



# The Oak Leaf

Newsletter of Broad Run Oaks



## Fighting Crime, One Report at a Time

On November 12<sup>th</sup> Officer Alex Dominguez led a Neighborhood Watch training session for interested BRO residents. A lot of the meeting discussion was focused on the vandalism that occurred recently in our community. Participants asked several questions and were given up-to-date information about the alleged culprit, his confession, and the status of his arraignment.

Officer Dominguez touched on many subjects over the hour-long session but noted that the main **purpose of a community watch is to increase awareness**. Having community members report suspicious activity provides the police department with much needed intelligence about the area and helps increase the incidence within the crime report, which ties to the number of patrols made in and around our community. The following excerpt from the PWC Crime Prevention Council November Issue of *McGruff Speaks* summarizes these important points:

*Neighborhood Watches are an important part of keeping our neighborhood safe. Police only respond to what calls are made. If no one calls about teen gang activity, suspicion of drug activity, graffiti, a fight in someone's front yard, public drunkenness, racing in the street, etc. the problems will get worse. Then the neighborhood's sense of security will suffer and property values will decrease. No one wants to live in such a neighborhood! Good, active and alert neighbors watch out for each other and report an suspicious activity so that the neighborhood stays safe and people would want to live there. The oblivious neighbor who is so wrapped up in his or her own world so much that they do not care about what someone else has to suffer, so long as they do not have to be involved. They are what the criminal element is counting on. Eventually they will have something happen to them and wonder why no one will help them. The police can't correct an activity they are not aware of... Only you can make a difference in your neighborhood.*

Currently, there are 39 residents within Broad Run Oaks signed up as part of the Neighborhood Watch. Although this is a decent number of people, it does not even begin to cover our entire community. There are still several areas in the community that lack block captains and participants. In order to be truly safe we need a commitment from everyone in the community. Don't wait to be the victim of a crime before you get involved ... join today!

To sign up for the Broad Run Oaks Neighborhood Watch, contact Karen Decker, the watch coordinator, via email at [neighborhoodwatch@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:neighborhoodwatch@broadrunoaks.com).



## Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My!

On October 26<sup>th</sup> ghosts, ghouls, and goblins converged on the tennis courts to participate in the annual BRO Halloween Parade. The event was a huge success with approximately fifty neighborhood children and their parents participating.

The parade was led by the Gainesville Volunteer Fire Department and the costumed participants circled through the community. Following the parade, children participated in several events including a bean bag toss, a duck pull, face painting, a haystack hunt and a pumpkin patch. Kids and parents also enjoyed refreshments.

Several people assisted in organizing and running the event including the Jaramillo family and Victoria Hurlburt, Broad Run Oaks resident face painter.

The community also owes a special thank you to Harris Teeter for the donated sugar cookies, and also Giant for the donated \$25 gift card that was used to buy paper products and candy.

A slide show of the event can be found on the social committee portion of the website ([www.broadrunoaks.com](http://www.broadrunoaks.com)).



## It's Time for the 'S' Word

With the warm days of summer long gone residents are gearing up for what is expected to be a long, cold winter, which brings with it the threat of snow. Though some people find snow wonderful, an equal amount find it miserable. Although the schools of thought on the substance itself may be diametrically opposed, everyone can agree that snow can be hazardous.

Many of our neighbors continue to use the sidewalks within the community, even in the grueling winter months. Therefore, we must ensure they have a safe path on which to travel and that the walkways in our community are free of snow and ice.

Residents are reminded that they are personally responsible for clearing the snow from the sidewalks along their property and must ensure it is shoveled and removed following any winter weather event.

## Committee News

### A Thought for the Holiday Season

*Karen Decker, Chair Helping Hands Committee*

Isn't it amazing that the heart of the holidays can often be found in a simple gesture of kindness ...

*Twas soon to be Christmas and across many lands  
The people had considerably less in their hands*

*Home values they plunged while job losses did rise  
It's still going to worsen the pundits surmised*

*Bombs ripped open buildings as new threats emerged  
Upon tankers and cruise ships still pirates converged*

*Scandal and quagmire held political reign  
It seemed the whole world was going insane*

*In this time of unrest was there still room for peace  
Even if briefly, a few days at least*

*As I collected my thoughts and gathered my herd  
Their antics portraying a life undeterred*

*A great satisfaction pulsed to my core  
Neglected these creatures would be never more*

*To me it's the greatest gift you can give  
Opportunity to thrive, opportunity to live*

*So to headlines that lament that spending is dead  
I suggest the following outlook instead*

*Maybe this Christmas we might get it right  
Given that cash flow is incredibly tight*

*Less stuff under trees would seem a good start  
Especially if more giving came from the heart*

*Such as actions we take, and differences we make  
Genuine presents instead of plastic and fake*

*The true spirit of Christmas, revealed by frolicking cats  
Who would've known it's as simple as that*

*On Jita, On Keena, On Pichu and Balz  
We must tell those people shopping in malls*

*On Reyuu, On Riyuu, On Sparky and Gray  
Time is running out, we mustn't delay*

*And I thought to exclaim as we drove out of sight  
Merry Christmas to all, and I hope you see the light*

– Michael Arendt .

This poem was penned by the son of one of my co-workers. He feeds and cares for a group of eight stray cats (hence the names given above) in his community, and through his gentle kindness with them they are now tame enough to receive veterinary care. It is every parent's hope that their children will not only learn to care for themselves, but will also begin to look beyond their own needs and wants, and begin to think about others. In this season of giving, how appropriate that, for my friend, the greatest Christmas gift her son could give her is simply the fact that he has grown to be such a kind and caring individual.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season, especially to those serving in our armed forces.

### Open Space

*by Miriam McBride, Chair*

Welcome Winter! The Open Space Committee has been hard at work and is pleased to announce that the Sterling Point entrance received its make-over! We look forward to the warm weather this Spring so that we may watch our plantings flourish. The Board of Directors is currently working to ensure that the irrigation is up and running by Spring and that the Solar lighting is repaired. In addition, the Communications Committee is working to install a second information sign, exactly like the one at the Sierra Sunset entrance, at the Sterling Point entrance.

We would like to encourage each homeowner to remember the importance of picking up litter in and around your property, as it often ends up in our common areas once the harsh winter winds begin to blow.

As always, please contact the Open Space Committee for any problems associated with a common area. We can be reached by e-mail at [openspace@broadrunoaks.com](mailto:openspace@broadrunoaks.com). The Open Space Committee looks forward to hearing from you!

Have a safe and happy holiday!

Visit our website:  
[www.broadrunoaks.com](http://www.broadrunoaks.com)

### Architectural Review Committee

*Mike O'Loughlin, Chair*

The Architectural Review Committee recently completed an annual review of the architectural guidelines and has submitted recommended changes to the Board of Directors for approval. Once the Board approves the modifications, the entire document will be updated and posted to the community website ([www.broadrunoaks.com](http://www.broadrunoaks.com)). A summary of the approved modifications will appear in a future newsletter.

The Architectural Review Committee continues to perform inspections to keep our community in top condition. In these hard economic times, it is more important than ever for our community to have a good visual impact on potential buyers.

A couple inspection items continue to pose a problem in our community, beginning with the proper storage of trash cans and recycling bins. Residents are reminded that receptacle containers should be picked up promptly following trash service (the same day as the pickup, with a 24-hour grace period) and stored out of view at all other times.

In addition to trash bins, many homes are beginning to show their age. Once warm weather returns, residents are encouraged to do some spring cleaning and repair on the exterior portions of their home. Items such as painting and caulking should be done on an annual basis.

The Architectural Review Committee wishes everyone a safe, enjoyable holiday season, and a prosperous 2009.

## What's in a Resolution?

New Year's Resolutions are a common practice for many people. Often they are used as a way to reach a hard to achieve goals, such as stopping smoking or losing weight; but just as often, possibly even more so, they are simply broken promises that people make to themselves. So, if you truly want a solution to a problem, below are some tips to help you succeed with your 2009 resolutions.

- **Be realistic.** Choose an obtainable goal.
- **Avoid re-resolutions.** Selecting something you have been unsuccessful with in the past will set you up for failure. If you still want to achieve that item you may need to alter it (e.g., instead of making a resolution to lose thirty pounds, make one to eat healthier and exercise more).
- **Create a game plan.** Be sure to build in milestones and contingency options.
- **Monitor your progress.** Reward yourself for reaching milestones along the way.
- **Talk about it.** Letting others know your goal and your plan can create a support group for your efforts.
- **Don't overload.** Making more than one resolution is a sure way to set yourself up for failure.
- **Don't give up.** Change takes time; most experts agree that it takes approximately a month to create a habit and six months for it to actually become routine.

Statistics show that on average 20% of people successfully reach their New Year's resolution. Following the tips above can help ensure you can claim success at the end of 2009.



**THANK YOU**

**Giant**

**Harris Teeter**  
Your Neighborhood Food Market  
The Best Is What We're All About



## Classifieds

### Let's Start a Play Group (ages 6-18 months)

If you're interested in starting a Play Group/Mom's Group in our community, and meeting some of your fellow neighbors, please contact Erika Larkin, mom of Mikey (8 months old) and resident of Sour Gum Court. Plans include one day a week play date, alternating locations and groups outings, etc. E-mail [erikalarkin@yahoo.com](mailto:erikalarkin@yahoo.com) or call 703-864-9017

### Mark your Calendar!

Exciting Up coming Events  
at  
Virginia Oaks Golf Club



**Food, Drinks & a Great Time with your Family, Friends & Neighbors**  
Call 703-754-7977 for more information

### • *Third Thursday Karaoke Kickoff* •

Thursday January 15<sup>th</sup>  
Kids 6:30pm Adults 7:30pm

Come help us start a 2009 Third Thursday Tradition & enjoy  
**1/2 Price Hamburgers!**

### • *Open Mic Night* •

Friday January 23<sup>rd</sup> 7:30pm

Calling all Talented Artists- Single & Group Acts!!  
Please contact Rob Hanna if you wish to perform  
(571-248-4242 or [sodjob@aol.com](mailto:sodjob@aol.com))



## 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 Spring 2009. Article topics and suggestions will be accepted until February 28<sup>th</sup>. Submit ideas to Paula MacDonald, *The Oak Leaf* editor and Communications Committee Chair at:

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

**From the President:**

Fellow Residents,

The coming year should be exciting for our community, with the Sterling Point entrance enhancements and hopefully several community functions. The goal of the Board of Directors is to improve the community and develop relationships with everyone who lives here. Our new members, Jim Decker and Brian Tower, have already made a great impact and shown their positive skills; Debby Riplinger continues to be reliable and can always be counted on to do what it takes to help all our residents and the community; and Melissa Jaramillo has shown great leadership in her new position as vice president. This group will do an outstanding job for Broad Run Oaks.

Our committee members also continue to strive to make Broad Run Oaks the best community in Prince William County. Although many residents volunteer their time for our community, I would like to specifically mention a couple who have recently gone above and beyond the call of duty. Mike O'loughlin, who was recently voted Architectural Review Committee chairman, has ensured continuity during a difficult time and kept the entire team on track. Ms. Angie Sagel did a majority of the leg work for the landscaping at the Sterling Point entrance. Her addition to the Open Space committee with Miriam McBride will ensure we have a strong team in charge of the overall appearance of Broad Run Oaks.

As mentioned, our community has a lot of great volunteers, but we could always use more. I ask everyone to get involved, if not on a committee then by attending Homeowner's Association meetings. We invite you to attend, ask questions, and make suggestions to both the Board of Directors and the committee chairs of Broad Run Oaks on events/functions you would like to occur or ideas you have to improve our community—everyone's voice counts.

In addition, I encourage all residents to get involved and join our neighborhood watch. We had two vandalisms in our community this year and we all need to remain vigilant to keep crime out of Broad Run Oaks. In an effort to deter crime, the Board recently voted to erect 'No Soliciting' signs around the community. These will be installed soon.

On a parting note, on behalf of the rest of the Board, we would like to thank all residents for being part of a great community. During this holiday season we wish you and your family good tidings and hope that you prosper in the New Year.

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 occur in February. Pay attention to the website and community sign for specific details.