



For Board and Committee Meeting Dates, please see calendar on the last page.

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“Listen, can you hear it? Spring's sweet cantata.”

Most of Loft Ridge residents would probably agree that the 2010 spring is more than just welcome. It was anxiously awaited. After three huge snowstorms, we had a record amount of snow this winter season. The sun, warmth, and drivable roads will be such a nice change!

This issue brings you a quarterly update on the HOA's projects and reminders about several important activities: the Annual Meeting, the Annual Inspection, the Easter Egg Hunt, and opportunities to get involved through committee participation. Every one is encouraged to consider helping out with the Association's activities. It is the efforts of people like you that keep our community an attractive and sought-after neighborhood.

We also included information about xeriscaping and yard maintenance, an interesting approach to getting local produce without spending a little fortune, some “green” tips, and how and where you can stretch your dollar. An overview of government services in the area is our way to welcome and help newcomers get oriented in their new home.

Mark Your Calendar For May 26th Annual Meeting

This is your once-a-year opportunity to join your neighbors and:

- Get an update on events in Loft Ridge
- Meet current Board members
- Meet candidates for Board vacancies
- Express your opinions or concerns
- Ask questions
- Volunteer for a Committee
- Meet members of the management team

There will also be:

- A budget review
- Special items to be considered
- Election of new board members
- Updates on facility and ground projects
- Reviews of committees' accomplishments and/or plans
- Other items of special importance to homeowners

All are welcome on May 26th, 2010. Registration starts at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting scheduled from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Mark Twain Middle School in the Lecture Hall.

An annual meeting packet -- including the agenda, the new budget, specific proposals to be considered, and details on items that require residents' participation -- will be mailed to all Loft Ridge homeowners prior to the meeting.

Loft Ridge Projects Update

With warmer weather approaching, it will soon be time to begin work on scheduled maintenance projects throughout Loft Ridge. A major priority will be **street sealing and curb painting**, tentatively planned for the June timeframe. In addition to sealing street cracks and applying a protective overlay on all eleven Loft Ridge streets, yellow curbs will be scraped and repainted, as will parking space tic marks. Also planned during this project is replacement of the damaged **speed bump** next to the Ridge View playground with a more vehicle-friendly speed table, like those located at the Ridge View Drive dip and near Churchman Court.

Sometime in the near future, grounds crews will be onsite to perform the **annual spring cleanup** of our community. Cleanup tasks include removing sand from roads, picking up trash and fallen branches, pruning common area plantings, and replenishing **mulch** throughout the community.

Curb and drainage work will soon be completed in the area next to 5663 Ridge View Drive, in order to address icing problems resulting from drainage of the natural area across multiple parking spaces. Also planned is the planting of ornamental grasses in the adjacent natural area to absorb excess water.

In February 2010 the Fairfax County Office of Stormwater Management briefed the Board and Gypsy Court residents on the status of the **bioretention garden** planned for the area at the end of Gypsy Court. It was learned that the County is ready to move forward on their plans to install the bioretention garden as early as Fall 2010, as well as to finally address the heavy erosion to the **creek** area (across from the tennis courts on Ridge View Drive and behind Churchman Court). More details to follow as they become available.

Spring inspections of exterior properties will begin in the March/April timeframe. Homeowners will be notified by mail of any exterior maintenance violations requiring correction after the conclusion of the inspections, but it is also every homeowner's responsibility to contact Sequoia Management at 703-803-9641 or management@loftridge.com if they haven't received a letter and want to be certain that they have no open violations.

Call for Volunteers for 2010 Annual BBQ and National Night Out

Due to the overwhelming popularity of the National Night Out event in both 2008 and 2009 (no doubt partially due to the presence of a moon bounce!), the Association will be combining our 2010 Annual Barbeque with this year's National Night Out Event, tentatively scheduled for the first week in August.

Originally from Texas, your fellow neighbor and the grill master Carter Mullen is the lead volunteer for the barbeque portion of the event.

He needs your help with picnic tables, BBQ grills, the set up and pot luck items. Please contact Carter at carter58@gmail.com if you're willing to lend your hand.

Keep your eyes out for the date and time as we get closer to the event.

Vehicle Registration in Loft Ridge

As some of you may already know, the Board is considering plans for the registration of all Loft Ridge vehicles. Registering vehicles and requiring identification tags would provide many benefits, including:

- (1) making it easier to identify vehicles that do not belong in Loft Ridge (such as those belonging to teenagers using our common areas for illegal activities, or to someone scouting the neighborhood for cars or homes to break into);
- (2) ensuring that all vehicles in Loft Ridge are in good working order; and
- (3) ensuring that all vehicles parking long term in Loft Ridge actually belong to Loft Ridge residents.

The Board has been investigating various options already in use by other HOAs in Northern Virginia, and will be scheduling the matter for discussion at the Annual Meeting on May 26th. Stay tuned or come to one of the monthly Board meetings for further details!

4th Annual Loft Ridge Easter Egg Hunt

SAVE THE DATE!
Saturday, March 27th at 10 a.m. at the Tennis Courts

Rain Date: Sunday, March 28th at 2 p.m.

The Loft Ridge Moms' Group invites the entire community to attend this fun activity, whether you have kids or are a kid at heart.

There will be a toddler hunt area for kids zero to three years or at parent's discretion, and a big kid's hunt area for the older kids.

This year we will try to focus on being eco-friendly, thus there will be no flyers at your doorsteps to remind you of this event. So, mark your calendars now!

The food provided will center on breakfast item foods, i.e., doughnuts, muffins, breakfast casseroles, fruit, juice boxes, and coffee/tea for adults.

Anyone interested in organizing games or crafts for the kids or donating food items, is encouraged to get in touch with the event organizer, Christina Lyster by email at christinalyster@yahoo.com

Call to Arms!

Actually – it is just a call to service. Every year an opportunity arises for each of us to decide when we can make a commitment to join a formal group of our neighbors who are responsible for trying to make things better – for ourselves as well as for the community. We call that group the Association's Board of Directors.

If you have never served on the Board, please consider taking your turn for this important community function. It is not a full-time position and there are no special skills required other than your willingness to contribute. All you need to do is make an effort to understand the items presented, join your fellow Board members once a month to review the details, and then vote the way you think best benefits the community.

The only way good things happen in the community is when good people step up and make them happen. Take a chance and give the community the benefit of your of participation.

For details on how to be nominated, what the process is and where to get a form, go to www.loftridge.com and click on Nominating Committee listed on the left hand side. If you have a question you would like to discuss, check with the committee chair or contact any current or past Board member.

2010 Annual Home Inspection

Depending on the weather, inspections of all 284 Loft Ridge properties are scheduled to begin in April. These inspections are based on a standard list of exterior items identified as requiring regular maintenance, and have proven to be one of the best means available for maintaining the overall appearance of our community and improving property values.

There are still some homes with violations outstanding from last year. Inspections of homes with prior year violations will be conducted in early March.

For questions regarding annual inspections, please contact Kathi Cahall, the ACC chair, at accchair@loftridge.com, the HOA Board at board@loftridge.com, or Sequoia Management at management@loftridge.com.

Xeriscaping? Xeriscaping!

You've just come home from a long week of work. It is late Friday night, and you're looking forward to a relaxing weekend. But wait -- your work isn't done yet. A thirsty or overgrown yard demands your attention. Homeowners with even small lawns need to water and mow frequently, especially during the hot summer months. Watering and mowing are only the most visible requirements. Fertilizers keep lawns green and pesticides help get rid of pests.

Is there an alternative to keep your yard looking charming without the chores? Yes. **Xeriscaping is a landscaping technique** that employs low-maintenance plants to reduce the water, time, and money spent on maintaining an attractive landscape. In arid states like Colorado, Utah, and Arizona, xeriscaping uses plants naturally adapted for dry climates. Instead of a fragile layer of grass, many residents decorate their yards with hardy native ornamentals that don't require as much watering or mowing. Perennials are ideal, since they need to be planted only once and develop deep roots protected from full sunlight and dry winds. The same approach works in Virginia, by selecting plants adapted to our more temperate climate.

If you decide to xeriscape your yard, there are many choices for Virginia's climate. Perennials like sage, mint, purple coneflower and phlox can cover sunny areas. Spreading mulch around individual plants will retain water around the roots, giving a professional look and preventing weeds. Mulching is essential to xeriscaping, since it conserves water lost from evaporation. The City of Alexandria's mulch site at 4215 Eisenhower Avenue provides free mulch during summer, see <http://alexandriava.gov/YardWaste>.

Yew, arborvitae, lavender or rosemary bushes can be shaped as a living fence while reducing the need to water and mow small areas. Native prairies once covered large areas of the great plains, and you can introduce a bit of these native landscapes into your yard. An established prairie garden requires no mowing and only minimal watering. In a few seasons, the roots of perennial grasses will grow deep enough to require only rain. You can tailor a prairie garden to take the size and shape for your yard with commercially available prairie seed mixes. Low-growing blends specialized for small plots will remain short, and flowering blends will also provide nectar plants for butterflies.

Want to xeriscape your yard? There are three easy steps: get brainy, get picky, and get dirty! First, educate yourself about what the best plan is for your yard. Research which plants will thrive in your yard, depending on how much sunlight it receives. Check the Fairfax County website for recommended plants in our area <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/PARKS/gsqp/gardening.htm>. Make a list of plants to give yourself many options.

Next, choose which plants you want, how many, and where to plant them. Before planting a single root or seed, you can develop a winning plan electronically. Take digital pictures of your yard, and place them in a Word document. Next, draw the areas where you'd like plants, along with the specific types. This will help both you and the HOA ACC understand what to expect. This step is critical because permanent landscape changes require ACC approval. The ACC request for change or addition form (http://www.loftridge.com/hoalInfo/ACC/LoftRidge_ACC_RequestAddChange.pdf) can be submitted electronically along with your annotated digital picture or yard map.

Last, after your plan gets approved, grab your shovel and make your plan a reality. Or, those who prefer a truly low-maintenance yard can also hire a contractor.

After these three steps, you could be the next person to swap your lawn mower for a lawn chair!

Yard Inspection Committee Calls for Your Help

Early last fall the Board approved the creation of a new committee: the Yard Inspection Committee. Acting on a suggestion from the current ACC at that time, the Board created this committee to assist them with more frequent inspections that were deemed necessary. It is hoped this will allow better response to homeowners' concerns about landscaping violations throughout the community. Also, it is thought that the residents give suggestions about language changes or additions to the handbook for Board consideration. The committee is just in its infancy, and is in desperate need of volunteers as it attempts to get rolling and better define itself.

If you think you might be interested in volunteering to help the committee, Kevin Johnson has volunteered to be the Board liaison and is currently looking for committee members. He can be reached via email at kpj104@gmail.com or by phone 703-960-5810. Please contact Kevin with any questions about the committee.

Can I Have a Yard Sale?

Yes, but there are specific HOA guidelines that every Loft Ridge homeowner must follow for having a yard sale, including having at least five of your neighbors join the event, getting Board approval, designating a person in charge of the event, and holding the sale in the designated common area.

The summer is just around the corner! Check out details on having a yard sale in Loft Ridge online at <http://www.loftridge.com/loftRidgeInfo/Yard%20Sale.htm>



Loft Ridge Orientation 101

For those of you who are new to the neighborhood, here's a list of local government services to help get you oriented. We hope you find this information helpful!

Elected Officials and Voting

- US House of Representatives - JIM MORAN
- US Senate - JAMES H. WEBB, JR.; MARK R. WARNER
- Virginia House of Delegates - MARK D SICKLES
- Virginia State Senate - GEORGE L. BARKER
- Board of Supervisors Chairman - SHARON BULOVA
- District – LEE and District Supervisor - JEFFERY C. MCKAY
- District School Board Member - BRAD CENTER
- School Board Member at Large - ILRYONG MOON
- School Board Member at Large - MARTINA A. HONE
- School Board Member at Large - JAMES L. RANEY
- Voting Precinct - CLERMONT (423)
- Polling Place - CLERMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 5720 CLERMONT DR

Public Safety (Name, Address, and Approximate Distance)

- Police District Station - FRANCONIA PD, 6121 FRANCONIA RD (2.74 mi.)
- Fire Station - FIRE STATION 05 FRANCONIA, 6300 BEULAH ST (2.67 mi.)
- Hospitals
 - ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL, 4320 SEMINARY RD (1.75 mi.)
 - JEFFERSON MEM. HOSPITAL (3.01 mi.)

Public Services

- Schools
 - Elementary School - CLERMONT, 5720 CLERMONT DR
 - Middle School - TWAIN, 4700 FRANCONIA RD
 - High School - EDISON, 5801 FRANCONIA RD
- Libraries
 - JOHN MARSHALL LIBRARY, 6209 ROSE HILL DR
 - MARTHA WASHINGTON LIBRARY, 6614 FORT HUNT RD
- Post Offices
 - JEFFERSON MANOR PO, 5834C N KINGS HW (22303 mail pickup)
 - FRANCONIA PO, 5221 FRANCONIA ROAD (22310 mail pickup and closest for mailing)
- Recreation Centers
 - LEE DISTRICT REC CENTER, 6601 TELEGRAPH ROAD
 - MOUNT VERNON REC CENTER, 2017 BELLE VIEW BOULEVARD

How to Haggle With The Best Of 'Em

We continue publishing some practical tips on how to ask for the best price on various items. Check out the 2009 winter edition of the Lime Light for the first few suggestions.

- **Online purchases**

Consider this: You can't haggle online. But there are Web sites (such as www.shopzilla.com, www.froogle.com, and www.nextag.com) that track and compare Internet prices for products and direct you to the best bargains. They also rate the sellers based on customer reviews.

Try this: To lower the price even further, call a regular store that stocks the product and ask that store to match the best price you saw advertised online. They will likely drop the price to beat another reputable dealer. You can find a list of authorized dealers by contacting the product's manufacturer or, in many cases, just going to the manufacturer's website.

- **A cell phone**

Consider this: Your opportunity to haggle over cell phone minutes and features isn't when you're signing up for a new plan. You'll start getting sales calls a couple of months before your contract runs out, but don't bite.

Try this: Wait until your contract is about to run out, then call the company's customer service department. Their job is to keep you in the fold, and they'll probably throw some extras your way to do it. Tell them exactly what you want in terms of a new phone, minutes and features, based on research you have done about what other companies are offering, and they may stretch the rules to get you to renew. It is always worth talking to a supervisor if others can't help.

Great Deals on Kids Clothes and Toys at Area Consignment Sales!

Every spring, area churches have huge consignment sales on kids clothing, toys, books, and baby equipment. You can get great deals on infant and children's clothing, baby layettes, strollers, bikes, cribs, car seats, toys, games, puzzles, art supplies, infant slings, high chairs and much, much more! Here are a few upcoming sales:

Moms of Mantua Consignment Sale at the Mantua Swim and Tennis Club, 9330 Pentland Place, Fairfax on Saturday, March 13th from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Calvary Road Baptist Church Consignment Sale at 6811 Beulah St., Alexandria on Saturday, March 13th from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. For details or to register as a consignor, visit www.crb.org/consignment.htm.

Cameron United Methodists Women's & Children Consignment Sale on the corner of Telegraph Rd. and Franconia Rd. on March 26th from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on March 27th from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information or to register as a consignor, contact Nancy Owens at CUMC.UMW.CCS@gmail.com.

Annandale United Methodist Church Consignment Sale at 6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale on Saturday, April 24th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information or to register as a consignor, contact Amanda Aguilera at 703-642-2696 or amandaaguilera1@verizon.net.

Save Our Bay – Skip the Spring Fertilizer

While many of us think spring is the best time to start fertilizing our lawns, fall is actually the time of year when cool season grasses benefit most from fertilization. Heavy spring rains wash fertilizers off our lawns and into local waterways, where they can fuel the growth of algae that harms fish and blue crabs.

You can replace traditional springtime fertilizing with "grasscycling," or leaving leftover grass clippings on your lawn after mowing. Grass clippings are a natural fertilizer that can reduce 25 to 50 percent of your lawn's nitrogen needs. Leaving grass clippings on your lawn also reduces bags needed to collect yard waste. For more information, go to the Chesapeake Bay Program's website at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/inyourbackyard.aspx?menuitem=16888>

Is A CSA Right For Your Family?

If your family eats a lot of produce and is interested in saving money while helping the environment, joining a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) cooperative may be a good option. CSA co-ops allow members to purchase a share in a local farmer's crop. In exchange, members receive an allotment of that farmer's crop on a weekly basis throughout the growing season. Produce changes from week-to-week, as crops become ready for harvest. A benefit to CSA co-op membership is fresh produce, often at lower prices than those in grocery stores. A benefit to the environment is reduced shipping and packaging, and because many CSA farms use organic practices, may also include a reduction in pesticides, fertilizers, etc. being introduced into the environment.

When deciding if a CSA is right for your family, consider how much and what type of produce your family eats. Different farms specialize in different crops. Consider whether you have room to store extra produce. You may also want to consider splitting a "share" with a neighbor. Several families in Loft Ridge already split shares. Some CSAs deliver to your door, others ask that you pick up produce from a nearby parking lot. For example, one CSA delivers on Fridays near the King Street Metro. These are all factors to consider when selecting a CSA. To get you started, here is a list of just a few of the CSA co-ops in this area:

Blue Ridge Center CSA Farm

Blue Ridge Center CSA Farm offers weekly shares from June through October
Contact Person: Allan Balliet
Location: 11661 Harpers Ferry Road, Purcellville, VA 20132
Phone Number: (540) 668-7640
Website: www.blueridgecenter.org
Area Served: Pick up your share of fresh, delicious veggies at the farm, or at one of several drop sites in NoVA and DC area.

Great Country Farms

Members receive a produce basket filled with seasonal fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs delivered each week during the growing season. U-pick items are available most weekends and are most often unlimited for CSA members. Full shares are delivered in two half bushel baskets to make splitting with a friend easy.
Contact Person: Mark & Kate Zurschmeide
Location: Foggy Bottom Road, Bluemont, VA 20135
Phone Number: (540) 554-2073
Fax Number: (540) 554-2074
Website: www.greatcountryfarms.com
Area Served: Northern Virginia

Clagett Farm

Each week, from mid-May to mid-November. All you need to do is come to your pick-up site and take your portion of that harvest. In addition, you are welcome to come to your farm at any time to visit, to help, or to harvest as much as you want from the items on our you-pick list. The you-pick list might include flowers, herbs, and any vegetables we have in abundance, such as tomatoes or collard greens.
Contact Person: Carrie Cochran and Lara Handler
Location: 11904 Old Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Phone Number: (301) 627-4662
Website: www.clagettfarm.org
Area Served: Washington, DC & Prince George's County, MD

Bull Run Mountain Organic Farm

Bull Run Mountain Organic Farm CSA features vegetables, flowers and honey. Consumers can choose between a garden share, a two-person share or a family share. A flower share is also available and consists of a customized bouquet per week from mid-July to October.
Contact Person: Leigh Hauter
Location: 4360 Highpoint Lane, The Plains, VA 20198
Phone Number: (703) 754-4005
Website: www.bullrunfarm.com
Area Served: Washington, DC and Northern Virginia

Potomac Vegetable Farms

Potomac Vegetable Farms is in Vienna. Members can buy single or double shares, and receive a discount on pick-your-own-berries. Flower and egg shares are also available. Shares can be picked up in North Arlington and Falls Church from June through October.
Contact Person: Hiu Newcomb
Location: 9627 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, VA 22182
Phone Number: (703) 759-2119
Website: www.potomacvegetablefarms.com
Area Served: Washington DC Metro area and Northern Virginia.

Graceland Farm

Sells organic produce, herbs and perennial plants.
Contact Person: John & Kristin Wright
Location: 5308 Germantown Road, Midland, VA 22728
Phone Number: (540) 439-8171
Website: www.gracelandmidland.com
Area Served: Delivery spots include Dale City, Manassas, Nokesville, Montclair, Vienna, Fairfax, Falls Church, Arlington, and Alexandria, Herndon, Chantilly and South Riding, Virginia.

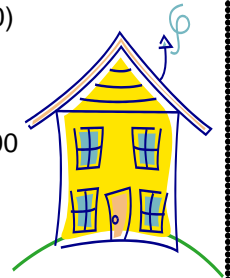
Loft Ridge Real Estate Update (listed between November 2009 – February 2010)

Sold

5684 Medallion Court - \$338,990
 5700 Ridge View Drive - \$415,00
 5631 Ridge View Drive (end unit) - \$438,000

For Sale

5738 Evergreen Knoll Court - \$335,000
 5720 Lofthill Court - \$400,000



Information provided by Metropolitan Regional Information Systems.

Daylight Saving Time



Spring forward! Daylight saving time begins Sunday, March 14th this year. Turn clocks ahead one hour before you go to bed on **Saturday, March 13th**.

Do not think of the hour of sleep you'll lose, but rather of extra hour of sunlight you'll enjoy from here into November!

Did You Know...

...that there are many locations in the area that accept and recycle used electronics?



Check out details at the Fairfax County website
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/mat-comp-locations.htm>

Thank You!

Big snowfalls hit the Washington Area!

Loft Ridge residents show concern for their elderly neighbors! The flowers will soon be up, the birds are chirping, and THE snow of December and January will be long forgotten. Not forgotten, though, will be the collective efforts of our neighbors. Several neighbors unasked took turns shoveling our walk and steps. For this, we are very appreciative.

Thank you to those involved.

Ruby and Gerry Grant
 5724 Lofthill Court

Contributing Editors

Our special thank you to residents who have helped in the writing and editing of this issue of the Loft Ridge Limelight:

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Norma Hughes	Kevin Johnson
Mary Kelly	Bob Lucas
Christina Lyster	Adam Marcetich
Luba Mullen	Nancy Schoenig
Lisa Staresina	Peggy Thompson

For Upcoming Events.....

...check www.loftridge.com. As of publication time, the following HOA events have been scheduled:

Board Meetings:

Wednesday, March 24th
 Wednesday, April 28th
 Wednesday, May 19th
 Mark Twain Middle School

Annual Meeting:

Wednesday, May 26th
 Mark Twain Middle School, Lecture Hall

ACC Meetings:

Check website for dates and locations!

Communications Committee Meetings:

Tuesday, March 9th, 7:30 pm
 Tuesday, April 13th, 7:30 pm
 Tuesday, May 11th, 7:30 pm
 Check website for locations!