

Harvest Farms - HOA

PO Box 955 - Sykesville, MD 21784

IN THIS NEWSLETTER:

- 4th of July Festival: Page 1
- Pond Update: Page 2
- Community News & Reminders - page 4
- Bylaws Updates: Page 5-6
- 2018 Budget: Page 7
- President's Update: Page 8



FOURTH OF JULY

Planning for the fourth of July is currently in progress.

THE PONIES WILL BE RETURNING THIS YEAR!

Rita's Italian ice too.

Please join us at the corner of Cable and Hammond for the annual parade to the playground. The parade will be starting at 10 sharp!

Hot dogs, Rita's, games, face, painting, and bounce house.

Come join us from 10-noon!

Check the Facebook page and website for links to volunteer, including opportunities for student volunteer hours!

Volunteer sign-ups: <http://signup.com/go/yfjAvxP> or email: harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com



A Pond for All Seasons



Harvest Farms community pond still continues to be the jewel of the neighborhood and has become a gathering place to fish, relax, enjoy a walk or appreciate the flora and fauna that abound at this site.

Element has been contracted to attend to the grass cutting and general maintenance of the area. We do need some additional help in weeding and tending to the beds. If interested please contact Andrea Kowaleski at 410-608-2120. Solitude maintains the health and vitality of the pond and keeps us informed of their pond visits. They view our pond as extremely healthy with a good population of fish, turtles, and even resident nonpoisonous snakes. Unfortunately the steps that were taken to ward off the geese have fallen short of success. A committee had been formed that sought solutions and even the DNR was contacted. Fifteen gauge wire was put to specifications around the pond and with the changing water levels due to rain the geese

were able to find access places to enter the water. Yes, we no longer have 100 geese but once again this problem needs to be addressed even though the number is less. As soon as the geese have finished molting they will vacate the lake but the annoyance to homeowners still exists.

There are or were a circle of rocks that edged the main bed but over time they have disappeared and some wound up in the pond. At times they have been overturned because anglers are looking for worms. These rocks serve a purpose to prevent erosion and hold the mulch and soil around the plants. Encourage children that frequent the pond to fish or enjoy being outside to keep the rocks where they are located and to right the ones that have been dislodged or turned over.

The planting beds have emerged as sites with lots of plants that attract pollinators. No funds were spent on plants because of the many donations received from Carroll County Master Gardeners, the US Forestry Board, and homeowners ridding their yards of some of their own plants. As a result we have gardens that keep changing and growing with an emphasis on native plants and avoiding invasive ones. One bed is still a work in progress and plants that like shade are being sought. It is located by the large transformer and we welcome any donations.

A Pond for All Seasons (continued)

What You Can Do:

- Keep all vegetation and other materials from washing into the pond. Grass clippings, leaves, and sticks can accumulate around storm drains and go directly into the pond. Please take a few minutes to clean off a drain if it is near your home. Our pond is very shallow 4-5 feet deep and washed in materials raise the sediment level and promote algae growth. Please do not blow grass onto the street or storm drains inlets.
- Limit use of pesticides and herbicides because they wash into the pond also. Sweep/blow fertilizers off of roads and driveways back onto lawns after spreading to prevent it from washing into storm drains. Remind your lawn care companies of this information.
- Please remove all personal food wrappers, bottles, and garbage when at the pond.
- Pick up pet waste and throw it in the trash.
- Invasive vines need to be monitored and pulled out because they can choke and limit the good plants from growing. If you have or see Mile-a-Minute, Multiflora Rose, English Ivy, or Oriental Bittersweet do your community a favor and remove them.



Thank you for your cooperation. We at Harvest Farms take pride in our pond area. It has been noted by Carroll County Compliance Specialist and Environmental Inspector that our storm water management pond is an amenity to the community and none in this county compare with its natural beauty and attention to care. We appreciate the good working relationship we've maintained with the county as well as with those that have assisted us in having a site that is as inviting as our pond area.

Andrea Kowaleski

HOA - Officers

President: Michele Carroll

Treasurer: Scott Walthour

Secretary: Donna Chaney

Vice President, Communications: Charles Lawson

Contact info: harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com

www.harvestfarms.org

Important Information

Neighborhood notices, including annual dues information, are sent electronically.

Please send us your email address to be included plus any updates.

harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com

Community News & Reminders

Architectural Changes: Residents are required to submit the required architectural request forms prior to making any external changes to a home.

Harvest Farms Community Facebook Group: A great place to connect with your neighbors. To join go to: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/harvest.farms.community> and click "Request to Join the Group".

More News

Police Concerns: Residents are reminded to call the police in the event of any illegal activity or with any concerns (Sheriff's Office: 410-386-2900 or 911).

Monthly Meeting Minutes: Minutes from the monthly HOA meetings will be emailed. Please make sure your email address is on the mailing list.

HOA Board Meetings

Are typically held the 4th Wednesday of each Month at 7:00 PM. All residents are welcome and encouraged to attend. More information can be found on the website.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 27th

Calling all Volunteers

We are in need of a few more volunteers. The website and architectural committees are looking for additional assistance. Reach out and volunteer. To volunteer or request more information, email the HOA at harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com.



Bylaws and Covenants Updates Project

Last summer, the HOA began working on updating our neighborhood [Bylaws](#) (the rules governing the association) and [Declarations of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions](#) (the actual rules of the neighborhood). We'd like to provide an update on what's been going on, the status of this effort, and what you can expect.



Why Did We Do This?

The bylaws and covenant documents have not been modified since they were first put in place by the developer 30 years ago. The documents still include the developer as a member of the association with a role in its governance. The documents compel ways of conducting business that are outdated and ineffective (including the use of registered mail and telegraphs as a means of communication with residents). In addition, the operating processes defined by the documents have been difficult to maintain and have led to confusion or decisions that are not in compliance with the rules. One of the biggest examples of this is the requirement for a quorum of a majority of residents each year to elect the board of directors, which has never happened.

What's Been Happening

Last July, the board approved hiring a new lawyer who specializes in HOA law – Lisa Heimlicher from Winegrad, Hess, Friedman & Levitt, LLC. She recommended starting with a new covenants document as a template to modify for our neighborhood, which she provided for us, rather than attempting to amend the existing document. She also recommended only updating the covenants, rather than both the bylaws and covenants, and including everything in the new document.

Nearly 20 residents volunteered to help on a committee to review the documents; identify the areas that can be removed, updated, or added; and suggest modifications that would be helpful for our neighborhood. Meeting weekly, the committee worked all summer and into the early fall. It reviewed every section of the covenants template document and updated many areas to ensure they reflected the needs of our neighborhood.

The lawyer reviewed the progress several times during this process and provided feedback and legal guidance. The HOA board also reviewed the changes recommended by the committee and provided feedback. Earlier this year, the lawyer finalized the document with all the changes, additions, and deletions identified by the committee.

Bylaws and Covenants Updates Project (continued)



Approving the New Covenants

Approving and enacting the new proposed covenants document requires the approval of 60% of neighborhood residents. Each household receives one vote and must be up-to-date on the annual dues to cast a vote.

Here's What is Currently Going on and What You Can Expect

- The HOA board and covenants update committee is developing an informational document that will explain the changes that are proposed in the new covenants document.
- All residents will receive a printed copy of the new covenants document, the informational handout that is being developed, and a ballot that can be used to vote for or against implementing the new covenants. We are planning on mailing these documents by the end of June.
- The HOA board is currently looking into electronic voting to collect residents' votes, in addition to the paper ballots. We will have more information on this soon.
- Board members and committee members will be at the July 4th neighborhood picnic with copies of the new covenants and the ballots and will be available to answer questions and collect votes.
- Over the summer, board members and committee members will be visiting individual homes to answer any questions about the new covenants and collect votes. Our plan is to collect votes until we have reached the 60% quorum threshold and have enough votes to approve the new covenants or until everyone in the neighborhood has had an opportunity to vote.
- We will continue to keep you updated on our efforts and progress. If you have any questions, please feel free to send us an email at any time (harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com).

2018 Budget

Updated: 6.18.18 199 Units		Harvest Farms HOA Budget			
		2018			
		\$/Unit (Budget)	Budget	Actual to date (6.18.18)	Delta
Revenue					
	Dues	\$ 375	\$ 74,625	\$ 73,968	\$ (658)
	Total Revenue	\$ 375	\$ 74,625	\$ 73,968	\$ (658)
Expenses					
<u>HOA Services</u>					
	Waste Collection	\$ 217	\$ 43,200	\$ 10,429	\$ (32,771)
	Subtotal Services	\$ 217	\$ 43,200	\$ 10,429	\$ (32,771)
<u>Admin, Finance & Legal</u>					
	Legal Fees	\$ 11	\$ 2,200	\$ 212	\$ (1,988)
	Insurance	\$ 10	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,957	\$ (43)
	PO Box	\$ 0	\$ 70	\$ 70	\$ -
	Office Supplies & Mailings	\$ 3	\$ 600	\$ 84	\$ (516)
	State & Federal Taxes	\$ 0	\$ 40		\$ (40)
	Subtotal AFL	\$ 25	\$ 4,910	\$ 2,323	\$ (2,587)
<u>Community Resources</u>					
	Grounds Maintenance	\$ 52	\$ 10,400	\$ 5,049	\$ (5,351)
	Pond - Maintenance	\$ 32	\$ 6,300	\$ 2,965	\$ (3,335)
	Pond - Electricity	\$ 3	\$ 650	\$ 134	\$ (516)
	Subtotal Resources	\$ 87	\$ 17,350	\$ 8,148	\$ (9,202)
<u>Community & Communications</u>					
	Website	\$ 0	\$ 80		\$ (80)
	Social - Easter Egg Hunt	\$ 1	\$ 250	\$ 74	\$ (176)
	Social - July 4th	\$ 11	\$ 2,100	\$ 325	\$ (1,775)
	Social - Miscellaneous	\$ 3	\$ 500		\$ (500)
	Social - Yard Sale	\$ 1	\$ 120		\$ (120)
	Subtotal Community	\$ 15	\$ 3,050	\$ 399	\$ (2,651)
	Total Expenses	\$ 344	\$ 68,510	\$ 21,297.79	\$ (47,212)
	Capital Projects	\$ 31	\$ 6,115		\$ (6,115)
Gain/(Loss)			\$ -	\$ 52,670	\$ 52,670

**Please send any questions to: harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com

President's Update

Hello, neighbors!

I hope this newsletter finds you doing well and enjoying the warmer weather. Despite the unusually rainy weather we've been having, we were able to hold the yard sale on two consecutive Saturdays, as well as have a bulk pickup at the curbside. We appreciate your patience regarding the bulk pickup. We had more items at the curb this year than I've seen in my 23 years here in Harvest Farms.

The spring and summer months bring opportunities for upkeep and improvements in Harvest Farms. It's also the time of year for one of our favorite neighborhood activities: the 4th of July parade.

Here are a few things going on that might catch your eye:

- Recently replaced playground equipment with a new perimeter and bump-out area for the sliding boards
- Installation of a perimeter fence line around the pond area to deter the Canada geese (a work in progress...they're pesky, persistent critters)
- Upcoming installation of a small, fenced in storage shed for HOA equipment and supplies
- Repair and resurfacing of the tennis and basketball courts
- Work on the remaining picnic tables at the pond

Regarding the 4th of July parade, **WE STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS!** Please take just an hour to help us continue to hold this annual fun-filled family event. Go to <http://signup.com/go/yfjAvxP> (or the Facebook page) to see how and when you can volunteer. You can also email at harvestfarmshoa@gmail.com for more information.

While you are at the playground area during the 4th of July festivities, please take the time to review and vote on the new bylaws/covenants. The committee, headed by Donna Chaney, has done a thoughtful, thorough update to our community's governing documents. We believe the updated documents will improve how we function as an HOA.

Of course, no community newsletter is complete without a reminder to pet owners. Please pick up after your pets when you are walking through the neighborhood. We're all able to enjoy the neighborhood so much more if pet owners take just a few seconds to clean up after their pets.

Michele Carroll

HOA President