

# The ak Leaf

Newsletter of Broad Run Oaks



## Could Your Yard be the Next Yard of the Month?

The second year of the Yard of the Month Program is off and running. So far two yards have been awarded the coveted prize, and almost twenty have been nominated. The program, which began last summer, rewards one resident each month throughout the summer for their efforts to make our community more visually appealing.

The May winners were Daniel and Brandy Smith who reside at 12204 Sour Gum Court. After such a brutal winter, many of the yards in the community have been showing obvious signs of recovery, but not theirs. Due to Daniel's hard work it has been beautifully manicured since the beginning of spring.

The June winners were the Purvins at 12077 Paper Birch Lane. The Purvin family did have to spend some additional time and effort this spring replacing several plants damaged by the snow. They also had some stone landscaping installed and the result is simply stunning. The intricate rock walls and gardens that border the sidewalk house multiple varieties of trees, shrubs, and flowering plants making the yard an obvious choice for the award.

The efforts by homeowners to beautify their yards seem to have increased with the introduction of this award. There are three more chances to win...will your yard be selected as one of the best in BRO?

## Illumination Update

The project to hard-wire lighting at the entrances is complete and the effect is enlightening (pun intended). Many residents have commented how much nicer the entrances are and how they can see the community sign at the Sterling Point entrance much better. Kudos to the Board and Armstrong Management for their efforts in getting this often trying task completed.



The Board is now working with NOVEC and Prince William County to ensure the streetlights we were allotted are installed to brighten some of the dark areas of our community. However, residents are reminded to please keep their lamplight functional, since they are the main source of 'street lighting' within our community.

## Fireworks Safety

Did you know that more fires are reported on the Fourth of July than any other day of the year in the United States? More than half of these fires are caused by fireworks. The good news is you can enjoy your holiday and the fireworks, with just a few simple safety tips:

- Only discharge approved, legal fireworks
- Ensure a responsible adult is present—only adults should ignite fireworks
- Place fireworks on a flat surface, clear of any combustible material and clear of all buildings
- Never throw fireworks
- Always read all warnings and instructions
- Be sure other people are out of range and warned before lighting fireworks

*continued on page 3*



*May 2010 Yard of the Month Winner*



*June 2010 Yard of the Month Winner*

## The Great American Award

*By Matthew Chabak, Contributing Writer*

Summer is finally here and as many of us are still thoughtful of the Memorial Day activities we must now prepare for the summer and the next big event of the year—July 4<sup>th</sup>. I always look forward to this great weekend (really I look forward to any day off from work) with fireworks, picnics, gatherings, and more fun. But this year, I think I'm going to celebrate with one additional activity which came to me as I was attending my youngest son's 5th grade graduation ceremony.

During the ceremony the principal and a host of other teachers and community leaders passed out a multitude of deserving awards for academic excellence, physical fitness, attendance (one child received an award for not missing a day of school in five years), citizenship, and assorted after school activities such as the chess club, robotics, cheerleading, etc. However, there was one award issued to only three of the nearly (and I'm guessing) 200 students graduating that night. This award was called the Great American Award. In order to receive this prestigious certificate, one must recite the pledge of allegiance, recite or sing the Star Spangled Banner, recite all 50 States and their capitals, recite the Gettysburg Address, recite the Preamble to the American Constitution, and finally, recite all the President's names in order.

*continued on page 3*



## Committee News



### Neighborhood Watch

The Broad Run Oaks Neighborhood Watch held a meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Officer Jason Alicie presented material to the residents in attendance. One topic he covered was the Operation ID program that the PWC Police Department runs.

Operation ID is a theft prevention program designed to help owners identify their property if it is stolen. The basic process is that owners engrave their property with 'VA' and either their drivers license or ID card number. Then they keep a list of the property with details such as make, model, color, and serial numbers. They can also take pictures.

Several engravers, which were donated by the Prince William Crime Prevention Council, are available for check out from libraries around the county. Engrave property such as bicycles, TVs, cameras, guns, computer equipment, etc. that can be easily taken away. Help the PWC Police help you—engrave!

### Architectural Review Committee

by *Michael O'Loughlin, Chair*

Spring was good to us this year and brought lots of rain to make our lawns nice and green. I want to take a moment and commend those homeowners who have worked hard to make their yards look so beautiful. We had 17 homes nominated for June's Yard of the Month award and it was very hard to pick only one home to win. When the ARB inspects, they are not just looking for things that are wrong, they also make note of homes that look nice. With the hot summer months ahead of us we will all have to help keep our lawns green and healthy and prevent weeds from taking over the yard and flower beds.

Some of the most common issues we find when walking around our community are: Those with front doors exposed to the weather tend to need touch up paint on a regular basis. Garage doors should also be checked often. Homeowners are good about mowing their lawns, but some do not weed whack the front garden area or along the front/sides of their homes. Sidewalks should also be edged. As a reminder, the grass strip between the sidewalk and street is the responsibility of the homeowner. Due to the maturity of our neighborhood, trees and bushes are getting big and tall. Please inspect yours to ensure the branches do not hang too low over the sidewalks. Our inspectors will be looking closely at this during their next inspection. Mailbox covers look nice but please remember to make sure house numbers are visible either on the cover or the post, and check to make sure house numbers have not fallen off your mailboxes. Remember, trash bins are not allowed to be stored in driveways or in open areas along the side of homes. Please store them out of view on days with no trash service.

We are averaging two to three new applications a month and homeowners have done a good job to make sure all the required information is included so we can make quick decisions. If you have any questions about the application submission process or what modifications require submission of an application, email [arb@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:arb@broadrunoaks.com) and we will answer your questions. Homeowners are reminded that each alteration requested must be submitted on an individual application. The ARB meets monthly and meetings are open to residents. If you are interested in attending, check the website or contact the ARB for meeting information. Have a safe and wonderful summer.

### Open Space

by *Miriam McBride, Chair*

I just wanted to take a moment to say farewell to the residents of Broad Run Oaks. I have served on the Open Space Committee as the Chair since the original formation of the committee and have seen much progress in that time.

During my time, we have had both entrances professionally landscaped, irrigation installed at both entrances, information signs installed, and beautiful hard wire lighting installed. Several of these projects were taken on by the Board and they have done a wonderful job. My committee members, both current and past members, have played an integral role in many of the projects.

I have enjoyed getting to know others who serve in Broad Run Oaks and encourage others to do the same. That being said, we are in great need for someone in the neighborhood to step up and take over the role as Open Space Committee Chair. Since the major projects for Open Space have now been completed, most of the responsibility will be communicating with the landscape service. This includes alerting them of any missed mowing, mulching, etc., keeping track of any overall landscape problems, and selecting the bi-annual flowers for the entrances / common areas.

If you feel this is something you could do, then please contact [hoa@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:hoa@broadrunoaks.com) and express your interest. If you are worried you won't have time, I had the same reservation years back. I work full time, have three children, and a husband that has deployed for months at a time, with no family in the area. So if your situation is any better than that, you just might have the time. I often tell my children that if you are not part of the solution, then you are part of the problem. Just a thought.

Take care and I wish you all the best.

**Interested in getting involved in Broad Run Oaks?  
There will be three Board positions up for re-election  
this year or you can join a committee – contact the  
Board ([hoa@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:hoa@broadrunoaks.com)) to express interest**

### Helping Hands

*Karen Decker, Chair*

The Helping Hands Committee was created to assist members of the Broad Run Oaks community in times of need. The goal of the group is to bring the community together in a common effort of human kindness. If you need assistance or would like to offer assistance to the neighborhood you can contact [helpinghands@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:helpinghands@broadrunoaks.com).

*If you have some respect for people as they are,  
you can be more effective in helping them to become better  
than they are – John W. Gardner*



### Social Committee

Although we still have not gotten any volunteers to assist with the Social Committee, the Board and some other committee members are planning an end of summer event to coincide with the annual meeting. Watch for details on the website and/or the community signs.

## May I Interest You in a Pool?

By Tricia Potts, Contributing Writer

During these hot summer months wouldn't it be nice to enjoy a swim. We could cool down and take a much needed break. Work, school, and the general day-to-day bustle that we are normally surrounding ourselves with can overwhelm us. Well, myself and others are proposing modifying our current community space from a tennis court to a swimming pool.

Our tennis courts are so infrequently used that it really isn't much of a community feature at all. Other neighborhoods in Gainesville boast a pool, tot lots, tennis courts, and a club house. While it is nice to have low HOA dues it would be equally nice to have an amenity that can be utilized and appreciated by all.

The benefits for having a pool are numerous. Recreational exercise in pools has the least impact on joints. Marketability for the resale and continued value of our community will become more vital as newer developments are constructed. And of course the social aspects of having a place to congregate will be great.

Depending on the size and costs of the pool we could potentially accommodate other community amenities; like a club house, tot lot, putting green, or batting cage. This is a process, so the first step is to garner interest. Then we will need to agree on the costs based on the size, features, and overall use of the space.

Please let the Board know if you are interested by sending an email to [hoa@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:hoa@broadrunoaks.com). Then, attend the next HOA meeting (currently planned for August) to discuss the topics outlined above. As always your ideas, opinions, and questions are welcome.

### Fireworks

*continued from page 1*

- Never ignite fireworks while holding them
- Never build or experiment with homemade fireworks
- Never try to re-light fireworks that have not functioned properly
- Keep a bucket of water nearby in case of a malfunction
- Call 9-1-1 immediately if a fire starts or if injury occurs
- Dispose of used fireworks by first soaking them in water

The safest way to prevent fireworks-related injuries is to leave fireworks displays to trained professionals. To ensure a safe Fourth of July fireworks display your whole family can enjoy, visit [www.pwcgov.org/fire](http://www.pwcgov.org/fire) and click on 'Fireworks.'

Information from PWC Police & Fire Departments, reprinted with permission

## Great American

*continued from page 1*

It's obvious why only three students received this award, it's not very easy to do. I would like to congratulate those students for completing a very impressive task. The presentation of this award made me think about these key documents and the elected leaders of this great country and how it has endured for more than 200 years. I think we can all agree this country has diverse opinions regarding politics, religion, taxes, freedoms, size of government, etc., but if you think about it, so did our founding fathers. These differences prompted them to meet, often under precarious conditions, to debate and courageously create a new nation free from tyranny. They created a document declaring their destiny and gave some really good reasons (29 altogether) why. Just before signing the document, they mutually pledged their lives, sacred honor, and fortunes to show their true convictions.

While the previously named documents and Presidents (regardless of opinion) are truly founding pillars of America and its society, it is the unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America which ignited this nation. To celebrate the 4th of July this year, I think anyone who takes time re-reading the Declaration of Independence and perhaps sharing it with their families can certainly be called a Great American too.

I hope everyone has a safe and patriotic weekend.



## Born to Ride

By Debby Riplinger

It's summer and that means cars sharing the road with motorcycles (and bicycles). For years I've been riding on the back of my husband's motorcycle. I've learned what to expect from cars and the people that drive them, and how much of a danger they can be to a motorcyclist. However, the freedom and exhilaration of riding a motorcycle outweighed my nervousness and I got my own bike. I bought a Harley Davidson and took a course to learn to ride it.

I'm hoping this article will make you take extra caution when driving your car this summer. Take a couple of seconds longer before you pull out of an intersection (this is where most motorcycle/auto accidents happen). Don't tailgate. Check your blind spot before changing lanes. Take your time. And don't run red lights—if I could give out tickets for every car I see running the lights on Linton Hall Road, I'd be a millionaire.

All I'm asking is that you be a considerate and safe driver and watch for me. I'm the one in the bright orange vest.

## Community Contacts

### Board of Directors

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

[hoa@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:hoa@broadrunoaks.com)

### Management Company

Armstrong Management Services, Inc.  
 3949 Pender Drive, #205  
 Fairfax, VA 22030  
 telephone: 703-385-1133  
 fax: 703-591-5785

[customerservice@armstrong.net](mailto: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 Fall 2010. Article topics and suggestions will be accepted until September 10<sup>th</sup>. Submit ideas and/or inputs to Paula MacDonald, *The Oak Leaf* editor and Communications Committee Chair at:

[communications@broadrunoaks.com](mailto: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 a new season, along with summer comes yard maintenance and exterior modifications. Everyone is reminded to please maintain your property and if you plan an exterior modification be sure to review the Architectural Guidelines, which are available on the community website ([www.broadrunoaks.com](http://www.broadrunoaks.com)). If you have any questions about maintenance or modifications, feel free to contact the Architectural Review Committee at [arb@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:arb@broadrunoaks.com). They will gladly assist you.

After reviewing previous editions of the Oak Leaf I noticed that I forgot to thank a Broad Run Oaks Committee. It is the Communications Committee and it is comprised of my wife, Paula MacDonald. Paula is responsible for updating the community signs, maintaining the website, and putting out this great newsletter. In addition she serves as the secretary of the ARB and as a member of the Neighborhood Watch and Helping Hands committees. All that and she still has the patience to put up with an irritable President of the Board. My thanks to her for her hard work the last four years, and to the two new volunteers who submitted articles for this edition of the newsletter—Matt Chaback and Tricia Potts.

On a sad note, we are losing a long-term volunteer from our community. Miriam McBride, the Open Space Committee chair, and her family are moving out of Broad Run Oaks. Miriam has done a phenomenal job chairing the committee for the past seven years. We wish her and her family good luck in their new home. She will surely be missed.

We are planning an end of summer event in conjunction with the annual meeting this year. It will likely happen in mid- to late-September. Please watch the website/entrance signs for details and plan to join us. I wish you all a superb summer.

Sincerely,

Paul MacDonald  
President, Broad Run Oaks HOA

Page 4



**Join us in August for the Homeowners Association meeting — watch the website and the community entrance signs for more specific details**