



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

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The Summer Spectacular

This issue brings updates on the recent Association activities, important summer safety reminders, and announcements about upcoming HOA and community events. We also included some ideas about how to have fun without breaking the bank, tips for keeping your pets cool in the hot weather and attracting butterflies to your garden. Enjoy your summer spectacular!

May 27th Annual Meeting Recap

On Wednesday, May 19th many neighbors from Loft Ridge gathered at Mark Twain Middle School to attend the Annual Meeting of the membership. Attendance was high and a heartfelt Thank You goes out to all those who were able to participate while those neighbors unable to make it to the meeting were missed.

The meeting included a recap of the projects from the past year completed by the Board with the help of the wonderful and dedicated volunteers of the community. Some of the projects mentioned included the completion of the irrigation systems down Ridge View Drive and at the tennis court area, as well as on Evergreen Knoll and Lofthill Court. Other projects included sidewalk repair, a curb and asphalt grading fix to eliminate icing problems along a stretch of Ridge View Drive and work with the county to establish bio-retention at the end of Gypsy Court and to control erosion behind Churchman.

The treasurer gave his report on the budget announcing dues would stay steady for the fiscal year of 2011, which starts on July 1st. The ACC and the Communications Committee gave their respective reports to the community on the past year's activities, including the ACC working to submit new language to the handbook as well as the Communication Committee's work on a new welcoming packet.

Voting commenced, and while the ballots were counted, community members shared tasty snacks provided for all in attendance. After the break, the Board presented information regarding parking guidelines. Overall the membership thought there were very few parking problems in the community, and felt that if we make honest attempts at courtesy with our neighbors most issues can be avoided. At this point in time there is no plan to change current parking procedures and guidelines in the community.

Finally, the votes were tallied and the community as whole welcomed two new Board members, Damon Blanton and Judy Markowski, into their new positions at the same time thanking the outgoing Board members Jason Kramer and Nancy Schoenig for their years of service and dedication in making this community one of the best places to live in Northern Virginia.

Loft Ridge Projects Update

Grounds crews have completed the annual **cleanup and mulching** of our community, and are on a 7-10 day mowing schedule from now until November. Also completed in April was an environmentally-friendly **weed treatment** and **seeding** of common area grass to take advantage of spring rain. During the course of the summer and fall three fertilization treatments and aeration of soil will follow.

Sod and grass repair continues. If you have areas near your house that need sod and seeding and you're willing to water through the hot summer months, please email the Board at board@loftridge.com.

Street sealing of all 11 Loft Ridge streets to repair cracks and protect pavement is scheduled for June. Road crews will need complete access to each street, so all cars must be moved on the day your street is scheduled for maintenance. (Work will be staggered between streets and different sides of the community to avoid problems from scheduling too many adjacent streets at the same time). A detailed work schedule with exact dates and times for each street will be distributed to residents in the near future.

Proposals to replace deteriorating **split rail fencing** at the tennis courts and throughout the community are currently being considered. Work is expected to take place later this summer.

Tree pruning and removals were completed in February and May. Another round will take place in September or October, so if you're aware of any dead trees or damaged limbs to common area trees, please email board@loftridge.com.

Landscaping continues throughout the community, focusing on high-profile areas such as the community entrances on Cannon Lane and Ridge View Drive. Our landscaping budget is limited, but if you know of an area that needs landscaping and are willing to help out with planting or watering so our landscaping dollars go farther, please email board@loftridge.com.

Planning an Event in the Loft Ridge Common Area?

Whether it is a birthday party in the open area behind your house, fireworks on the 4th of July or a barbeque at the tennis courts, your first step should be to contact the Association and let us know of your plans.

This will not only avoid scheduling conflicts between different events, but will protect the Association from unnecessary lawsuits and other potential problems that can result from unauthorized activities if they involve community common area.

Please feel free to email the HOA Board at board@loftridge.com for more information.

Did You Know...

that the best thing to do if you come across a young bird that is old enough to leave its nest but is too young to fly is to leave it alone?

In the majority of cases, there is nothing wrong with it and although the parents aren't visible, they are nearby caring and feeding it along with their other fledglings.



How To Create Your Very Own Butterfly Garden

There are over a hundred species of butterflies in Northern Virginia. Many of them can be encouraged to call your yard home with a little planning ahead of time. Below are some basic things to keep in mind if you want to attract the maximum number of butterflies.

- **Avoid using pesticides and herbicides.** Butterflies are insects and so are obviously very susceptible to them.

- **Shelter.** Provide some protection from the wind. Gardens planted without something acting as a windbreak will not get as many butterflies.

- **Plant for continuous blooms.** Butterflies need to feed from spring through fall. A burst of flowers will only keep them around for that short period of time. A succession of blooms will keep different species around the whole growing season. Deadheading (cutting off of spent blooms) will keep many plants re-blooming.

- **Locate your garden in a sunny spot.** A sunny location allows the butterflies to warm up and allows for a better diversity of blooming plants. Many plants bloom better with more sunlight, so an area receiving at least 5-6 hours of sun is preferable.

The following are **favorite butterfly nectar sources** in Northern Virginia - Asters, Blazing Star, Butterfly Bush, Butterfly Weed, Button Bush, Coreopsis, Cupplant, Dogbane, Fleabane, Goldenrods, Lantana, Mistflower, Monarda, Oxeye Sunflower, Purple Coneflower, Rudbeckias, Swamp Milkweed, Thistle, Wild Blue Phlox, Verbena and Zinnias.



Enjoy the Summer Without Breaking the Bank

With the economy still recovering, it is only prudent to continue being cautious about your spending habits. Consider the following ideas for having fun on a limited budget:

At home

- Have a Backyard BBQ – Cook something that you have never prepared before.
- Cook something new together – Find a recipe that your whole family will enjoy and split up all the duties, working together and creating a family meal where everyone can take credit.
- Have an Indoor Picnic – Why deal with all the bugs and people when you can have a fun picnic in your living room?
- Go camping - you can set up a tent in your yard for a night, set up a campsite inside your home or check out area campgrounds.

In the Area

- Have a Picnic in the Park – Fairfax County has a great number of parks from which choose; spend an afternoon with your loved ones on a blanket in the sun.
- Take a Hike – Northern Virginia offers a wide variety of hiking trails. Visit Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.
- Visit a Museum – Washington, DC is home to the wonderful Smithsonian museums that are free for public. Or better yet, experience history and enjoy lovely weather at the Manassas National Battlefield Park.
- Take a walking tour of Old Towne in Alexandria or visit the grounds of Arlington National Cemetery.
- Visit the Three Houses of Government.
- Watch the Animals at the National Zoo.
- Visit National Harbor.
- Go to a free performance at the Kennedy Center.
- Explore the beautiful grounds of the National Cathedral, the sixth largest cathedral in the world, and then take a Gargoyle Tour.
- Walk among living butterflies at the National Museum of Natural History's Butterfly Pavilion or stop at the National Arboretum.

Quick Tips for Pet Owners To Keep Pets Cool During Summer

Thousands of pets die needlessly every summer from overexposure to heat. Learn how to protect your pets from this easy-to-prevent killer.

- **Watch for signs of heat stroke.** Call your veterinarian if you think your pet has heat stroke.



Signs

- Rapid panting
- Lots of drooling
- Hot skin
- Twitching muscles
- Vomiting and dazed look

First Aid

- Wrap in towel soaked with cool water
- Place in a bathtub with cool water
- Pour cool water over the pet
- Put ice-packs on the animal's head

- **Provide plenty of fresh water.** Dogs sweat by panting and through the pads of their feet which helps lower their body temperature. Since pets that are sensitive to heat may run low on fluids, you need to watch for dehydration. A quick test is to gently pinch the area between the shoulder blades. The skin should snap back into its usual position when you let go. Skin that stays in the pinched position for three to five seconds is a sign that your pet is dehydrated, and you will need to call your vet right away.
- **Save the walks for evening time.** Sensitive paws burn easily on hot pavements and at beaches.
- **Watch out for sunburn.** Water, sand and rock at the beach reflect sunlight and are a source of sunburn for your pet. Shorthaired pets and those with pink skin or white hair are more susceptible to burning. Limit time in the sun and provide shade.
- **Watch eating and exercise habits.** Give your pet less food during extremely hot weather. Avoid exercise or vigorous activity during the hottest part of the day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Never leave your pet in a parked car.** When the temperature outside reaches 86F, the temperature inside a car can reach 122F within minutes – even with the window open slightly or parked in the shade. This is extremely dangerous to your pet! Although your pet may want to come with you, it is much kinder to leave him or her at home with plenty of fresh cool water and shade.

Help Keep Loft Ridge Green!

As it gets hotter and dry conditions begin, consider helping water small trees and shrubs in the common areas to help them make it through the summer.

Some homeowners do water and that not only keeps the community looking good but adds to the value of the area near them.

Such efforts are always appreciated!



Did You Know...

that Kingstowne Farmers Market is open every Friday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. from May 7th to October 29th?

It is located at the Kingstowne Town Center behind Sunoco Gas Station and in front of Giant. For other information about this and other farmers markets in Fairfax County, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/wp-farm-mkt.htm#schedule or call 703-642-0128, TTY 703-803-3354.



HOA Annual Inspections Update

Scheduled for early this summer, all properties with identified repairs or maintenance issues should have received a letter from management indicating what exterior maintenance items should be addressed. This letter again details the more stringent violations enforcement policy established in 2008, which applies violations assessments to unresolved prior-year violations and offers homeowners the opportunity for a hearing to discuss their violations and assessments.

If you did not receive a letter but wish to make certain there are no pending violations for your property, please email management@lofridge.com and include your name and Loft Ridge address (unfortunately, our attorney has advised not to send "No Violations" letters, in the event a violation is inadvertently omitted and a homeowner uses the "No Violations" letter to claim that the violation was approved by omission).

Homeowners receiving 2010 exterior maintenance letters may see one of the following:

1. Yard and landscaping violations with a 30-day deadline to make corrections;
2. Structural violations with a 90-day deadline for making repairs and/or corrections;
3. A list of 2009 violations, asking for immediate correction, offering the homeowner the chance for a hearing and reminding homeowners that violation assessments will be charged against unresolved 2009 violations.

Follow-up landscaping and yard inspections will be underway in the near future, and follow-up inspections to check the status of structural violations will take place in the Fall. After the second round of follow-up inspections, homeowners with unresolved violations will receive a letter from management notifying them of the open status of their ongoing violations and any potential actions that may be taken by the Association. As always, if you have any questions about the inspection process or something you were cited for, please email management@lofridge.com.

Why did I get a violation notice for something I've already corrected?

For example, you may receive a violation stating that your fence needs to be cleaned, and you might wonder why, since you just recently power-washed it. The reason is most likely that the inspection occurred before you power-washed your fence. There is a certain amount of time between inspections and the generation of letters and sometimes a homeowner may receive a violation for something that has been corrected in the meantime. If this happens, notify management immediately by phone at 703-803-9641 or email at management@lofridge.com and list the violation that has been corrected.

Why did I get a violations notice when my neighbor has several violations that aren't getting fixed?

This is a commonly asked question, and the answer is simple: please don't assume that because you see open or ongoing violations on another property that they haven't been cited or the Association is not working to get them resolved. It is ongoing violations such as these that led to the more stringent policy for getting violations resolved, and the Association is doing everything it can to get these addressed so property values continue to rise and remain as high as possible. Additionally, the Board, ACC, and management have gone to great lengths to ensure that violations are cited consistently, so rest assured that if you've been cited for a particular violation, so should everyone else with the same issue!

After you've corrected any violations, it is helpful to notify management that you have done so. Please be specific about the violations you've corrected. This information is placed in your file and is helpful to ACC members when conducting follow-up inspections.

Pet Waste Alert

Please remember to pick up after your pet!

Treat your walking area the same as you treat your front lawn. Pet waste isn't just stinky when stuck to the bottom of your shoe; it can spread disease if not properly disposed of and can harm our youngsters.

Please use one of the three dog waste stations or trash cans located throughout the community.

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 and 2010 spring editions of the Lime Light for other suggestions.

- **Uncovered repairs**

Consider this: Companies don't always charge for repairs after the warranty has expired. Common problems might not require a recall but may be so prevalent that a company will fix the glitch for free.

Try this: Enter the full name of the product (i.e. "Brand X digital camera M16") and the problem (i.e. "cracked view screen") into a search engine to find chat rooms where people have discussed similar troubles and learn what the company has done for them. Call the returns department, not customer service, to talk to someone who can authorize a free repair or a replacement. Tell them you're loyal to the brand, but that you've seen online evidence of widespread issues with the product.

- **Home repairs and improvements**

Consider this: Comparing bids from several contractors will give you some leverage with the one you'd like to hire.

Try this: Get three to five bids, and be clear about the products you want to use. If your preferred contractor is at the high end, say so and offer to show him the other bids. He may adjust his price. When hiring a plumber or a tradesman for a small job, ask him to break down his price into labor and materials. About 35 percent should be materials and 65 percent labor. If the ratio seems wrong, say so. But be diplomatic. If you squeeze him too hard, he might give you less than first-class workmanship and use less expensive materials.

BBQ Safety Reminders

The combination of hot, dry days and BBQs can sometimes have a lethal outcome. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Keep charcoal grills far enough away from your home or other combustibles so that an adequate amount of air can circulate.
- Charcoal must be kept dry and spare propane bottles should be stored outside and away from your home.
- Dispose of grill ashes and/or charcoal in a safe fashion. Never place hot ashes in paper or plastic bags or containers.
- Keep children away from the grill. Grills continue to give off heat long after the cooking has stopped.
- Have a back-up plan – keep a fire extinguisher close by.



Also, with a prior ACC approval, you can install a permanent grill which must be placed in the rear of your house, within the fence line and as far as practical from the adjacent property lines.

Enjoy the summer and stay safe.

Did you know...



that the Lee District Park is building the Accessible Treehouse? Scheduled to open in the summer 2011, the new attraction will make a visit to the park enjoyable for everyone in the extended family. The tree house will overlook the 79 acre forest offering panoramic views that change throughout the seasons. Long, wide, gently graded ramps will allow all kids to dream fanciful games up in the trees. Call the park at 703-922-9841 for project details.

Independence Day Celebration

For many people celebrating the Fourth of July means fireworks. If your celebration plans include fireworks, please remember that under Virginia law (Code of Virginia, Ch. 9, Sec. 27-94 *et seq.*) only certain types of fireworks are permitted for consumer use:



Permitted

- Sparklers
- Fountains
- Pinwheels
- Whirligigs
- Pharaoh's serpents

Prohibited

- Firecrackers
- Skyrockets
- Torpedoes
- Any fireworks traveling laterally, rising into the air, or firing projectiles into the air

Under Loft Ridge HOA rules (Resolution 20), "fireworks, candles, torches or any similar flammable devices in the common [area] must be managed responsibly, under adult supervision at all times, and disposed of properly. Anyone who knowingly or with negligence violates this Resolution can have fines imposed and their rights for the use of the common area suspended." As with any event in the common area, you must obtain permission from the Association before having a 4th of July party or putting on a fireworks show.

The Nation Council of Fireworks Safety (www.fireworksafety.com) also reminds that responsible firework management and disposal means:

- Fireworks should be ignited only by sober adults.
- Children should never be allowed to handle exploded or unexploded fireworks.
- Fireworks should never be ignited indoors.
- Fireworks should be ignited away from trees and houses, in an area free from dry trees, grass and other flammable debris.
- Use a shooting box, wooden board or other hard, flat surface for igniting fireworks
- Fireworks should be kept 20 feet from spectators.
- A hose and/or fire extinguisher should be "on-standby" while fireworks are being ignited.
- Spent fireworks and "duds" should be placed into a nearby bucket of water, and allowed to become completely wet before disposal in the trash.
- Use safety glasses and punks while lighting fireworks.
- Never combine or modify commercial fireworks.
- Never use "homemade" fireworks.

Attention: Noise Pollution!



Summer is a great time to enjoy parties and get-togethers on our patios but they can be noisy. Other summer activities such as skate boarding, rollerblading, ball playing can also result in a lot of noise.

Remember your neighbors and be mindful of the noise.

Elderly people, small children and those with illnesses may be sleeping early and excessive noise is frustrating and can be an irritant to some homeowners.

Have fun this Fourth of July but be safe and responsible. Your family and neighbors are depending on you!

Did You Know...

that the Washington, D.C. area has hundreds of miles of interconnected off-street trails and on-street bike routes? Check out a guide to recreational bicycle trails in Fairfax County at

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/bikes2a



Loft Ridge Real Estate Update

(sold between February 2010 – April 2010)

Evergreen Knoll Court - \$330,000

Lofthill Court - \$397,000

Information provided by Metropolitan Regional Information Systems.



Mark Your Calendar for 2010 Annual Loft Ridge BBQ and National Night Out

What: These two popular community events are being combined into one. Join your neighbors to meet our Lee District Supervisor and members of the Fairfax County police department, and to enjoy snacks, a pot luck, and a BBQ. Bring your kids to play games, a moon-bounce and more!

When: Tuesday, August 3rd from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. (TBC)



Where: The Association's common area near the tennis courts.

- Do you have an easy recipe of a cool summer dish that's your family's favorite?
- Can you lend your picnic table or chairs for a few hours?
- Do you have an hour to spare to help set up and/or clean up the area?
- Have ideas for fun games for kids?

If you answered yes to any of these questions or have ideas for helping make the event a success, please contact Carter Mullen, your neighbor who leads this year's volunteer effort, at carter58@gmail.com.

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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| Mary Kelly | Gloria Kupstas |
| Bob Lucas | Adam Marcetich |
| Carter and 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, June 23rd, 7:30 pm
Wednesday, July 28th, 7:30 pm
Wednesday, August 26th, 7:30 pm
Mark Twain Middle School

ACC Meetings:

Wednesday, June 9th 7:30 pm
5757 Ridge View Drive
Wednesday, July 14th 7:30 pm
5703 Gladden Court

Communications Committee Meetings:

Tuesday, June 8th, 7:30 pm
4406 Churchman Court
Tuesday, July 13th, 7:30 pm
5730 Lofthill Court