

November 2009



THE ACORN



FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Folks, short and sweet this month. Please join us at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, November 18th at Navy Elementary School. You may begin signing in at 7:00 p.m., and the meeting will start at 7:30 p.m.

We will have several items to discuss:

- What's the best way to repair some major items?
- Shall we have a community trash service contract?
- Does the Homeowners Association absorb the Recreation Association?
- What's up with the property as you enter Fair Oaks Estates off Ox Hill Road?
- Will your dues go up? And when will you be billed?
- What concerns each committee chairperson the most?
- Why haven't you voted for the Article of Incorporation Amendment?

Be prepared to elect two Board members at this meeting. ***Please send or have someone bring your proxy if you can't make it to the meeting.***

It's been worthwhile, sometimes very "interesting," but always with a touch of humor. I have appreciated your support and interest.

Rick Oborn, outgoing Board President

Architectural Review Board. The Architectural Review Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. on November 17th 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.

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 October 13th meeting results: One application was submitted for review, which included removing dead trees from a back yard, removing a tree and a bush from the front yard, and installing new landscaping. The application was 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

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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 have been troubleshooting the solar light at the Alder Woods Drive entrance and ended up replacing the battery. Batteries typically last about three years, and it was time for this one to fail. So while the solar lights are efficient in term of energy utilization, the batteries must be periodically replaced and recycled.

Our management company and the Board have been considering what to do with the playground equipment at the Washington Brice Road tot lot. There was a bridge made of heavy-duty fabric that connected the two sections of the equipment. The bridge broke. It seems that type of material is no longer approved for playground use. As far as we can tell, the equipment is about 20 years old. We are

considering replacing the complete piece of equipment and have solicited bids. The standards for playground equipment have changed a lot over the years.

Finally, we made arrangements to have the sprinkler systems winterized.

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 November 1985 issue:

- We spotlighted another neighborhood artist, watercolorist **Sandra Baggette**, a Marine Corps wife and mother of four who lived on Ruben Simpson Court. She was an Art major at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, and her life as a military wife had taken her to Chile, California, Rhode Island, and South Carolina.
- We publicized some of the “vanity” license plates in the neighborhood, including “HUSKR”, “IBQROOO”, “BROKE-1”, and “BROKE-2.” One plate—“VEG DOC”—is still resident in the neighborhood, although it probably resides on a different vehicle.
- We announced one adoption and one birth involving two members of the Welcoming Committee. **Penny** and **Gene Juve** adopted a newborn girl, and **Judi** and **Nick Schmitt** had a baby boy. Good grief—these babies could have families of their own by now!

REMEMBERING A VETERAN

Robert (Bob) Williams, Captain, U.S. Coast Guard (retired) and long-time Fair Oaks Estates resident, died on August 20th and was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery with Full Military Honors on October 13th. **Bob**, his wife **Carol**, and daughters **Jennifer** and **Katie** were original Fair Oaks Estates residents on Lt. Nichols Road. **Bob** graduated from the Coast Guard Academy with a Commission and B.S. in Engineering in June 1967 and served in a variety of sea and shore assignments in positions of increasing responsibility, including as Commanding Officer of a patrol boat in Vietnam. Among many other notable accomplishments, he earned a Masters Degree in Management (Telecommunications) at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California; was a Sloan Fellow at the Alfred P. Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; served as a Special Assistant on then-Vice President Bush's National Narcotics Border Interdiction System White House staff; and was the Deputy in the Ceremonies Directorate of the Joint Task Force–Armed Forces Inaugural Committee 1997.

Bob retired from the Coast Guard in 1997. After retiring, he was an active member and past President of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association, Northern Virginia Chapter. He also was passionate about his work with the Coast Guard Foundation and volunteer work as a docent at the Smithsonian Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum.

REMEMBERING ANOTHER VETERAN

Charles William (Bill) Cushion, Colonel, U.S. Air Force (retired), died on Saturday, October 10th and will be buried with Full Military Honors in Arlington National Cemetery on December 16th. **Bill** and his wife **Dottie** are among the original homeowners on Ox Hill Road and have been in and out of the neighborhood twice over the years with **Bill's** Air Force assignments. **Bill** graduated from Colorado College with a B.S. in Chemistry, and his Air Force career took him and **Dottie** to Florida, Mississippi, North Dakota, Illinois, Korea, and Germany, in addition to assignments here in the Washington area. He specialized in missiles and telecommunications and earned a Masters Degree in Contract Management from the Florida Institute of Technology. **Bill** retired from the Air Force in 1992 after 26 years of service and had been working as an administrative officer with the Institute for Defense Analysis.

Bill also was a father and grandfather, with three daughters (**Stephanie**, **Melanie**, and **Natalie**) and seven grandchildren, including twins who will turn one-year-old on November 17th. He was famous and envied by his neighbors for the beautiful flowers that he maintained around his house and enjoyed by all for his wry sense of humor.



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THE END (OF THE YEAR) IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Cheesecake. Do you like cheesecake or carrot cake? Support the Oakton High School Orchestras by purchasing locally made gourmet cheesecakes. All 1-lb. cheesecakes are \$12; 2-lb. cheesecakes \$21; carrot cakes \$13. Cheesecake choices are Classic, Raspberry Swirl, PB Fudge Swirl, Cookies & Cream, Chocolate, or Pumpkin. Cakes keep several months in the freezer, so order now for Thanksgiving, holiday parties, and gifts. Orders and payment (checks to OHS Orchestra Booster Club) are needed by Wednesday, November 4th. Your cheesecakes will be delivered to your home on November 23rd. Please call **Sheila** at 703-786-9019 to order.

White Squirrel Sightings. **Joan McRorie** spotted our little mascot on Friday, October 9th in his normal area at the top of Ox Hill Road. **Joan** said the little guy should visit her place; she has a brand new bird feeder that her backyard squirrels have figured out, and the critters are growing chubby on the bird seed. We had another sighting on October 10th—this one by **Kim Ford**. **Kim** said White Squirrel didn't do his usual prolonged "stare down" because he was preoccupied with holding onto a very large acorn in his mouth. Given the bumper crop of acorns this year, White Squirrel shouldn't go hungry. In an emergency, the bird feeder "diner" is open at the **McRorie** residence.

White House Ornament Sale. 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 now by calling 703-378-6841 or 703-378-6216.

Check Out a Green Library. Oakton Library on Hunter Mill Road recently received certification as a green building, attaining a LEED Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. The building garnered this certification because it incorporates many green features and design innovations, including energy efficiency, water conservation, recycled materials, and improved indoor air quality. Besides benefiting the environment, these green features save an estimated \$15,000 per year. Compared to a traditionally built library, Oakton Library cuts energy bills by 26 percent, producing a savings of about \$10,000 per year, and reduces water consumption by more than 41 percent compared to a conventionally designed library of the same size, resulting in a savings of about \$5,000 per year. Oakton Library is a 17,304 square-foot facility with about 65,000 volumes, 16 public computers, and wireless Internet access throughout the building.

IT'S YOUR TURN (name withheld by request)

As a follow up to the comment in last month's issue of *The Acorn* about the school bus stop at Charles Stewart Drive and Washington Brice Road, here's a thought about the bus stop at Charles Stewart Drive and Ox Hill Road. I would make a request to the parents who drive their children to this bus stop to ***please turn off your headlights when parked at the curb waiting for the bus.*** For those of us who commute past that intersection each morning, your headlights can be blinding. We drive slowly, but even a small blinding from a headlight could lead to an accident, especially with the children coming out between cars to get to the bus pickup area. And with the coming winter months and cloudy mornings, it will be darker and the bus riders will be harder to see. The lack of natural light, the glare of the headlights, and the fact that many students wear dark clothing combine to make it even more difficult to see them crossing the street. Thanks for your assistance in helping to keep our students safe.

LLAMA LADY—THE SECRET LIFE OF JOAN MCRORIE

*(Editors' Note: Many residents probably know **Joan McRorie** on Ox Hill Road as our local "White Bird" Harley Momma and a White Squirrel lover, but this soon-to-be-retired Federal employee has other secrets, some of which she shares below at Mr. Editor's request. You might recall that **Joan's** theme song (and Harley tag) is "White Bird." To that we now need to add "Llama Llama Duck.")*

I'm the proud "mama" of two llamas—Sweet Pea turned one year old on 9/11 and lives on a farm in Tom's Brook, Virginia; Mako is six months old and lives on a farm in Edinburg, Virginia. How this came about started with the purchase of 10 acres of land outside of Edinburg in the Shenandoah Valley a year and a half ago. My significant other and I bought the property for building our retirement home there. We both agreed llamas were pretty neat animals and that we'd like to have some on our farm. Last October, I began searching the Internet for information on llamas in Virginia and found a Web site for Posey Thisisit Llamas. The owners (Joyce and Jim Hall) welcomed visitors to their farm, so I got in touch with them. It was a sunny day in October when we visited, and Sweet Pea was a month-old cria (that's what llama babies are called). When Joyce told me she'd do a long-term easy payment plan, we had a deal!

Now about Mako. Last month we enjoyed a weekend at the Old Edinburg Days Festival. Joyce had a vendor tent set up and was selling llama yarn and crocheted/knitted items. Her daughter Jamee and I sat there with our spinning wheels, spinning llama fiber into yarn (spinning was something I taught myself last winter). Right next to us was another couple, also friends of the Halls, and they had brought along three llamas for show-and-tell. When we saw Mako, we fell in love with his coloring and fiber texture and his prize-winning bloodlines and thought he'd be a perfect mate for Sweet Pea. More llamas to come!

As for the White Bird Harley, the first one made its appearance in June 2002. Less than two years and 8,000 miles later, it was replaced with a bigger and more powerful version. This White Bird Harley and I have journeyed more than 34,000 miles so far. I've traveled as far north as the Canadian Niagara Falls; as far east as Rehoboth Beach and Ocean City; as far south as Gatlinburg, Tennessee; and as far west—the mother of all trips—Harley-Davidson's 105th Anniversary celebration last August in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. One of my most memorable stories was during a trip through the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. We paid the toll and started off down the highway, but my magnetic tank bag came loose from the wind. I was able to retrieve it (glad that semi was in the other lane!), but my camera was dented and my cell phone was in six or more pieces (I was only able to find five). Another time, one of my highway pegs (long-distance footrest) came loose and bounced across the highway. Thank goodness it didn't hit any of my riding companions behind me!

My (now ex) husband and I moved to Fair Oaks Estates in September 1988. Our son **Eddie** turned two the next month, and our son **Patrick** was born three months later in January 1989. Our daughter **Rachel** was born three years later in January 1992. Fast forward to now. **Eddie** graduated from George Mason University in May and is living in Springfield and is employed with a USAID contractor. **Patrick** attended DeVry University for almost a year, then two months ago he moved to Florida to continue studies with the help of his Dad (he reports that it's hot and humid there). **Rachel** is in her senior year at Chantilly and will be taking the State Boards for her cosmetology license next spring before she graduates. I'm planning to retire next March after 35 years of Federal service but will stay here for at least another year and a half because the significant other is not eligible to retire until April 2011. Maybe I'll go to work at Home Depot and sell power tools or water daisies. Or better yet, perhaps I can become the White Squirrel's agent!

FROM THE EDITORS

Here's a heartwarming story that runners, moms, and dads should appreciate. (Reader alert: proud parent news follows.) Daughter number two—the veterinarian in California and mother of grandson number two—completed the Sacramento Cowtown Marathon on October 4th. This was her sixth marathon, and she won her age group. However, the biggest news was that her finishing time of 3 hours 42 minutes qualified her to run the Boston Marathon next April. Runners will understand what an accomplishment this represents! And anyone who's seen Mr. Editor plod his two miles around the neighborhood will recognize instantly that he'll never qualify for Boston, so having a daughter do so is the next best thing. If any of our Fair Oaks Estates marathoners has any advice on where to stay or how to prepare for Boston—either as a runner or a cheerleader—please let Mr. and Mrs. Editor know.

Before we get to Boston, however, there's an important occasion that comes around every year at this time—Veterans' Day on November 11th. The

day will be especially poignant this year for Mr. and Mrs. Editor. Mrs. Editor's 94-year-old father, Chris Keegan, a retired U.S. Army Colonel and World War II veteran, died on October 11th. Colonel Keegan was a Company commander and Battalion operations officer with the legendary Japanese-American 442nd Regimental Combat Team—the most highly decorated unit in the war—in Italy and France and was wounded three times. After a 30-year military career, he went on to a post-retirement life of service that included leadership positions in his local community and in the Lions Club in southern California. He was truly a member of the “greatest generation.”

Please also remember on this Veterans' Day two recently deceased veterans from Fair Oaks Estates—Captain, U.S. Coast Guard (retired), **Bob Williams**, and Colonel, U.S. Air Force (retired), **Bill Cushion**. Also remember another neighborhood veteran who died last November, **Bill O'Brien**. We should all be grateful for their service to our nation.

**Fair Oaks Estates Homeowners Association
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