

October 2009



# THE ACORN



## FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fellow residents, fall is upon us and it's time to take care of some obligations before we become consumed in holiday and family observances.

First, the Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18th at the Navy Elementary School (despite my earlier notices that gave a date one day later). It seems the school won't let us reserve more than three months in advance, and we were beat out for our preferred date! Please, please attend or send the special proxy with someone. You'll remember that we passed the Bylaws Amendment in May but cannot increase the size of the Board of Directors until the Article of Incorporation Amendment passes. The Declaration Amendment also has not been passed. We are open to discussion at the Annual Meeting. Call me or another officer and we will be happy to visit as many homes, mailboxes, or hidden proxy locations as necessary so that you can help conduct the community's business.

At the last Annual Meeting, we did not have a quorum (counting proxies and residents in attendance), and if we do that again we will leave two of the three current Board positions open for one person to appoint. No one as yet has offered to stand for election. Included in this issue of *The Acorn* is a "Statement of Candidacy." If you are interested in serving on the Board, please complete the form and send it to our Community Manager, Jan Fenton, Fair

Oaks Estates Homeowners Association, c/o Sequoia Management Company, Inc., 13998 Parkeast Circle, Chantilly, VA 20151-2283. If you have been concerned about or interested in the proposed amendments or in other community issues, now is the time to be active. An election proxy and the candidates' statements will appear in the November issue of *The Acorn*.

I have been on the Board for three years, and my term expires. Please talk with any officer and learn that the more substantive work is done by our professional management company and, to their superb credit, those who fill the non-elected positions of Treasurer, Secretary, Open Space Committee chair, and the ARB chair and members. Does being on the Board put you on the hook to make mature and considered decisions? Yes. Does it eat up lots of time? No.

Now to the civic helpers. First, soon after you receive this issue of the newsletter you will have some 8th-graders knocking on your door to ask you to sign proxies about the amendments that we discussed at the Special Meeting in May. Please see the FOEHA Web site for full texts of the amendments. Secondly, plans are being drawn up now for an Eagle Scout project next spring to repair and upgrade the tot lot between Lt. Nichols Road and Ox Hill Road.

Thanks for everyone's participation.

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**Architectural Review Board.** The Architectural Review Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. on October 13th 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](http://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 September 16th meeting results:** Two applications were submitted for review: one for a swing set and gravel under a deck, and the other to remove a dead tree from a back yard. Both 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](mailto:jfenton@sequoiamanagement.com).

**Open Space Committee.** Nothing significant to report this month.

**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](mailto: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 October 1985 issue:

- The first Fair Oaks Ladies Coffee, sponsored by the Welcoming Committee, was scheduled.
- The issue of acquiring street lights for the neighborhood was first raised, with the Community Affairs Committee soliciting volunteers to help make this happen.
- A “News of People” column profiled artist-in-residence (on Washington Brice Road) **Carol FitzSimonds**, who graduated from Hollins College with a fine arts degree and was affiliated with several local art groups, including The Torpedo Factory in Alexandria. Her artwork won awards in a number of shows and was favorably reviewed in *The Washington Post*. **Carol** and her husband, **Jim**, a US Navy officer, were in and out of the neighborhood for many years during his military assignments in the area.
- There was to be a planning meeting to organize a Fair Oaks Estates Dinner Club.

We have a correction from last month’s “nostalgia” item. We said **Evelyn Rector** still lived in the neighborhood, but although she is listed in the January 2009 edition of the *Fair Oaks Directory*, usually reliable sources say she moved away long ago. We promise to correct the *Directory* in January 2010.

**RECREATION ASSOCIATION NEWS**

Sadly, the 2009 pool season has come to an end. Like the lonely little red brick schoolhouse in the Peanuts cartoon, our beautiful pool facility will miss the sounds of laughter and fun during its “off” season. But the 2010 pool season is just around the corner.

The Board needs to know what you think about pool operations. Do you have comments or concerns about how the pool has been run this summer? Do you have suggestions on ways we could improve the operation of the pool and the Recreation Association? Now is the time to begin the discussion so that the Board can work on incorporating new ideas into planning for the 2010 pool season. You can contact the Board and make your views known by sending an e-mail to [comments@fairoaksrec.com](mailto:comments@fairoaksrec.com).

The FORA Board is *still* in need of a few good men and women *volunteers*. We *still* need to fill the Treasurer and Secretary positions. Please consider volunteering your time in support of the pool and its members. We have been searching for quite some time and need additional support to keep the Board functioning and strong into 2010. Call or e-mail any of the current Board members if you can contribute some of your time and energy.

Here’s a belated welcome to some folks who have been here since January!

Tim and Robin Brown  
Kali (16), Kaitlin (10), Kaden (4)  
3808 Ruben Simpson Court  
703-262-0330

and **Robin Brown** moved from the Philadelphia area. **Tim’s** a Navy officer who’s now assigned at the Pentagon and commutes on Metro. They slipped in under the radar in January, but we’re glad to know they’re here. And **Robin** says they like the neighborhood.

**IT’S YOUR TURN (name withheld by request)**

Here are two issues for everyone to consider:

Now that school has resumed, let’s be considerate of those who have bus stops in front of their property. Remember, the bus stops are in front of or beside their property, not on the property. For example, there is a bus stop at the corner of Charles Stewart Drive and Washington Brice Road that has an especially large crowd of children every morning in front of and, at times, all over the yard. The folks who live there also have an infant, and we all remember what those days were like, trying to keep things quiet. Let’s be good role models for our kids and considerate neighbors!

With Halloween approaching, I want to remind people about UNICEF. For those unfamiliar with the organization, UNICEF is the United Nations International Children’s Fund and works for children’s rights, their survival, development, and protection. It’s a wonderful organization, and every Halloween some children choose to collect change for UNICEF rather than candy. My children have done this for the past few years and may do so again this year. So if you see the little orange box that the children carry, please know that it’s for a good cause. Thanks.

## SUMMER IS REALLY OVER

**Some Excitement on September 6th.** Just after lunchtime on Sunday, September 6th, some residents on Ox Hill Road heard a *very* loud boom and then the power went out for many homes on Ox Hill Road and perhaps for the entire community. (Power dropped at Mr. and Mrs. Editor's house on Washington Brice Road too). Ox Hill Road residents saw smoke coming from the grassy area under the high-power lines near one of the last big poles before you exit to West Ox Road. Neighbors rushed over and seemed to control the small fire until the fire engine from Fair Oaks Fire Station could arrive and soak the area.

**Sheila Hautbois** on Ox Hill Road said she went to look at the damage on Sunday evening and found the cause. What looked to be a very large bird of prey was on the ground. **Sheila** thinks it must have flown into the lines and shorted them out. She said the carcass was charred and a small area of grass was burned. The tall grass in the area was extremely dry, so **Sheila** thought we were fortunate that neighbors and the Fair Oaks firefighters reacted quickly.

Dominion Virginia Power didn't have much to add, except to note that the incident caused a 35-minute power outage. The company said it's hard to determine how often a bird or other animal causes outages like this one but that this was the first such incident in our neighborhood since at least 2002. Mr. Editor suspects the main culprits in these cases must be very big birds, very stupid squirrels, or very tall deer.

**A New Post Office Option.** The US Postal Service in September opened a USPS Contract Unit inside the Briar Oaks Exxon Service Center, located adjacent to the Fair Oaks Fire Station on Route 50. The Briar Oaks "post office" provides all the services available at a regular post office except for money orders and passport applications. The Briar Oaks "post office" is open from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. every day, including Sundays and holidays. Collection times are 4:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday and 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. There is no mail collection on Sundays or holidays.

**Flea Market and Boutique.** Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, October 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday and 8:00 a.m. until noon on Saturday at Pender United Methodist Church at Alder Woods Drive and Route 50. Stock up for the winter! All items are in good condition and very low prices. Kids will have a blast, including a treasure hunt! Burgers and drinks are available for lunch. All proceeds will benefit Missions and local outreach. There will be lots of fall and winter clothing for women, men, and children; tools and household items; appliances; computer gear; furniture; and books and CDs. Sponsored by the Pender United Methodist Men and Women.

**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. It is really beautiful! The cost of the ornament is \$18, and all profits benefit charity. Order yours now by calling 703-378-6841 or 703-378-6216.

**Coming in 2010.** The VDOT project to widen Fairfax County Parkway and build an interchange at Fair Lakes Parkway will begin late next year, thanks to \$13 million in state-allocated stimulus money and nearly \$25 million in regional stimulus funding. The total cost for the project, which should take about three and one-half years to complete, is estimated to be between \$81 and \$85 million. We have no estimate on how much aggravation the project might cause Fair Oaks Estates residents, but we're sure it will all be worth it in the end.

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### IT'S YOUR TURN (Renee Crossman)

For the record, I'd like to raise couple of issues about the repaving of the path between Washington Brice Road and Brices Ford Court. The experience was not a good one for residents who live close to the path on Brices Ford Court. The first pavement the contractor laid down was done incorrectly and was too thin in some parts so they pulled that up and threw it on our lawn and our neighbor's lawn, killing a significant amount of grass on our lawn and some on our neighbor's lawn. My husband has worked very hard to keep our lawn healthy; by the time the company came to reseed the damaged areas, it was several weeks later and we had already spent \$200 to get the lawn back into good shape. (And, by the way, the second repaving also was too thin.) Secondly, the contractor started work way before the time that was appropriate and woke up most of the residents in the area on a Monday morning that we happened to have off. We were shocked at the carelessness of this company and their disregard for people's sleep, as well as the damage they caused. I don't want this to happen to any other part of our neighborhood, and I recommend that we choose a different company next time.

*Response from Open Space Committee Chairman David Boggs:*

I suspect we all have had experiences where we got a disappointing contractor. I assure you the path project did not go as planned, but we attempted to make the best of a bad situation. As Mrs. Crossman noted, the contractor had to take several corrective actions. These corrections didn't just happen. **Jan Fenton**, our Community Manager, and I were on-site throughout the project, and some changes were made on-the-spot (such as the mentioned removing of substandard new pavement). We are aware of the damage to adjacent lawns and were very happy to see the neighbors take corrective action. As Mrs. Crossman noted, we insisted that the contractor re-seed. We're sorry it took so long, but we kept pressing the contractor and the Association withheld payment until the corrective actions were done. This contractor was our second choice. The first choice was unable to accept our contract. We will not do business with the contractor again. I do disagree with Mrs. Crossman on one point, however—I honestly don't think a 7:00 a.m. start time is unreasonable. I personally never want to do another path paving project! Unfortunately, there are other aging paths that need attention.

### PENDER VILLAGE CENTER

Jonathan Ross of Atlantic Realty provided an early September update on what's happening at the company's development on Route 50 near Fair Oaks Estates. Jonathan said construction should be pretty much completed by late November or early December and that tenants should be able to start moving in after Christmas or early next year. The project was about 60 percent leased as of early September; the "anchor" store will be a Harris Teeter supermarket, and Hardwood Artisans will occupy another major space in the center. A hair salon, dry cleaner, and a pizza place are already signed-up, as well as a gym facility called Everybody Fitness. Negotiations are underway for a restaurant to fill a 7,000 square-foot space and with a coffee shop chain. Retail facilities will occupy the first floor of the center, with professional offices—including a dentist and possibly administrative offices and training facilities for Harris Teeter—on the second floor.

It's nice to see that Atlantic Realty is preserving some of the local history by naming the development Pender Village Center. As we noted in the September issue of *The Acorn*, the name "Pender" was bestowed on the area at the intersection of West Ox Road and Route 50 in the 1890s by John Ballard, a local merchant, future postmaster, and former Confederate Army Captain. Ballard named the area in honor of his wartime regimental commander Major General William Dorsey Pender, a North Carolinian and West Point graduate who died of wounds received at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863.

**FROM THE EDITORS**

We're sure lots of folks are already counting down the shopping days till Christmas, but there are more immediate concerns—what are you and your kids going to wear for Halloween? As part of our continuing public service effort, here are some predictions for what will be the most popular Halloween costumes this year from [www.extremehalloween.com](http://www.extremehalloween.com). These folks claim to be a family-run company in business since the 1970s; you can check their predictions from previous years against what actually happened at their Web site. For 2009 their list includes:

- For infants and toddlers: Pea in the Pod; Baby Minnie Mouse; Precious Pink Wabbit; Yoda Baby; and Wolverine X-Men.
- For girls: Hannah Montana; Princess Fairy and Zarina; Princess Leia; and Batgirl.
- For boys: Wolverine X-Men; GI Joe Snake Eyes; Clone Trooper Commander; and Red Power Ranger.

- For women: Nightmare Black Widow (please, don't bite the messenger—we're just reporting); Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz; Tooth Fairy; Snow White; and Wonder Woman.
- And finally, for men: Wolverine X-Men; GI Joe Snake Eyes; Anakin Skywalker; Captain Jack Sparrow; Gorilla; and Comical Cow.

Mr. Editor considers it a good sign that "Star Wars" can continue to unite families, although it doesn't appear women are into this genre. (It might have something to do with Princess Leia's strange hairdo.) It distresses Mr. Editor somewhat to see that men must either be death-defying action heroes or comical characters. Mr. Editor also wonders how long it's been since Christopher Columbus reigned as a popular Halloween character? Or Sir Francis Drake? Or Magellan? None of them probably had the appeal of Captain Jack Sparrow. And so it goes.

**Be Safe and Have a Happy Halloween!**  
**And a Happy Columbus Day Too!**

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