 2011**. Volunteers meet at the Red Spruce entrance at 9:00 AM. Trash bags will be provided. Wear weather proof foot wear and bring gloves. Designated areas will be assigned. This project is usually completed by 11:00 AM. The filled trash bags are placed in designated spots and will be picked up and hauled to the trash dump later in the day. Tapestry Drive had the most volunteers last year. Which street will take the challenge to beat them this year with more volunteers? This is a great environmental helpful project for GMF students to contribute to the community.

## ELECTIONS FOR GMFHOA BOARD OF DIRECTOR

Voting for board members will take place at the annual homeowners meeting March 16. The term of office for three board members will expire. Two of the members, Fred Knowles and Frank McHugh, have volunteered to place their names on the ballot to serve for another term. John Sullivan will leave the board in March at the end of his term. John has faithfully served for three years. The community extends a "thank you" to him for all of his work, especially with the annual clean up days, cleaning of the brick entrance signs and his participation on committees. Nominees are needed. Contact Lori Taylor 703-978-1045 if you would like to be included on the ballot. One of the very important responsibilities of members of homeowners association is to participate in the activities of the association such as active serving in the association and attending membership meetings.

\*\*\*\*\*

## COMMON LAND FIX UP

The Board voted to replace the two dying yews flanking the Tapestry Drive entrance sign. They will be replaced with Nandina Domestica. On the common land located at the curve of Red Spruce, three white crepe myrtles and a ground cover of Pachysandra at their base will be planted. The area was previously overgrown with brambles which were removed and is now unsightly. The plants selected are very low maintenance and will provide color in the summer. The area is filled with old construction debris which will first have to be removed and then the soil amended. The plantings be done in the spring by our lawn maintenance company Silverbrook Nurseries. In addition, Silverbrook will replace the rip-rap that is washing down stream and add additional at the support bases of both bridges. This will complete the repair project of the north bridge.

## SPEEDING IN THE COMMUNITY

Complaints of speeding in the community continue to come to the Board. Violators appear to be all ages. Adult drivers **should be** the most responsible and aware of the danger of speeding on GMF roads. The worse times seem to be at rush hour especially in the mornings. The extra 60 seconds it takes to get to the entrances are not worth the death or injury of anyone. Our students are crossing the road to get to the bus stop and do not always look for oncoming cars. It is imperative that drivers slow down to **25 mph!!**

Another serious problem involves impatient drivers making a left turn onto Braddock Road. They pull out on the right of those drivers already in the median strip, blocking the view of the first driver and can potentially cause an accident. GMFHOA has been in contact with the police department regarding the speeding problems. Residents are also encouraged to notify the police at **703-691-2131 if you see unsafe driving**. Report the license number, time of incident and describe the incident. The police will warn the individual of their unsafe driving practices.

\*\*\*\*\*

## BRADDOCK DISTRICT DOG PARK

Monticello Park located on Guinea Road is the site of the proposed Braddock District Dog Park. The organizers are to meet with Fairfax County Park Authority for further discussions. The Park Authority will need a signed agreement from the organizers/association of dog owners who will be required to maintain the park. The County will provide the site, but the maintenance and running of the site will be provided by the organizers/association of dog owners. Interested persons can contact Russ Rosen at [rosen22@verizon.net](mailto:rosen22@verizon.net) for more information.

\*\*\*\*\*

## GMFHOA REMINDERS

The GMFHOA restrictive covenants (Article VII) require review and approval by the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) before any **external change in your home**. Request forms for changes can be obtained on the web site. For questions, contact the ACC chair, Ray Bluhm at [RayBJr@aol.com](mailto:RayBJr@aol.com)

Residents are asked to keep the sidewalks in front of their homes cleared of overgrown shrubs, trees and vegetation.

Sellers of homes must obtain a **Disclosure Packet** to give to the buyer. This package contains the association By-Laws, Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions of the GMFHOA. The association by law has 14 days to respond, which includes an ACC external inspection of the property. View instructions and obtain the request form for the packet on the GMFHOA web site.

**Dumping** of yard cuttings into the common land is prohibited by law and GMFHOA covenants. Yard waste is collected weekly by the trash companies. The dumped materials kill the natural vegetation that filters the water as it flows into the Chesapeake Bay, alters the habitat of wild life and changes drainage. Dumping is a violation of GMF Restrictive Covenants and the Federal Resource Protected Area (RPA) act. The association as well as the individual can be heavily fined by state and county law.

**Encroachment** into the RPA stream common land by extending lawns, gardens, or storing of items is prohibited. Removing trees or natural growth must be approved by the GMFHOA Board, and new plantings must be native to Virginia.

\*\*\*\*\*

## GMFHOA ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

The Board voted **no** increase in the GMFHOA annual assessment for 2011. The amount of **\$120** remains unchanged.

The assessment will be sent two ways: 1) electronically; or 2) via postal mail. Included will be the 2011 budget and agenda for the March 16 general meeting. Payment of the assessment is due upon receipt. Endorse your check to GMFHOA for **\$120** and send to: Vikki Keen, Treasurer, 10153 Red Spruce Road, Fairfax, VA 22032

These funds are used to maintain the common areas, and repair or replace GMFHOA owned structures.

All homeowners legally become members of the association when they purchase their home and are required to pay the annual assessment.



## POWER OUTAGE CONTACT INFORMATION

Do not assume that your neighbor has called Dominion Power if a power outage occurs. It is important that everyone calls to notify them. The repair of your power lines only begins when the power company received at least **three** call of homes without electricity in a specific area. The number to call is **1-866-366-4357 (1-866-DOM-HELP)** and enter your account phone number. On the internet go to [www.dom.com](http://www.dom.com) and search "storm center".

Do not assume that your neighbor has called Dominion Power if a power outage occurs. It is important that everyone calls to notify them. The repair of your power lines only begins when the power company received at least **three** call of homes without electricity in a specific area. The number to call is **1-866-366-4357 (1-866-DOM-HELP)** and enter your account phone number. On the internet go to [www.dom.com](http://www.dom.com) and search "storm center".