

The Oak Leaf

Newsletter of Broad Run Oaks



Tips for Spring Yard Maintenance

The air is getting warmer and the threat of snow is past. Now is the time to start thinking about April showers bringing May flowers. Most of us are anxious to see bulbs sprouting, buds unfurling and color splashed throughout the garden. And, although it is a bit early to get your hands in the dirt, there is plenty that can be done in preparation for the spring gardening season.

March is a great month for trimming and tidying. It is the appropriate time to cut back ornamental grasses, such as Pampas and Monkey grass. The old growth should be cut 4-6 inches from the ground. Many trees and shrubs can also be pruned during March. Fruit trees, evergreens, and several other deciduous trees can be trimmed and shaped prior to the appearance of new growth. However, spring-blooming shrubs should not be pruned until right after they bloom.

March is also a good time to clean perennial beds. Remove leaves, trash and any extra mulch you put over plants for winter protection. Begin cutting back plants that were left standing through the winter. Get a jump on the season by edging and weeding beds. Digging and teasing out weeds when they are small, saves countless hours of weeding during the sweltering summer months. Cutting in a neat edge on garden beds also slows the progress of weeds and gives the landscape a neat, professional appearance.

Once grass starts to turn green, rake the lawn to remove dead grass, leaves, etc. Wait for the lawn to dry out prior to using any pre-emergent weed killer for grassy weeds, such as crabgrass. If possible, apply pre-emergent weed killer before mid-April. To control broadleaf weeds—like dandelions—use a broadleaf weed killer; but do not apply this until the weeds begin growing. Fertilize grass with a slow-release, high nitrogen fertilizer, once before the end of May.

Early-spring is also the appropriate time to begin watering trees and shrubs that were planted in the fall. Newly planted trees and shrubs need supplemental watering for a full year to stay healthy, establish a good root system and flower well. Use new leaves as the indication to start watering. A slow, steady watering is best—soaker hoses or a hose with a slow trickle serve to water deeply and well.

Perform a pre-season check to ensure your garden tools and lawnmower are ready for the busy gardening season. Check them and fix, sharpen or replace as necessary. Take a stroll around your yard to survey whether any of your plants have been damaged by the weather or woodland creatures, such as rabbits or rodents. Start a list for your garden center. Flip through your garden journal and start a list of "must do" projects. By the time your list is done, spring will be here.

Glenkirk Elementary Advisory Committee

submitted by Laura Rivers

Do you have students who attend Glenkirk Elementary? Are you interested in helping Glenkirk Elementary become a more effective school? Then the Glenkirk Elementary Advisory Council could be for you.

The Advisory Council is composed of staff and parent representatives from the community. The purpose of the Council is to represent and assess the needs of the community and the Glenkirk staff, and to act as an advisor to the school administration on important issues such as the budget and implementation, evaluation and modification to the school plan. The Broad Run Oaks representative to the Advisory Committee is Ms. Laura Rivers.

Advisory Council meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month during the school year (between September and June) and are open to the public. Meetings take place at the school and Citizen's Time is allotted at the beginning of each meeting for community members to voice concerns. Previous meeting minutes are posted on the school website (<http://www.pwcs.edu/Glenkirk/>).

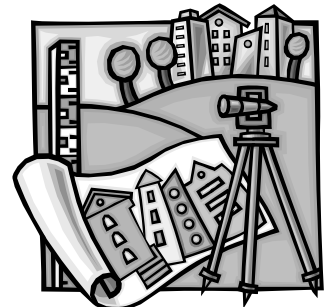
Residents interested in asking a question and/or speaking during Citizen's Time can email their name and telephone number to Ms. Gilkerson (gilkerls@pwcs.edu). Community members are also welcome to contact Ms. Rivers, LauraRivers@comcast.net or (703) 754-5827, who can take any questions or concerns to the Advisory Council.

Visit our website:

www.broadrunoaks.com

Community Records Update

Members of the Broad Run Oaks Board of Directors and Armstrong Management Company will be surveying the neighborhood in the coming months. The purpose of the survey will be to annotate all exterior improvements to ensure that community records are up to date. The Architectural Review Board will use the assessment as the baseline for future inspections. If you have any questions about this process, or any other, please contact the Board of Directors at hoa@broadrunoaks.com.



Committee News

Welcome Spring!

Miriam McBride, Chair

The Open Space Committee looks forward to working with TruGreen again this year to ensure that our neighborhood is properly maintained. With that being said, if you notice any common area that is missed when the mowing season begins, or has a litter problem, please let us know. You can contact us at openspace@broadrunoaks.com.

Our wonderful warm weather flowers are due to go in sometime in April at our Sierra Sunset entrance. Once we have the "okay" that the Sterling Point entrance is no longer in any risk of further construction, we will work to have that entrance landscaped as well.

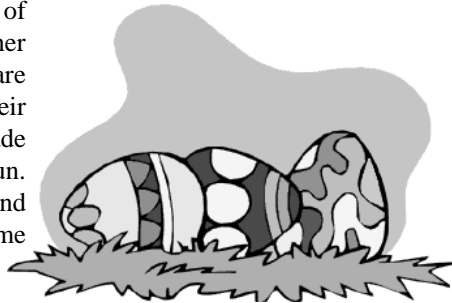
As always, we welcome new members to the committee and appreciate any suggestions you may have! Have a wonderful Spring!

Committees are never full ... Email the board (hoa@broadrunoaks.com) to get more information on joining one of the Broad Run Oaks Committees (ARB, Bond Release, Communications, Helping Hands, Open Space, Social, and Survey).

An 'Egg-stra' Special Event

Maria Duffus, Chair

The annual Broad Run Oaks Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, March 29th at 3:00 p.m. at the tennis courts. Due to how early Easter is falling on the calendar this year, the Social Committee decided to schedule the event for the weekend after Easter, in hopes of ensuring better weather for the event. Parents are encouraged to bring their children, up to fifth-grade age, to enjoy the fun. Simply bring a basket and get ready to have some fun and find some eggs.



Helping Hands

Karen Decker, Chair

Everyone has heard the saying, "it is better to give than to receive." However, one of the committees within our community thinks these are words to live by. The Helping Hands Committee was established to help neighbors in need. As with all the committees in the neighborhood, Helping Hands is composed of volunteers willing to donate their time and expertise to assist. Please contact the committee if you have a need or know of a need within the neighborhood.

I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again – William Penn

Notes from the ARB

David Sanchez, Chair

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) has been performing scheduled, periodic inspections for a little over a year. The group took over this responsibility from the management company in an effort to get feedback to the community in a more timely manner. The positive results of these inspections can be seen throughout the community and the ARB and Board of Directors thank residents for their prompt responses to notifications. These individual home improvements, along with the landscaping done in and around the community common areas, are helping Broad Run Oaks compete with other communities in the Gainesville area.

In order to continue this improvement, the ARB would like to take this opportunity to remind residents of the two most common discrepancies noted during inspections—basketball goals and trash receptacles. Both of these items are expected to be stored out of sight when not being utilized. If residents have questions regarding this they should consult the *Broad Run Oaks Architectural Guidelines* that were provided when they purchased their home. The exact references for these items appear on pages 16, Section H (Recreation and Play Equipment) and 26, Section Z (Trash) respectively. Copies of the *Architectural Guidelines* can be downloaded from the Broad Run Oaks website (www.broadrunoaks.com).

In addition to the above discrepancies, two other areas warrant discussion. First, many homes within the community are beginning to show signs of aging, including structural damage and a need for repair and/or repainting of porticos and patios. It is best to address these aging issues early, before they have the opportunity to become truly unsightly or possibly even dangerous. Second, a large number of homes within the neighborhood have non-functioning exterior pole lights. For safety and security reasons, it is critical that these lights perform as intended. Therefore, replacement of burned out bulbs in homeowner's pole lights should take place as soon as possible.

Lastly, the ARB would like to remind residents that spring is just a few short weeks away and the task of maintaining their yards in accordance with the *Architectural Guidelines* is fast approaching. That said, the ARB would like to commend residents for the improvements made over the last two years to individual lawns—it has been the area that has shown the greatest improvement. Remember, summer lawn care actually begins in the fall and spring. Performing maintenance now will ensure a healthy yard throughout the summer. Previous editions of the *Oak Leaf*, which are also available on the Broad Run Oaks website, have provided articles with yard maintenance tips by season.

Once again the ARB thanks homeowners for their efforts in making Broad Run Oaks one of Gainesville's best communities. They also thank the other committees for their efforts to improve the overall appearance of Broad Run Oaks.

Time for Spring Cleaning

Spring represents new growth and new beginnings, and many people find it to be a terrific time to clean up and organize their lives and homes. If you are one of these folks, or would like to become one, the following tips can help you get started.

Before Beginning:

- Inventory and assemble your cleaning supplies. It's a good idea to consolidate items into a single bucket that can be carried from room to room. Suggested items include cleaning rags, all purpose cleaner, glass cleaner, feather duster, disinfectant, and furniture polish.
- Wear comfortable, old clothing that you will not mind getting stained or dirty.
- Devise a plan of attack. It is best to use a top down approach, taking it one room at a time.
- Include a list of items you would like to replace, fix and/or give to charity. Prepare a budget, if necessary.

During the Cleaning:

- Focus on one room each day. This keeps you from getting worn out and giving up before the entire house is finished.
- Open the doors and windows to let fresh air in while you clean. The temperate spring weather makes it pleasant to work without air conditioning. It also ensures that cleaning fluid chemicals can dissipate from the enclosed space.
- Save the draperies until the room is complete and wash the drapes of each room separately. Clean Venetian blinds with wet cloth after you have dusted the room and vacuumed the carpet.
- Once a room is complete, close the door and do not open it unless necessary. This ensures that dust won't migrate into the cleaned room.
- Empty all drawers and cupboards, sorting items as useful or useless. Ensure you organize items as they are replaced and remove items that have not been used for a long time and are not likely to be used again. Donate items deemed useless to charity or store them out of the way for a garage sale. When in doubt, throw it out.

Once the clutter is clear and the cobwebs are gone, you can feel better knowing you are heading into summer with a clean, organized home.

Neighborhood Watch

The Broad Run Oaks Neighborhood Watch, which is coordinated by Karen Decker, is now 'official.' Neighborhood Watch signs are now posted in two areas of the neighborhood—the Sierra Sunset entrance and the tennis court entrance. The sign at the Sterling Point Drive entrance will be installed sometime in the future.

Despite this progress, the Watch is still in need of volunteers to become block captains. Areas requiring captains include Big Leaf Maple Court, Crackling Cedar Lane, Crimson Crossing Way, Narrow Branch Court, Prickly Ash Way, Scarlet Maple Drive, Sierra Sunset Lane, Sour Gum Court, Sterling Point Drive, and 8100 and 8200 Tenbrook Drive. The Broad Run Oaks community thanks our neighbors who have already volunteered in this capacity, as well as those who are members of the Watch.

The latest Neighborhood Watch crime alert from the Prince William County Police indicates that there has been an increase in larcenies from vehicles within Prince William County. The most sought after item appears to be GPS systems and the route of entry has been through the breakage of windows. The thefts have been occurring between the hours of 6:30 and 10:30 p.m. Residents are urged to lock their vehicles and ensure valuable items are not left inside.

As always, report any non-emergency or suspicious activity to the Prince William County Police at 703-792-6500. Remember, a vigilant community is a safe community.



Community Contacts

Board of Directors

Chuck Robinson.....President
Nasser Alikhani.....Vice President
Debby Riplinger.....Secretary
Melissa Jaramillo.....Treasurer
Paul MacDonald.....Member-At-Large

hoa@broadrunoaks.com

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This newsletter is an official publication of the Broad Run Oaks Homeowners Association. Publication in this newsletter of resolutions, rules, regulations and meetings duly adopted or called by the Board of Directors serves as official notice to the membership and residents of the meetings or the adoption and implementation of these enactments of rules for the purpose of enforcement

Newsletter Articles: If you have topics or articles you would like to see addressed in the newsletter, please contact Paula MacDonald, *The Oak Leaf* editor and Communications Committee Chair at:

communications@broadrunoaks.com.

All suggestions are welcome!

From the President:

Dear Fellow Residents,

I hope you all enjoyed the lack of snowfall this winter as much as I did, and that you are looking forward to the warmer weather spring will bestow upon us. As the warm weather approaches, our landscapers will be back on site mulching the trees, planting the seasonal flowers, and maintaining the grass in the common areas. Last season we had some issues with the quality of landscaping that Broad Run Oaks received and along with the contractor we have made some adjustments that will hopefully eliminate these issues. That said, if you notice a common area that is not receiving the appropriate level of attention from our landscapers, please email the open space committee and/or the board and we will ensure that it is addressed.

Along with the warm weather comes the increase of foot traffic in our community—people walking, riding bikes, and children playing. With this increase in our community's outdoor population, I would like to remind residents that the neighborhood speed limit is 25 MPH. Please slow down and use a more watchful eye as you travel throughout the community during the spring and summer months. Parents are also asked to remind their children that the street is not a safe place to play.

Lastly, I would like again to address the issue of streetlights in our community. There are some sections of our community that for one reason or another were left without any streetlights. Prince William County is aware of this issue, however they have done little to address it. If you feel as strongly about the lack of lighting in our community as I do, I encourage you take a few minutes out of your day and let the Prince William County Gainesville District Supervisor, Mr. John Stirrup know how disappointed you are with the county for approving a community plan that did not include streetlights. You may contact Mr. .Stirrup at: Sudley North Government Center, 7873 Ashton Avenue, Manassas, Virginia 20109, Office: (703) 792-6195, Fax: (703) 792-7664, Email: Gainesville@pwcgov.org.

To counter the lack of streetlights in our community, we ask each homeowner to ensure their front lamp post is in operating condition. This is extremely important since in many cases these lamp posts are the only source of light on our streets. If you find your light not working and are unable to attend to it on your own, please contact the Helping Hands Committee (helpinghands@broadrunoaks.com) and they will gladly provide assistance in repairing your light.

In closing, as usual I would like to thank all those who have volunteered their time to our community and welcome all those who would like to volunteer. We are always looking for assistance and no matter what your talents may be, there is likely an area in the community that could put it to use. If interested, simply email the board of directors (hoa@broadrunoaks.com).

Chuck Robinson, President Broad Run Oaks HOA

**Broad Run Oaks Homeowners Association
c/o Armstrong Management Services, Inc.
3949 Pender Drive, #205
Fairfax, VA 22030**



**Join us in April 2008 for the next meeting of
the Broad Run Oaks Homeowners
Association—specific details will be posted
on the website and on the community sign
(located at the Sierra Sunset entrance)**