

December 2009



THE ACORN



FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A round of applause was earned by all who sent proxies or attended the Annual Meeting! The Board thanks you all. We achieved a quorum and elected two new board members—**Aaron Tolman** (who had been appointed last year) was elected for a two-year term, and **Peter Okoli** was elected to a three-year term. The normal term of election is three years, so we credited **Aaron** with the year he already served. **Ron Crowe** is your President for the coming year.

This meeting also was a continuation of the “Special Meeting” begun last May, and we will accept additional votes until early May 2010. Ninety-nine people have voted on the Article of Incorporation Amendment to expand the Board to five, which leaves us 155 short of passing the Amendment.

We announced during the Annual Meeting that Homeowners Association dues would remain at \$250 for 2010 (although the automatic increase could have taken us close to \$300); you will receive the billing in early December. *This is a month earlier than in the past because the Board decided that payment would be due on January 1, 2010 to align with Association spending needs at the beginning of the year.* A grace period without penalty will extend through January 31st.

We worked hard to keep the dues at this level and expect in 2010 some major expenditures from reserves for grounds maintenance and capital renovations. For instance, we will soon sign

contracts for the large lot off Washington Brice Road to replace worn out or dangerous equipment. A group of Boy Scouts will help us complete the renovation in the spring. Follow the project on <http://www.foeha.org>.

Offered for further discussion at the Annual Meeting were the topics of contracting with one waste and trash company to service the community (with provisions for “op outs” if you dispose of your own refuse), and whether or not the Homeowners Association and the Recreation Association should combine.

Several of us have heard comments from contractors working in our community that the superb maintenance of our homes and grounds sets us above similar areas they visit. Good for all of us! Let’s keep it that way.

Thank you for your considerations, suggestions, heated discussions, and volunteerism throughout the past year.

Architectural Review Board. The Architectural Review Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. on December 15th at 12549 Lt. Nichols Road to review all completed applications received at least *seven days* before the meeting. An agenda for the meeting will be posted on the FOEHA Web site (www.foeha.org) prior to the meeting.

The Acorn December 2009

Important Note. Please be sure to submit your applications 30 days in advance. It is important that you follow the instructions closely on the application, such as providing a site plan (plat) of your property showing the locations of new decks, removal of trees, and so forth. Incomplete applications will slow the approval process.

ARB November 17th meeting results: Four applications were submitted for review: removal of dead trees from a back yard; construction of a new shed and landscaping; construction of a new driveway; and construction of a new screened porch and deck. All applications were approved.

Contact information. Sequoia Management is your primary contact for submission of ARB applications, requests for re-sale packets, and reports of ARB violations. Contact Jan Fenton, Fair Oaks Estates Homeowners Association, c/o Sequoia Management Company, Inc., 13998 Parkeast Circle, Chantilly, VA 20151-2283, 703-803-9641, 703-968-0936 (fax), or e-mail jfenton@sequoiamanagement.com.

Open Space Committee. We had the final mowing of the season, the sprinkler systems winterized, and one pass at leaf removal from the mow section of the Common Area. We're done with tree removal for the year—it's hard to tell the dead

trees now that the leaves are down. Unless there is an obvious dead tree hazard, we will wait until the spring for any additional removals. It's been a big tree removal year—we're over budget in that one category.

We've arranged for snow removal from the Common Area sidewalks. We still need to update the "Mow Map" and solicit bids for 2010 because our three-year contract with Shenandoah Landscaping has expired. We have an Eagle Scout project pending for next spring to improve the other tot lot. It's been funded and the initial plans drawn-up. This will be the fourth Eagle project in the community, all of which have been excellent experiences.

FOEHA Flashes. Certain events arise where rapid communications are best handled electronically. Consider checking the Fair Oaks Web site for "What's New" postings. For those of you who find e-mails helpful, we would like to compile your addresses. They would be safeguarded and used only for time-sensitive notices from the Board, such as change of date for a homeowners meeting. Recipients would not see addresses for others on the e-mail. If you would like to participate, please send a note to **Rick Oborn** at obornr@cox.net.

FROM THE PAGES OF THE ACORN

Here we go again with more news from *The Acorn* from 25 years ago. These items are from the December 1985 issue:

- We noted that three neighborhood runners—**Brian Ward**, **Dave Eberly**, and **Bob Stocks**—had completed the Marine Corps Marathon. Two other local runners, **Gus Fulleborn** and **Gordon Bower** were foiled from competing because of health and business, respectively. All of these folks are doing their running someplace else these days.
- We published a story about Reuben Simpson, after whom Reuben Simpson Court is named. (The name is spelled incorrectly on the street sign.) He was a laborer who came from England with his brother in the 1850s to work at Sully Plantation. He married a woman named Lizzie about 1860; too bad they didn't name the street after her! Lizzie Simpson Court has a nice ring to it!
- We congratulated **Ty** and **Betty Lou Fell** on Stewarts Ford Court—where they still reside—on the birth of daughter **Lindsey Morgan Fell** on October 5th. Look out, **Lindsey**—30 is creeping up on you fast!

The Acorn December 2009

OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACORN

It might be worthwhile, especially for newcomers, to again review the bidding on how everyone can contribute to *The Acorn*. There are several specific categories that are open for contributions, and the editors are always looking for submissions.

The ***“Bulletin Board”*** is the section of the newsletter that everyone probably is most familiar with. We usually run Bulletin Board items for two consecutive months unless they are business ads, which we run indefinitely—space permitting. We especially need your assistance in monitoring these recurring ads; please let us know when you no longer need the ad or if you’re moving out of Fair Oaks Estates. ***Please remember that only Fair Oaks Estates residents can have ads in the Bulletin Board.***

The ***“It’s Your Turn”*** category is very flexible and offers residents the opportunity to comment on issues that affect the neighborhood or to provide interesting personal insights. In recent months we’ve had pieces discussing behavior at school bus stops and safety driving past the swimming pool. ***Please remember that we do not accept anonymous contributions, but we will withhold the writer’s name on request.***

“News of People” is a category for which we’d like to see more submissions. These can be short, such as birth announcements or news of awards, promotions, weddings, and similar events involving Fair Oaks Estates residents and their families. We also would like to see more longer pieces, such as the one that appeared in last month’s issue about **Joan McRorie** and the one this month about **Mike McWeeny**.

Another specific area where residents can contribute is ***“Readers’ Recommendations”*** in which we solicit your insights on service providers who have given you excellent service. People are always looking for a good painter, electrician, plumber, car repair shop, or whatever, so if you’ve been particularly happy with the service you’ve received, please pass on a recommendation so other folks can benefit as well.

The best way to get any of these items to the editors is by e-mail. You can send your news as a Microsoft Word attachment to an e-mail or just type your story in the e-mail. Send it to kjclare@cox.net and make sure the word “Acorn” appears in the subject line of the e-mail. We also accept legible handwritten submissions or, if the item is short such as a birth announcement, just give us a call at 703-620-3771.

TOP AWARDS FOR FAIRFAX COUNTY WEB SITE

Fairfax County’s public Web site, www.fairfaxcounty.gov, has been honored as one of the top County government sites in the nation, receiving three recent awards.

- ***Freedom of Information Award:*** Fairfax County and the City of Alexandria share the Virginia Coalition for Open Government’s Freedom of Information Award in the government category. The County was recognized for its efforts to engage the public in addressing the \$650-million revenue shortfall for FY 2010.
- ***Best of the Web Award:*** The County earned top honors in the Center for Digital Government’s 2009 Best of the Web awards. Fairfax County’s site took first place in the County Web Portal category. Fairfax County’s Web site has now earned a Best of the Web award four times since 2003.
- ***Digital Counties Survey:*** Recognizing best practices and counties with exemplary digital service to residents, the 2009 Digital Counties Survey selected Fairfax County as the fourth place winner in the 500,000 or more population category. This marks the fifth consecutive year the County has ranked in the survey’s top five.

The Acorn December 2009

FAREWELL AND GOOD RIDDANCE TO 2009

Holiday Concert. The Vienna Community Band will be presenting a free classical holiday concert for all ages on Sunday, December 13th, from 3:00 p.m. till 4:00 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center. See the Web site www.viennaband.org for directions.

Another Holiday Concert. The Oakton High School Chamber Orchestra will present an “Ice and Lights” holiday concert for children of all ages! There will be three performances: Thursday, December 10th at 7:00 p.m.; and Friday, December 11th at 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. For ticket information contact the director, Ms. Myers, at DKMyers@fcps.edu.

More White Squirrel Sightings. We’re happy to report that our favorite mascot continues to be seen regularly in his accustomed place at the top of Ox Hill Road. **Joan McCrorie** is the Queen of the White Squirrel Club; she had another sighting on November 3rd and one the day before Thanksgiving too. **Sheila Hautbois** sighted our friend in late October,

And Another Critter Around. In addition to our White Squirrel, we also have a Red Fox who lives in and around our neighborhood. He/she has been around for quite awhile; unlike White Squirrel, however, Red Fox doesn’t like to be seen and usually is spotted only at night and into the early dawn hours. Red Fox doesn’t eat acorns and probably is more than a match for any cats and many dogs in the neighborhood, so it’s probably best to keep an eye on your pets when they’re out doing their duty before bedtime.

Reminder on Water Lines. A resident on Lt. Nichols Road mentioned to Mr. Editor that he’d recently seen a couple more lawns dug up because water pipes had to be replaced. Our reporter wanted to remind everyone that Dominion Virginia Power offers a relatively inexpensive insurance program to cover the cost of water line replacement, which can easily run into several thousand dollars. Check the details with the power company.

“500 Miles.” “If you miss the train I’m on, you will know that I am gone . . . “—no, not *that* “500 Miles.” We’re talking about the 500-Mile Club that Mr. and Mrs. Editors’ son-in-law **Brian Kraje** was inducted into in November to recognize his 10 finishes in the annual JFK 50-Mile Race in Maryland. He now has the sweatshirt to prove he did it—and he’s working his way to the 1,000-Mile Club by completing his 11th JFK on November 21st. Congratulations, **Brian!**

Last Chance for White House Ornaments. The Western Fairfax County Woman’s Club is selling the 2009 White House Christmas ornaments. This year’s ornament honors our 24th President, Grover Cleveland. The ice blue and white oval ornament depicts a view of the White House from the south lawn. The first White House Christmas tree to be adorned with electric lights can be seen in the upstairs window. The cost of the ornament is \$18, and all profits benefit charity. Order yours by calling 703-378-6841 or 703-378-6216.

AN IRISHMAN IN BLACK—JUDGE MICHAEL MCWEENY

Judge Michael McWeeny, who with his wife **Elise** is an original Fair Oaks Estates homeowner on Washington Brice Road, will be retiring from the 19th Judicial Circuit Court at the end of this year. We're fairly certain that no other neighborhood resident can make that claim!

Mike is a Navy brat, born in Williamsburg, Virginia while his father was stationed at Camp Perry. He grew up in Boston, Trinidad, Cuba, Germany, and Key West, Florida, with time in Northern Virginia in-between through the 4th grade. After his father retired from the Navy, **Mike** lived in Vienna, Dunn Loring, Arlington, and McLean, attending a new school almost every year and finally graduating from James Madison High School. He says college at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia was the first time he'd attended the same school for two full years or more. He met **Elise** during his senior year there, and they continued long-distance dating while she was at the University of Kentucky and he was studying for his law degree at the University of Notre Dame.

After marrying and settling in Northern Virginia, **Mike** briefly served as an Attorney Adviser to the Board of Veterans' Appeals and then was a Trial Lawyer in Fairfax County for 14 years before becoming a Judge. He served as a Judge of the Fairfax General District Court from 1985-1988 before his appointment to the Circuit Court Bench in March 1988. While with the Circuit Court, he participated in the development of the Differentiated Case Tracking System and served more than 10 years on the Bench/Bar Committee and the Community Criminal Justice Board. **Mike** has chaired numerous committees at the request of the Supreme Court of Virginia, served on the faculty of the Virginia State Bar Course on Professionalism, and currently is a member of the faculty for the Pre-Bench Orientation Program for new Judges at all levels of the state system. His other activities include being a regular speaker at Fairfax Bar Association and Virginia CLE programs. He served

as Chief Judge from 2001 to 2007.

Mike says that serving as a Judge gave him the opportunity to peacefully resolve conflicts of all kinds. On the criminal law side, it was possible to address the equally important issues of protection of society and rehabilitation of the offender. He adds that he has been blessed to serve with some of the brightest, most caring, and helpful Judges in the state and that most of the lawyers he has dealt with were dedicated to helping their clients and upholding the justice system.

Mike will continue his conflict resolution efforts after retiring as a Judge by becoming a mediator with the McCammon Group. The work will include resolution of a variety of legal disputes, including business litigation, personal injury cases, and family law.

Mike and **Elise** have three sons. **Sean**, 33, lives in Fairfax, works for INPUT in Reston as an account manager, and is getting married in March 2010. **Tom**, 30, lives in South Riding with his wife and is a Personal Injury and Worker's Compensation attorney with Koonz, McKenney, Johnson, DePaolis, and Lightfoot in Fairfax. **Ryan**, 18, is a senior at Chantilly High School and is looking forward to college in the fall.

As a Navy brat and an alumnus of Notre Dame, **Mike** admits to feeling somewhat conflicted about Navy's two recent upsets of the Fighting Irish on the gridiron in 2007 and again this season. But we suspect this is one issue on which **Judge McWeeny** isn't going to be impartial or unbiased and that he'll be happy to see Notre Dame resolve this particular conflict on the field and not in court and set the world right again next year.

Congratulations to our very own neighborhood Judge on his long and distinguished career!

FROM THE EDITORS

Please read and heed! Please notify the editors at kjclare@cox.net or by calling 703-620-3771 with any changes for the Fair Oaks Estates Directory no later than Saturday, December 12th. This is especially important if you have moved into the neighborhood during the past year and have not provided your name and phone number to our Welcoming Committee. Everyone appreciates having the Directory as a handy reference of who lives in Fair Oaks Estates, but we need everyone's help to keep it up to date. We'll plan on having the January 2010 edition of the Directory in your mailboxes by mid-January at the latest.

The end of an era is upon us. **Maureen Wolfe**, who has served as our Welcoming Committee chairperson since December 2001—for much of this period **Maureen** was the sole committee member—is handing over the job to **Renee Greer** this month. **Maureen** has labored tirelessly over the years, often

visiting new families two or three times and keeping Mr. Editor up-to-date on home sales in the neighborhood to help him prepare the annual *Fair Oaks Estates Directory*. Thanks, **Maureen**, for your many years of service to the neighborhood!

We also bid fond farewell this month to **Rick Oborn**, who has served on the Board of Directors for the past three years and as President for 2009. It's largely a thankless task; Mr. Editor suspects Board members hear more complaints and whining than praise. But **Rick** at least gets Mr. Editor's seal of approval for always being concise and informative in his Board news for *The Acorn* and for almost always being on time with his submissions. Thanks, **Rick**; we wish we could clone you!

Happy Holidays!!

Fair Oaks Estates Homeowners Association
c/o Sequoia Management Co., Inc.
13998 Parkeast Circle
Chantilly, VA 20151-2283