

The ak Leaf

Newsletter of Broad Run Oaks



Yard of the Month Recognizes Perfection

Beginning in May this year, Broad Run Oaks introduced a Yard of the Month Program. The program will run through the summer months, from May to September, and reward one resident each month for their hard work and dedication to making Broad Run Oaks a more visually appealing neighborhood.

The rules for the program are simple. Residents are only eligible to win one time per season. Nominations are accepted by the Board until the 5th of each month (May through September). Then the Board looks at the nominated yards and votes for a winner. The winner receives a gift card to help them maintain their yard in exceptional shape, and has their home highlighted on the neighborhood entrance signs and the website.

The inaugural winner of the award was Mr. Petracca who resides at 12107 Maiden Hair Drive. His exceptionally manicured lawn looks fantastic year round. Neighbors from Maiden Hair and Double Eagle Street enjoy the view they have of a beautifully landscaped corner lot.



May 2009 Yard of the Month Winner

Our June winner is the Lewis family at 12060 Maiden Hair Drive. The entire family participates to ensure the yard looks immaculate throughout the year. In fact, this year they are expanding the landscaping around the side and back of the house. Their neighbors appreciate the family's efforts, as does the Homeowner's Association.

If you know of someone who deserves the Yard of the Month award, contact the Board (hoa@broadrunoaks.com) and nominate them. Winners are posted on the website on a newly created Yard of the Month page, which can be accessed through the Residents tab. Congratulations to the winners and good luck to everyone else!

Child on Bicycle Injured by Vehicle

A sixteen-year old girl was struck by a car while riding her bicycle here in Broad Run Oaks. The child received a minor concussion, as well as some scrapes and bruises. She is recovering. Reports indicate that the driver was speeding.

Residents are reminded the speed limit within our community is 25 mph. There are many children within our neighborhood, so additional caution is warranted. In addition, parents should ensure that their children are taught appropriate bicycle safety (see page 4) and warned of the dangers of playing in the street.

Everyone must be vigilant, we do not wish to see a headline that reads *Child Killed While Playing in Community*.



Have you visited the
community website lately?
www.broadrunoaks.com

Swine Flu ... What Does it Mean to You?

There has been a lot of discussion in the news about H1N1 influenza, which is commonly being referred to as Swine Flu. Although the hype has died down a bit due to the low mortality rate of the virus, a lot of scientists and specialists think that the fall influenza season could see a resurgence of the virus with the possibility of it becoming more dangerous.

In order to protect yourself from influenza or any other contagious 'bug' that may be circulating this fall, ensure you and your family:

- Utilize good hygiene procedures—wash your hands often and keep hands and fingers away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.

(continued on page 5)



June 2009 Yard of the Month Winner

Committee News

Architectural Review Committee

by Michael O'Loughlin, Chair

If April showers bring May flowers, then what do April, May, and June showers bring? Beautiful green lawns and gardens! But that also means the grass and weeds are really growing fast so homeowners have to work a little harder to maintain their yards and keep them looking beautiful. Edging of sidewalks, in front of gardens, and along the sides of our homes are all a part of this maintenance. If circumstances for you are such that you need some help taking care of your yard or anything else around your home please contact the Helping Hands Committee (helpinghands@broadrunoaks.com).

Thanks to everyone who has put new house numbers on their mailboxes—I am sure the mailman also appreciates it. However, there are still many more mailboxes that require maintenance. Also, although mailbox covers look nice it is important to remember that house numbers must remain visible either on the cover or the post.

As the ARB members walk through the community signs of aging and items in need of repair are apparent. Why not take a few minutes to do as we do—stand out in front of your home and take a good look at everything. See what may need to be fixed or what may only need a little cleaning and/or touch-up paint. A little elbow grease can go a long way!

Trash bins remaining out have been less of a problem lately, but homeowners are reminded to remove the bins from the street as soon as possible following trash pickup. Once removed from the road, please remember they are to be stored out of view of the roadway. Lastly, don't forget to check your front pole light to ensure it is illuminating after dark.

As the weather improved, the ARB expected to see a lot of application submissions and that proved to be the case. Nine applications were submitted and approved in the past two months and the homeowners have done a good job making sure all required information was included so we could make quick decisions. If you have any questions about the application submission process or what does/does not require an application, simply contact arb@broadrunoaks.com and we will answer any questions. Homeowners are reminded that each exterior alteration request must be submitted on its own individual application. If you are new to the community, the ARB can also assist you to identify the approved exterior modifications on your property.

The ARB meets monthly and residents are always invited to attend these meetings. Meeting times are posted on the website, so visit www.broadrunoaks.com if you are interested—we'd love to have you join us!

We Want You ... To Get Involved!

Paula MacDonald, Communications Committee

To run a community requires volunteers and for the last couple of years I have been subtly trying to let it be known that we do not have enough of them to appropriately run Broad Run Oaks ... apparently I need to be more direct.

Despite the fact that Broad Run Oaks has many residents—381 homes to be exact—only a small percentage of them volunteer within the community. Of the residents that do volunteer, a large percentage of them serve on multiple committees or aid in more than one aspect of the community. The goal of all these volunteers is to ensure that Broad Run Oaks is a clean and enjoyable place to live, work with Armstrong Management to ensure our dues are spent as efficiently as possible, protect housing values by maintaining common areas and monitoring residences, and communicate with all residents to keep them informed of the progress and give them the opportunity to join.

The problem is, we can not do it alone. A large majority of residents have never even attended a Homeowner's Association meeting. Many that have only did so because they had a problem they needed solved or a complaint they wanted to vet. Although, bi-monthly and annual meetings are the appropriate forum for those items, those of us who attend regularly would love to see more community involvement on a different level—one that is concerned with the entire neighborhood and not just each individual homeowner's own property.

In addition, several committees—most notably the Social Committee—have been in need of volunteers for quite some time. In fact, the Annual Halloween Parade was able to take place in October only due to the efforts of the HOA Board and the Communications Committee (which I must note has been comprised of a single member for the last three years). Since that time, the annual Easter Egg Hunt and Memorial Day picnic have had to be cancelled. Although not being able to put on these events is discouraging to those of us who are trying to enhance the community, it is simply impossible for most of us to do more than we are already doing.

Bottom line is that we could really use the assistance of more of our residents. It really does not matter what your strengths are, I'm sure there is a committee within the community that would love to have the support you could bring. Please contact the Board (hoa@broadrunoaks.com) to get involved. Remember the goal of all of the volunteerism within the community is to make it a better place to live. Join us to make sure additional community events do not have to be canceled.

Committees in Need of Assistance

The Social Committee is in need of a Chairman and members to ensure BRO events do not continue to be nonexistent.

The Architectural Review Board has a vacancy to assist with inspections to keep the community looking its best.

The Communications Committee is in need of additional members to aid in developing the newsletter and maintaining the community website.

If you are interested in any of these three committees, please contact hoa@broadrunoaks.com.



Committee News continued on page 3

Helping Hands

by *Karen Decker, Chair*

For most of us birthdays are special days. They are our own personal holiday. We receive card and gifts, are taken out to dinner, or we may even have parties thrown in our honor. Milestone birthdays call out for even bigger celebrations, perhaps a trip to a special destination. The significance, the joy, the specialness of a birthday knows no age limit and is universal.

Last month, I received an email from a friend with the American Legion. He forwarded a request on behalf of the parents of a soldier wounded in Iraq. This soldier has been recuperating at Fisher House in Fort Sam Houston for over a year. He lost both his legs and suffered burns over parts of his body—a stark reminder to all of us that our country is still involved in fighting two wars. The parents' request was simple: please send Daniel a card for his upcoming birthday. They expressed much concern for their son. His recovery and rehabilitation had been very difficult. Daniel rarely had visitors and they were worried that he had become depressed. They hoped that if people knew about Daniel, they might care enough to take a few minutes to send him a card and show him that his sacrifice had not gone unnoticed and unappreciated.

I forwarded this request to many of you within the community. Your response was heartwarming ... you cared enough for this soldier, a fellow American, who was spending his birthday in a hospital trying to recover from injuries sustained while serving his country—while serving for all of us. One of our neighbors, Dana Bryan, shared the request with the children at the Winwood Day Care Center. Fifty children under her care, who range in age from 2 to 10 years old, completely embraced the effort to bring cheer to this soldier on his birthday. They understood the specialness of one's birthday, and got to work. The older children wrote lovely messages expressing their appreciation to Sergeant Thornhill. One child specifically wrote how he was sorry for his two broken legs and thanked him for being a "soldier for us." The younger ones got involved as well making cards with their hand prints and scribbles. As Dana told the Sergeant in her letter—there are many of us from Virginia who truly care about this unknown soldier from Texas. A proud sentiment felt by many of us throughout our great country for all of the soldiers fighting for our freedoms.

As we prepare to celebrate our country's birthday this month, take time to remember the contributions of all of our service members who won't be home with loved ones on their birthdays this year.

I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God, who is sending a love letter to the world. – Mother Teresa



Neighborhood Watch: Safe Walking Tips

According to the most recent Crime Watchers report, there was an abduction involving impersonation of a police officer. As the weather warms and people are out walking to enjoy the outdoors, be sure to consider the following safety tips :

- Walk in pairs - if possible.
- If you do have to walk alone, walk briskly and confidently, keeping your head up. Giving the appearance of confidence usually deters would-be attackers—they prefer weak, vulnerable, and unsuspecting targets.
- Walk in areas that are well lit and where there are other people. If you need to escape, walk to a nearby business.
- Do not take short cuts, stay on a well traveled road/path.
- Stay Alert.
- Have your cell phone programmed for 911 so that you only have to push one button in case of an emergency.
- Incorporate safety steps into your daily activities.
- Develop a plan of action.
- If approached by an officer, are they in uniform? Does the patch match the jurisdiction? Are they wearing a badge? If the officer is in plain clothes ask to see their badge/identification. Remember, you can request to have another officer to respond to your location.

Wishing you a Safe and Happy 4th



Open Space

Miriam McBride, Chair

Summer is here ... although it has felt more like an extended spring so far. The begonias are in at the front entrances, bringing a beautiful splash of red and white to welcome you home.

Our new landscape company, Community Landscape Services, are doing a terrific job maintaining the common areas. Remember, you can receive a 10% discount on all items at their nursery just by identifying yourself as a Broad Run Oaks resident. Visit their website for additional detail (www.broadrun-nurseries.com).

As always, if you see an area in need of maintenance please report it to openspace@broadrunoaks.com.

Safety ... It's Everyone's Responsibility

Catherina Hurlburt, contributing writer

Summer brings with it a more relaxed state of mind for most people, but the recent accident within our community reminds us all that safety should remain one of our top priorities. For the next two-and-a-half months, children will be everywhere, riding their bikes, scooters, and skateboards and playing outside. Please keep that in mind as you drive through the neighborhood—**slow down**. Likewise, remind your kids to look both ways and yield to cars. To ensure an enjoyable summer, please review the following safety tips with your children:



Bicycle Safety

- Rule #1, the rules of the road apply to bicycles too. Ride on the right-hand side of the street and obey all street signs/lights. Never ride against traffic.
- Always ride with your hands on the handlebars.
- Always stop and check for traffic in both directions when leaving your driveway, an alley, or a curb. It is best to cross at intersections because drivers have a hard time spotting bikers who pull out from between parked cars. If the intersection is busy, walk your bike across.
- Use bike lanes or designated bike routes wherever you can and be sure not to ride too close to parked cars—doors can open suddenly.
- Ride single file on the street with friends. Always pass other bikers or people on the street to their left side. Be sure to let them know you are coming—"On your left" is commonly used for this purpose.



Water Safety

Trips to the pool and beach will certainly be favorite activities as the weather gets even hotter. Whether enjoying the water in a swimming pool or in a natural source (e.g., lake, ocean, etc.), the following rules will help you and your children remain safe this summer.

- Never swim alone. Always have an adult or lifeguard watch you—even in your own backyard. Even experienced swimmers should have someone join them.
- Obey all the rules and respect boundaries. This includes following pool rules and recognized hours of operation, swimming only in designated areas, and paying attention to tide notifications at the beach.
- Swim at a depth that is safe for you. If you are just learning, stay in the shallow end or near the shore. Experienced swimmers should consider undercurrents and tides and ensure they do not swim out too far.
- Do not push or jump on others while in or around the water—this could lead to an injury to yourself or others.
- Never pretend you are drowning—a lifeguard or someone else could take you seriously.

- Do not chew gum or eat while swimming—you could choke.
- Wear protective footwear if surfaces are rough or rocky. Avoid running around a pool area since it is generally slippery. Rubber-soled footwear can help with traction when walking around the pool.
- There are many toys to help you float (e.g., inner tubes, air mattresses, or beach balls) and although they are fun and can help you while you learn to swim, they are not intended to save your life.
- Be sure to use plastic containers around the pool and at the beach — broken glass and bare feet do not mix.

Two prominent elements of summer are the relentless sun and those wild thunderstorms. You can never be too careful when it comes to thunderstorms. Remind your children to seek shelter as soon as they hear thunder—or, better yet, see a storm brewing in the sky. And let's not forget sun safety. A tan might look nice, but sunburns and skin cancer are not worth the tan lines. Additional safety tips follow:

Thunderstorm Safety

- At the first sign of a thunderstorm, immediately get out of the pool, lake, ocean, or any body of water. Water is a good conductor and will allow electricity to travel through it easily.
- If you are outside, seek shelter in a house or building. A car can be used in the absence of other forms of shelter.
- If outside and unable to get inside, do not stand under or near large objects (e.g., tall trees) because lightning is more likely to hit something tall.
- Plan ahead—be aware of the weather forecast prior to planning outdoor events (e.g., a camping trip).



Sun Safety

- Always wear sunscreen or sunblock on all exposed body parts—be sure not to forget your face!
 - Wear a minimum of SPF 15 or higher (30+ if you are fair-skinned)
 - For the most protection, apply sunscreen 15 to 20 minutes before going in the sun; reapply every 2 hours, especially if in the water or perspiring.
- Wear a hat or ball cap and sunglasses with UV protection for your eyes.
- Take frequent breaks from the sun by going inside or in the shade.
- Remember: the sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Don't forget to stay hydrated—drink plenty of water.



From water to sun to storms, we must guard against our nature to become relaxed in our judgments while we enjoy what Mother Nature has to offer. See www.kidshealth.org for additional safety information.

Swine Flu (continued from page 1)

- Cover your cough—cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm or a tissue. If you must use your hands to cover your cough, then wash your hands with soap and water or sanitize with an alcohol based sanitizer.
- Stay home if you are sick. Despite the criticality of your job or the importance of a test at school, if you have a fever or flu-like symptoms you need to stay home.
- Avoid sharing objects (e.g., utensils, bottles, cups) with others without thoroughly washing them first.
- Maintain a safe distance (i.e., 6 feet) during cold and flu season, especially when around individuals obviously suffering from an illness.
- Keep living and work areas clean.
- Get vaccinated. Although currently there is no vaccination for H1N1, the seasonal influenza vaccine will provide indirect benefits of keeping the immune system stronger, allowing it to better fight off the strain currently in circulation.

Regardless of the illness you are trying to prevent you and/or your family from catching, the steps above will help ensure you are armed for the fight.

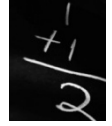
Top 10 Tips for Grilled Steak

1. Choose the right steak. Rib-eye or flank, t-bone, or top round—there’s a choice for every type of grill, fire, budget and taste.
2. Choose the right seasoning. Use rubs, marinades, sauces, butters, and bastes to add an extra dimension of flavor. Even something as basic as sea salt and cracked black pepper adds a spectacular taste to beef. Steaks partner deliciously with a world of interesting flavors—the possibilities are endless.
3. Build the right fire. Understand the difference between direct and indirect grilling and when to use each. Remember, every fuel and fire burn differently.
4. Cook it to perfection. It’s easy when coals and grill are the right temperature and you follow the basic cooking guidelines for the steak. (If the grill is too hot, the outside of the steak can overcook before the inside is ready; if too

Classifieds

Does It All Add Up For You?

A math tutor (grades K-8, Algebra 1, 2, and Geometry) is available during the summer months and throughout the school year. For more information, contact Jessica (703-568-4605).



- cold, you won’t get the right searing.) Use the "1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi method" to recognize when your grill is ready.
5. Know when your steak is done. Remember medium rare is 145°F; medium 160°F, and well done is 170°F. Use an instant-read meat thermometer or the "poke" test to check for doneness. An instant-read thermometer gives you the internal temperature immediately.
 6. Turn, don’t stab. Tongs are the most important tool in the griller’s workshop, enabling you to turn the steak without stabbing it. Look for spring loaded, long-handled tongs – 14 to 16 inches.
 7. Give it a rest. After grilling, give the steak a rest for a couple of minutes to let the juices redistribute before cutting into it. A drizzle of olive oil or a pat of butter gives the steak a handsome sheen and spectacular flavor and finish.
 8. Keep it clean! Always brush your grill grate with a stiff wire brush to clean it. (If you don’t have a brush, use a piece of crumpled foil.) Clean the grate after preheating, and again, after grilling. Oil the grate with a folded paper towel dipped in oil and rubbed over the bars of the grate. Food will stick to a dirty grate and you won’t get those snappy grill marks.
 9. Grill safely. Make sure the grill rests securely on the ground, deck, patio, or other surface. Never leave a lit grill unattended; don’t use it indoors or in a garage or carport. Always keep children and pets at a safe distance.
 10. And above all, have fun! Don’t be afraid to try something new. That’s what grilling is all about.

Steven Raichlen, How to Grill (Workman, 2001)

**Community
Contacts**

Board of Directors

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

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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: The next edition of *The Oak Leaf* will be Fall 2009. Article topics and suggestions will be accepted until September 11th. Submit ideas to Paula MacDonald, *The Oak Leaf* editor and Communications Committee Chair at:

communications@broadrunoaks.com

From the President:

Fellow Residents,

It's summer and that means it is the time for outdoor activities and gatherings. This means there are more children out playing and increased numbers of people within the community, especially on weekends. While all this is terrific, please keep safety in mind as you enjoy the warm weather.

When driving through the community, be mindful of the kids out playing. Be prepared to stop suddenly and watch your speed. Tenbrook Drive and Paper Birch Lane tend to be the two roads in the community that people feel can handle an increased speed, apparently due to the long straight nature of them. Remember though, the speed limit throughout the community is 25 mph and it only takes a few seconds for a small child to step from behind a parked car.

When having friends and family over for parties and barbeques this summer, be sure they don't leave your house drinking and driving. Also remember to practice good barbeque safety. It doesn't take long for a fire to get out of control during the hot and dry summer months.

Over the coming months the Board of Directors will continue making improvements to the community, such as repairing the lighting at the Sterling Point entrance. I hope everyone likes the improvements that have been made by the Board. If you have additional ideas for community improvements, please email the Board (hoa@broadrunoaks.com).

I would also like to take a moment to remind residents about paying their Homeowner's Association dues. Every household is responsible for paying them. Remember that these funds are what allow us to maintain the common areas of the community. They also pay for trash service, which every resident enjoys.

In addition, let me remind you to please maintain your own property. In these difficult economic times, it is more important than ever to keep our neighborhood looking its best. That takes everyone doing their share.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to ask that we all think about being a good neighbor. Respect the people who live around you and remember that your actions often impact them. Take the time to say hello while you are out enjoying the warm summer weather, you will likely be surprised at how much better living somewhere becomes once you get to know your neighbors. On behalf of the Board of Directors Enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,

Paul MacDonald

President, Broad Run Oaks HOA

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



**The next Meeting of the Broad Run Oaks
Homeowners Association will be on
July 14th at 7:00 p.m. at the Tennis Courts.
Bring a chair and join us!**