

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Constant Friendship Homeowners Association Newsletter

Spring 2007

Smart Energy Savers Program

On January 23rd BGE filed the Smart Energy Savers Program with the Maryland Public Service Commission. To learn more go to www.bge.com, click on Save Money and then Smart Energy Savings.

Spring is in the Air

The “spring to-do” list is growing each day and the board members would like to remind you of a few Constant Friendship guidelines.

- ♦ The form, Application for Approval of Architectural Improvements, must be submitted, and approval must be granted, prior to the start of any external improvement project. This includes, but is not limited to, installing a fence or storm door, building a deck, or painting the door and shutters.
- ♦ The owner shall keep his lot, and all improvements thereon, in good order and repair. Items include, but are not limited to:
 - a) the seeding, watering, weeding and mowing of lawns;
 - b) the pruning and cutting of trees and shrubbery;
 - c) the clearing of debris from sidewalks; and
 - d) the painting, or other appropriate external care, of all buildings and structures on the lot.
- ♦ Disposing or storing of waste (including grass clippings) on common areas is not permitted. Unreasonable or unsightly accumulation or storage of litter, new or used building materials or trash of any kind shall not be permitted within or upon any lot.
- ♦ Trash must be kept in a sealed container or a secured bag. Trash and recyclable materials shall be placed at the curbside no earlier than the evening prior to the scheduled pickup time.
- ♦ At all other times, trash and recyclable material containers shall be stored inside the house or at the back of the house.
- ♦ Bulk Items Options
 - ♦ *Harford Waste Disposal Center*
3241 Scarboro Road, Street, MD 21154
410.638.3636
 - ♦ Drop off for FREE: lawn and garden recyclables, grass clippings, leaves
 - ♦ Household Recyclables: plastics bottles & jugs, bi-metals, aluminum cans, glass bottles & jars, commingled in blue bags; mixed paper in paper bags; flattened corrugated cardboard.
 - ♦ Car & truck batteries; up to 5 gallons used motor oil and/or antifreeze; scrap metal and appliances; computers, monitors, speakers, printers, scanners, mice, keyboards, cables, modems, external disc drives; up to 5 tires up to 17" diameter off rim per year
 - ♦ *Purple Heart*: 410.712.0109, front door pickup service to collect usable clothing and household item donations to raise funds for the support of veterans and their families. www.purpleheartpickup.org
 - ♦ *Salvation Army*: 410.525.0530

What Do You Think?

The Board of Directors would like to know what you think about your community. What's good? What needs improvement? How can we make things better? We would like to hear about what is bothering you as well as recommendations for improvement. Not only will we get back to you to discuss the issues, we may put it in future issues of the newsletter to encourage discussion. We are actively trying to get more homeowner participation regarding community priorities. To do this, we need to hear from you!

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Constant Friendship Homeowners Association Newsletter

Spring 2007

Comments Requested

Currently there are several items that are not permitted in the community: semi-permanent gazebos, screen enclosures, white vinyl fences and stained fences to mention a few. What's your opinion? Send comments to your Property Manager or the Board of Directors at cfhoaboard@yahoo.com

Identity Theft

What do you do when you don't need your old but important documents such as bank statements or tax files? If you are merely tossing them into the wastebasket you are subjecting your financial future to risk. There are people who spend much of their time going through people's trash looking for documents with personal information. What they want is your identity. When they find what they are looking for, an account number, social security number and name and address (the more they find about you the easier it becomes for them), your life will become incredibly difficult. Your credit reputation will be destroyed. You may be refused a mortgage, a loan or the ability to refinance your home. You may be arrested for a crime you never committed.

Identity theft is accomplished in other ways such as a lost or stolen wallet or purse. And a simple solution for secure disposal of your personal documents is a shredder! It is the opinion of many security experts that every household should have a shredder. They are no longer expensive and bulky. Shredders are an easy and inexpensive way of reducing your risk to a growing problem in our society. Shredders can be found at Target and Walmart and for a larger selection visit Staples and Office Depot. One more reason to ensure your trash is properly secured when placed out for collection.

Progress is On the Move

You better watch out...you better not cry ... because the CF property management team is coming to review your street for:

The exterior appearance of your house

- ♦ Garden Borders
- ♦ Roof
- ♦ Trim / Repair / Painting
- ♦ Rake Board
- ♦ Windows
- ♦ Entry Doors / Front & Back

Violation(s) will be noted and a letter sent explaining the violation(s) and the consequences \$\$\$.

You will find the complete Rules and Regulations and Operating Guidelines at www.cfhoa.com. (*Updates are coming soon, including more choices and modernization.*)

What is a Rake Board?

Recently the community was inspected and a number of houses were found to have rake boards, which needed painting or repair. What is a rake board? It is a trim board that is on the side of a house. It runs from the peak of the roof down to the area next to the gutters. It is just below the shingles. At the end of the rake board and the gutter is a triangular piece of wood called a cap board. These two boards are frequently in need of painting or repair. Many homeowners have chosen to have them wrapped in aluminum or vinyl. Both end and middle units have the boards either in front or in back of the house.

It's About Time!

- ♦ Street Repairs: Fullerton is being scheduled. The current delay is enabling us to get a cost estimate on expanding parking spaces on the court. We will be repairing Overlea Place and possibly several other streets before the end of the year. Please be patient-this is a costly and timely repair.

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Constant Friendship Homeowners Association Newsletter

Spring 2007

- ♦ Sidewalk Replacement: you will notice spray paint marking the damaged areas to be repaired.
- ♦ No, You Can't Park There:
 - ♦ Red Alert: Parking in front of curbs painted red will be considered a parking violation, and the vehicle will be towed at the owner's expense. Areas to be marked will include mailboxes, fire hydrants and narrow points. We must limit some of the parking to ensure emergency vehicles access 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Summer-ize Your House

- ♦ Clear the gutters of leaves and debris.
- ♦ Ensure the clothes dryer hose is lint free.
- ♦ Schedule the water heater for a check up.

Let's Keep It Clean

- ♦ Make sure toys are put away each day.
- ♦ Trash cans, strollers, lawnmowers, chairs, shoes, etc., must not be left in front of your house. Store items in their proper location.
- ♦ Remove yard sale, new baby, missing animal signs, etc. when done with them.
- ♦ Dog owners must pick up after their pets and keep their pets on a leash when off their own property.
- ♦ Be considerate of others. Animal waste is not only a health hazard and attracts rodents but when stepped in will be tracked into your home.

Avoid Late Fees - Pay on Time

- ♦ Homeowners who neglect to pay their monthly fees timely will experience increased late fees and collection costs. The time prior to being referred to a collection attorney has been shortened, liens and foreclosure proceedings will be initiated and attorney fees to collect outstanding debts will be much higher once referred.

- ♦ Those who fail to meet their financial obligation to the community or fail to contact the managers will have no excuse when they have been referred to the attorney for collection.
- ♦ If you have any doubt about your account or are having financial difficulties, please contact the Property Manger. Questions can be answered and payment plans can be arranged.

Report Street Lights Out

The streetlights in the community are paid for by the community and maintained by BGE. If you notice a streetlight not working, please call BGE at 410.685.0123 or 1.800.685.0123, options #1 & #5, 24 hours a day. You can also access their website at www.bge.com.

Children

Do you know where your children are and what they are doing? Take a walk and explore the wooded areas around your home. Many children use these areas as a gathering place. Know what is going on in your community and where your children are playing.

Dryer Fires

Recently there have been several news media reports about clothes dryer malfunctions. Homeowners have called local appliance service departments and spent hundreds of dollars to find out that the dryer vent is blocked with lint or a pesky bird's nest. The blockages can be a serious safety issue. Not only do your clothes not dry, but the lint can ignite from the heat and start a fire. Check your dryer vent yearly. You may consider placing a screen over the vent to prevent a bird's nest.

Smoke Detectors

Every year there are warnings about checking your smoke detector and replacing the batteries. What does this really mean? Let's

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Constant Friendship Homeowners Association Newsletter

Spring 2007

take a look at what else you should consider. More than 80 deaths occur in Maryland homes each year from fire. Most people die from smoke and toxic gases rather than the fire itself. Many never wake up. Most fatal fires happen in residential buildings between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. when most occupants are asleep. Most fire deaths in Maryland could have been prevented. With this in mind, please read on. One in every three homes has inoperable smoke detectors. Batteries should be changed twice a year. Smoke detectors that are 10 years old or more are near the end of their service life and should be replaced. You should clean and vacuum your smoke detector every six months. All but the smallest home need more than one smoke detector. There are two types of smoke detectors, 1) ionization and 2) photoelectric. Each performs its task well but one might be better than the other for certain areas in your home. Smoke detectors use a "noise level" to alert residents. Do you have the detectors positioned correctly and loud enough to wake everyone? Some detectors can be powered by household electrical current and battery back up. Every household should have a fire evacuation plan that is rehearsed. Do you know enough about smoke detectors and fire prevention? If you have any questions go to www.firemarshall.state.md.us or search smoke detectors on the internet.

Pick Up After Your Pets *Please*

Once again the Board is reminding residents to pick up after your pets. It is against the law in Harford County and Constant Friendship HOA regulations to leave behind pet waste. If your pet uses the common area, you must still clean up after your pet. The common area is used by children to play. Please think of them when walking your pet. It is unsanitary, attracts rodents, spreads disease and is a mess on your carpet when tracked in. Your pet is your responsibility.

Common Area Watering

The Board of Directors would like to request that homeowners who live adjacent to a common area consider watering and fertilizing the area that borders your property. This will help the grass get established, reduce erosion and improve the appearance of the area. This small contribution can go a long way to improving the community.

Want More Information?

Check out the Constant Friendship website at www.cfhoa.com. We are updating the look and feel of the website with more current and relevant information. And the bulletin board will remain for your writing and viewing pleasure.

Useful Phone Numbers

You may reach John Strauss, Property Manager for Constant Friendship, at 410.879.8333 or jstrauss@tpsi.com or Elayne Zahn, Assistant Property Manager for Constant Friendship, at 410.838.4600 or ezahn@tpsi.net.

Harford Sanitation Services
410.838.5472

Harford Co. Sheriff (non- emergency)
410.838.6600

Upper Chesapeake Medical Center
410.643.1000

Abingdon Post Office
410.569.0491

Board Meetings are held monthly at Trenton Property Services (TPS), 126 South Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014. Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday of the month and begin at 7:00 pm. If you would like to attend a meeting, please call ahead to our Property Manager to reserve a seat.