

The Oak Leaf

Newsletter of Broad Run Oaks



Is Your Identity Safe?

by Karen Decker, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

With identity theft being on the rise, here are ten tips from your Neighborhood Watch to minimize the risk of it ever happening to you. Although chances are slim that a person will have this experience, it only takes one misplaced document or an accidental click on a link on the web to put you at risk.

- **Shred your documents.** Invest in a document shredder and get into the habit of shredding any mail that contains personal information such as credit card offers, bank statements, and even driver's license renewals.
- **Pay attention to the mail.** Be aware of the time of the month your bills arrive. If the bill is late there may be cause for concern.
- **Consider a post office box.** It may be worthwhile to sign up for a P.O. box, which will prevent identity thieves from being able to reach into your mailbox and gather your personal information
- **Opt of out credit card offers.** Call 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688) to learn more about opting out of pre-approved credit card offers that clog your mailbox. You can also visit the Opt Out Prescreen website
- **Take care when creating passwords.** As the internet is becoming a common tool for financial services, create

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Yard of the Month

Spring is here and that can only mean one thing ... it is almost time for the Broad Run Oaks Yard of the Month contest!

For the last two years, beginning in May and wrapping up in September, one lucky homeowner has been rewarded for their diligence in yard maintenance with this now coveted monthly award. Last year we heard tales of neighbors 'competing' to see who would win the title first.

Here is how the program works:

Qualifying is as easy as 1 – 2 – 3 ... (1) Be a homeowner in Broad Run Oaks, (2) Have no outstanding violations or late dues payments, and (3) Have a yard worthy of the award (i.e., good curb appeal).

Anyone can nominate a home for yard of the month, simply email the Board (hoa@broadrunoaks.com) with the subject line 'YOTM Nomination.' Nominations are accepted until the 5th of each month of the contest (May through September). Then, a listing of all nominations is sent to Broad Run Oaks committee members. Board and Committee members have until the 10th of the month to vote and rank their top 3 selections. The winner is chosen by tallying these votes.

If you would like additional detail on the Yard of the Month contest or if you want to see all our past winners, simply log on to our community website (www.broadrunoaks.com). Good Luck and happy mulching!



Hunting will occur within three age groups:

- 1 month to 3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8 years and up

Can you find a Golden Egg?

Broad Run Oaks EASTER EGG HUNT

May 1st 2011 3 p.m.

Bring a basket and join us at the tennis courts
There are twelve 'Golden Eggs' to be found and snacks will be served



Get Involved, Volunteer!

Have you ever considered becoming more involved in Broad Run Oaks? We are always looking for volunteers to participate on our committees and/or support individual events. There are a variety of ways you can help, many that only require an hour or two of your time.

If you are looking for a way to meet your neighbors or just want to give back to the community, contact the Board (hoa@broadrunoaks.com) and express your interest. Better yet, express your interest during the next HOA meeting. We would love to have you!

Architectural Review Committee

by Mike O'Loughlin, Chair

Punxsutawney Phil said we were going to have an early Spring this year and he was right. Just remember that when the flowers come out so do the ARB inspectors. We have now resumed our monthly inspections that will last through September. Remember, ARB inspectors are not out trying to cause trouble for homeowners, they only want to keep our community looking its best. Many homeowners have worked hard to make their homes look nice and the ARB thanks those homeowners for their efforts in making Broad Run Oaks one of Gainesville's best communities.

Yard care is paramount. Yard maintenance tends to be the most prevalent reason violation notices are sent out. Please mow your yard when needed and do not forget to edge your sidewalks and weed whack around your house and landscape. Many homes within the community have begun to show signs of aging, particularly around front doors and garages. It is best to address these aging issues early, before they have the opportunity to become truly unsightly or possibly even dangerous. Those homeowners with porticos above their front door need to be even more vigilant and address aging issues early. What can you do to help? Please take a moment out of your busy schedule to stand out in front of your home and take a good hard look at your house and property. Take note of things that need to be taken care of or those that will likely

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Social Committee

Melanie Smallwood, Chair

The Social Committee is gearing up for a busy spring and summer season. Our first activity of the year will be an Easter Egg Hunt on May 1st. Then, just two short weeks later, will be the Spring Community-wide Garage Sale on May 14th. Additional details on both these events is available on the Broad Run Oaks website, the Broad Run Oaks Facebook page, and within this newsletter (see below left and page 1 ads).

The Social Committee has plenty of room for members to help plan events and others to volunteer during events. If you are interested in serving in either role, contact us at social@broadrunoaks.com. If you do not have time to join or volunteer, we at least hope you and your family will be able to attend some of our events throughout the year—we look forward to seeing you there!

Looking for more Broad Run Oaks information or have something to share with the community?

Visit our website (www.broadrunoaks.com) or



(<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Broad-Run-Oaks/163709803643269>)

Helping Hands

by Karen Decker, Chair

Alas, spring has sprung. There is always something special about the spring season as Mother Nature showers us with many gifts. From the birds chirping over the picturesque displays of springtime flowers, to the cool breezes allowing us to take in the special fragrances of these blossoming plants ... one can only begin to notice the beauty in everything that surrounds you. To some, spring may represent a new beginning, a time for you to develop a new attitude or start new home projects.

With this in mind, if you would love to start a new project and you need advice or help to get started please do not hesitate to contact us, the Helping Hands committee, at helpinghands@broadrunoaks.com. We are here to provide any help within our capacity.

For those of you who celebrate Easter or Jewish Passover, please have a wonderful and safe holiday with your families and friends. Also, remember to take the time to thank our service men and women who put themselves in harms way to protect our freedoms. Enjoy your spring season!

*And Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;*

*And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
rose from the dreams of its wintry rest – Percy Bysshe Shelly*

Broad Run Oaks
Annual Spring Community-wide Garage Sale
May 14th 2011
7:00 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Ads will be run in the Bull Run Observer
Just set up, sit back, and collect the cash

Brought to you by the
Broad Run Oaks Homeowner's Association and Social Committee
For questions or further details contact the Social Committee at
social@broadrunoaks.com



need to be addressed in the near future—that is all the ARB inspectors do. Then, fix these issues before the inspectors have a chance to notice them and submit their monthly report requesting violations be sent.

Residents are reminded that U.S. Postal Service regulations require house numbers to be visible on mailboxes and homes. Trash and recycling bins should be picked up promptly following trash service and stored out of view at all other times. The warmer weather will also bring out basketball hoops. Prince William County law requires basketball hoops to be set up so that players are not playing in the streets or on sidewalks. The ARB rules now allow basketball hoops to be stored upright in resident’s driveways, adjacent to their home. Please DO NOT lay hoops down in front or side yards unless it is temporarily necessary due to high winds. Also note that basketball hoops not maintained in good repair or stored properly are a violation and can be legally removed from the property by VDOT. Residents are reminded that they must abide by local laws and ordinances regarding their pets. Please be good neighbors and be responsible pet owners—clean up after your animals.

Finally, as the weather improves the ARB expects to see a surge in applications for exterior alterations. To avoid delays in the approval process please ensure your applications are complete, legible, and contain all required documentation (e.g., plat drawing, if required). Documenting alterations is very important especially when it comes time to try and sell your home. The application process also lets your neighbors and the Homeowner’s Association know that you plan to do something and lets us make sure it is authorized and done correctly so you do not have to spend extra money removing or fixing something you had done. The ARB meets monthly, when necessary, to review property change applications. ARB meetings are always open to homeowners. Meetings are usually held the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Glenkirk Elementary School library. Residents are invited to confirm meeting time and location via email (arb@broadrunoaks.com). This email address can also be used to ask questions and inform us of any concerns you may have.

Thank you all for everything you do to help keep Broad Run Oaks one of Gainesville’s best and most beautiful communities.

passwords that would be impossible for someone to guess. A password of at least eight characters (lower and upper case) with a combination of numbers is a good start.

- **Create multiple passwords and change them regularly.** Have different passwords for different sites and change them at least once every few months (e.g., quarterly).
- **Monitor your credit report.** Look for anything that might be unusual and make sure that all of your known lines of credit are being reported properly.
- **Review your bank and credit card fraud policies.** Some banks and credit card companies have better fraud policies than others. Make sure your bank has something in place to automatically detect fraudulent activity, and how much are you are liable for if a fraudulent event occurs.
- **Be aware of phishing scams.** Do not follow links in e-mails that appear to be requests from your bank or other online services to update your personal information or account information. Most businesses do not request information this way. When in doubt, contact the business or log in directly to the website.
- **Only keep the essentials in your wallet or purse.** A big mistake is for you to carry more sensitive information than is necessary, such as your social security card or even your checkbook when you are not using it.

I hope these tips are informative and helpful. While there is a good chance you will never personally experience this situation, it is always better to be proactive than reactive. Have a wonderful spring season.

Open Space

Ric Seaman, Chair

Spring is in the air! The ornamental grasses have been cut back, fresh mulch has been put out, and soon our winter pansies will be replaced with spring flowers in the entrance beds.

Remember, the Open Space Committee is in place to ensure proper care of the common areas within our community. If you know of a common area that is getting missed during mowing or one that needs some additional care, contact us at openspace@broadrunoaks.com.

Community Contacts

Board of Directors

- Paul MacDonald.....President
- Jim Decker.....Vice President
- Debby Riplinger.....Secretary
- Brian Tower.....Treasurer
- Robert Rodriguez.....Member-At-Large

hoa@broadrunoaks.com

Management Company

Armstrong Management Services, Inc.
3949 Pender Drive, #205
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fax: 703-591-5785

customerservice@armstrong.net

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: The next edition of *The Oak Leaf* will be Summer 2011. Article topics and suggestions will be accepted until June 25th. Submit ideas and/or inputs to Paula MacDonald, *The Oak Leaf* editor and Communications Committee Chair at:

communications@broadrunoaks.com

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

From the President:

Dear Fellow Residents,

Welcome to Spring! That means it is that time of year again ... time for yard work. Everyone is reminded to help keep our community clean and neat. One major key to that is ensuring your own yard is properly cut and trimmed. Another is to always pick up trash that gathers in and around your yard. If we all take care of our own small area, the community as a whole will shine. Please take the time to do your part.

Residents are encouraged to pay attention to all Broad Run Oaks communications for announcements, upcoming events, and important notifications. Communications include this newsletter (*The Oak Leaf*), our website (www.broadrunoaks.com), our FaceBook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Broad-Run-Oaks/163709803643269>), and the community entrance signs. The social committee has several activities planned for the spring and summer months, and we want to ensure all residents are informed. It is my hope the Homeowner's Association will also sponsor a few parties and events while the weather is welcoming enough for everyone to gather outside. In addition, the Board is continuing to gather information about the possibility of a pool and/or clubhouse within the community. We also have several other issues that will likely be put up for vote at this year's annual meeting in the fall. Included on that list is a potential ban of commercial vehicles within the neighborhood. News of upcoming decisions, votes, and progress on these and other items will be shared with residents using one or more of the above listed forms of communication and/or through Homeowner's Association meetings.

I look forward to seeing you at one of the social events or an upcoming meeting.

Sincerely,

Paul MacDonald
President, Broad Run Oaks HOA

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Join us for the next Homeowners Association meeting, which will be held April 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the Glenkirk Elementary School Library