



LVCA NEWS

Newsletter 20

Fall Edition



LVCA BOARD

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703-641-9477, jbrace@wizard.net

Mary Jo Kellgren, Vice-President
703-795-1642, tangomjk@aol.com

Mary McFadden, President
703-560-1555, mmcfadden1@cox.net

Joaquín Tremols, At-Large
703-876-0313, Joaquin.Tremols@usda.gov

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Linda Witham, ACC/Grounds
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Linda Boone, Finance
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Pam Paroline, Neighborhood Watch
703-876-5639, pparoline@infantadopt.org

OTHER NUMBERS

Police Emergency: 911

Police Non-Emergency: 703-691-2131

Community Towing: 703-730-1177

ARMSTRONG MANAGEMENT

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KEEP FOR REFERENCE

NEWSLETTER HITS THE 21ST CENTURY

Yes, this is your last hard copy newsletter! In order to bring you the news more often, but without wasting more trees, the newsletter will now be issued in an electronic format. The good news? You will receive your colorful monthly newsletter the first week of each month. The bad news? None! You can opt to receive the newsletter by email, or be notified when the newsletter has been posted to the web-site. **IMPORTANT:** In order for this to work, you must send your preferred email address to dinoia@cox.net.

A limited number of hard copies will be made available to those who do not have email/internet access at work or at home. They will be available in a mailbox (to be installed) outside the entrance to the pool house.

2004 LVCA HALLOWEEN PARADE AND PARTY



The Halloween Parade on October 31st was a huge success! All of our princesses, football players, cheer leaders, witches, knights and even a tiny pea-in-the-pod paraded from the pool to the Tot Lot. We all had a wonderful Halloween feast and the children played together for about an hour on this gorgeous fall afternoon. Thank you to everyone who partici-

pated in this event. And a special thank you to Linda Witham and Laurie Bruckner for their delicious treats!

BOARD MEETING DATES THROUGH SUMMER 2005

The Board will continue to meet at Woodburn Elementary School, at 3401 Hemlock Drive in Falls Church. However, the meetings will be held on the 4th Thursday as the 4th Wednesday was not available. The board hopes to see you there! Note: There will not be a December meeting!

January 27, 2005
February 24, 2005
March 24, 2005
April 28, 2005
May 26, 2005
June 23, 2005

OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

To: Neighbors in Lafayette Village
From: The Board of Directors prior to the election held October 28, 2004 including
Myke Glaze, Pam Paroline, Mary Jo Kellgren, Joe Braceland, Mary McFadden

Recently, some of you may have received a letter that raised some concerns about the administration of Lafayette Village. They were addressed by the Board of Directors at the annual meeting on October 28, 2004. For those of you who were not at the meeting, we would like to share with you the board's response.

A review of historical records during the tenure of various board members was completed; listed below are the six issues raised in the letter with the response made by the board.

Point #1 – “ The LVCA reserve account is under funded and has not had an adequate annual funding level for several years. Although the board had knowledge of this situation, and required a 10% increase in our homeowners' assessments in 2003, the board continued to fund non-essential projects (i.e. community signs) out of the reserve account.”

Board Response – To begin with, the community signs were paid from the operating expenses and NOT from the reserve account.

Regarding the reserve studies, neither the reserve study completed in 1992 by GJB Engineering nor the 1997 study by Chesapeake Design indicated that the reserve account was under funded.

The 1992 study recommended an amount of \$26,000 for deposit annually to the reserve account:
- From 1994 to 1997 the reserves were funded at various levels ranging from \$30,400 to \$36,000 per year

The 1997 study indicated the account was OVER FUNDED and recommended an amount of \$17,795.50 for deposit annually to the reserve account:
- From 1998 through 2003 the reserves were funded at \$18,250, which exceeded the recommendation

The 2003 study was the first indication that the reserves may have been under-funded. The recommendation for annual funding was \$87,569. As a result, the annual funding to the reserve account was increased to \$25,200 for 2004. We could not achieve the level of \$87,569 with the current increase to annual dues of 10%. Also, spending from the reserve account over the last four years ranged from \$0 in 2004 up to \$61,000 in 2002. See detailed explanation below.

The above funding levels enabled us to maintain the same rate of annual dues for 11 years until the increase in 2004.

The following items were paid from the reserve account over the last few years – these amounts do not appear to be either disproportionate or aesthetic in nature.

2001 - \$9,893 for concrete repairs throughout the community

OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY *(Continued)*

2002 - \$61,000 total - - \$18,400 for retaining wall on Ashley Glen; \$5,100 for pool repairs; \$2,600 for tot lot fence; \$25,600 for new tot lot; \$6,600 for visitor spaces between Butterfield and Mt. Airey; \$2,600 for street light repairs

2003 - \$13,400 total - - \$1,200 for replacement street light on Butterfield; \$1,100 for starter pool pump; \$10,500 for coping stones at the pool

2004 – None

Point #2 - “Even though the board was aware of the under funding of reserves, they spent disproportionate amounts of money for aesthetic projects while the need for additional town home parking area lights, a community safety matter, was deferred.”

Board Response -The matter of additional lighting for the community was addressed earlier this year by the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) and approved by the board – it was NOT deferred. The Board requested a bid from Dominion Power based on the cost of \$1200 for the streetlight we installed in 2003. Dominion Power recently provided us with the final figures that are about triple the cost perlight that we paid just last year. The cost increase is due to the size and the root systems of the trees in the community, as well as the distance from the electrical source needed for each streetlight. Based on costs and user input regarding the location of the lights, we anticipate installation as soon as practicable. See related article in this newsletter from the ACC.

Point #3 & 4 - “The board did not consider multiple bids for the new community signs, before awarding the project to a single vendor. The cost to all of us? \$12,958.”

“The board did not reassess the sign project feasibility when it was discovered that the initial price estimate of \$6900 was incorrect and that the cost would be almost double. The board did not approve additional funds for the project, yet the project went ahead with a total of \$12,958 being spent.”

Board Response – The board received and considered multiple bids, some as high as \$26,000. The final cost was initially \$13,668 and was reduced by \$710 through negotiation by the Board Treasurer. The minutes of May 2003 note the discussion of the increase in the cost of the signs. The minutes fail to reflect the formal motion to approve the funds, although it is implied through the discussion in the minutes.

The size and material for the signs were discussed during board meetings held in 2002 and 2003. Following the installation, the board received positive feedback regarding the entrance signs to our community.

Point #5 – “Despite an Architectural Control Committee (ACC) ruling to allow a town homeowner to remove a fence with the stipulation that it must be replaced, the board decided that the owner did not have to replace a fence that was removed.”

Board Response – An owner violation is a private matter between the ACC and board members. Having said that, let’s talk hypothetically about what could happen in a situation like this.

- the ACC stipulates that a fence must be replaced
- the board then reviews the request and also reviews and discusses the ACC guidelines on fences
- the board decides the guidelines were not explicit and could be interpreted as “may” have a fence instead of “must” have a fence

OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

(Continued)

- upon further discussion at a subsequent meeting, the board reverses its decision acknowledging that it is a long standing past practice that all townhouses have fences and all past requests not to replace a fence were denied

As in any case of a violation, a homeowner is notified. The board works with all owners to provide time to make necessary improvements. At the present time, all townhouses in Lafayette Village have fences in the backyards.

To eliminate future questions, the ACC guidelines will be edited to explicitly state the requirement for fences in the town house community.

Exceptions to ACC guidelines are reviewed on a case-by-case basis if special circumstances are presented.

Point #6 – “The board did not hold Armstrong Management to its promise to issue a rebate on the management monthly bill to cover losses of interest and future earnings that occurred when they failed to deposit \$16K of our money in a CD as directed by the board. In response to community raised questions, not the board’s question about this matter, the promised reimbursement was finally made 10 months later.”

Board Response – Armstrong Management paid both the lost interest of \$195 plus a penalty of \$100 that was imposed by the board. The issue could have been handled in a more expeditious manner than the 10 months that elapsed. The community-raised questions on this matter ensured that the appropriate payments were made.

In closing, it is our hope is that these explanations will provide you with the facts in each situation.

It is important for the Board of Directors and the homeowners to work together to achieve a strong well-managed community. Your input is valuable in making decisions for our community - please, come to the monthly board meetings, think about getting involved on a committee or volunteer to help with an activity.

WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS, LINDA BOONE & JOAQUIN TREMOLS!

Linda Boone’s family is an original owner in LVC, having lived here since March 1984. Her son, Nathan, grew up in the community and this is home to them. She retired from the Marine Corps in 1991 having served 21 years in a variety of administrative and project management positions. Currently working with Fairfax County government as the Planning Branch Chief for the Division of Solid Waste Disposal and Resource Recovery, she is responsible for the \$36M per year contract they have for the operation of the waste to energy facility at the I-95 Landfill, where the County’s waste is processed and electricity produced. Active in the community, Linda has served as the President of her son’s high school PTO for 3 years and is now involved in the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets. She enjoys walking and reading as recreational activities. Linda looks forward to serving on the Board again, as she had a 3 year term in the late 80’s and also served on the Neighborhood Watch

Joaquín Tremols is an attorney who has been occupied in banking and real estate matters since 1983. He is currently employed with the USDA Rural Development where he writes regulations and administrative notices for a \$3.2 billion single family housing loan program. Prior to joining Rural Development, Mr. Tremols worked for banking institutions

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ARMSTRONG MANAGEMENT UPDATE

ARMSTRONG MOVES TO TEAM FUNCTIONALITY

At the Annual Meeting, several homeowners asked for additional information on the new Armstrong Team Concept. The New Team Concept will have several teams of managers working with all communities.

There will be a Communication Team that will handle all calls and emails. They will generate all letters, annual meeting notices and violation letters. The Communication Team will also generate work orders and ensure that the work is completed.

The Budget and Financial Team will prepare draft budgets, approve invoices, prepare five-year plans and conduct reserve analysis.

The Contracts and Vendor Team will prepare contracts, obtain certificates of insurance for vendors and prepare requests for proposals. This team will also include insurance claim administration and they will review and evaluate insurance policies.

The Site Management Team will conduct site inspections, resale inspections and meet with vendors and residents. They will oversee contract performance to ensure that the work contracted for is completed per the contract.

The Meeting Preparation Team will generate the Board packets, update annual calendars and update Armstrong Connect information.

Homeowners will still call (703) 385-1133 or write to customerservice@armstrong.net for assistance or questions. Homeowners should also call this number if s/he has received a violation letter or has questions concerning guidelines. When you call Armstrong Management at the number above, a Customer Service Representative will answer the phone. In most cases they will be able to assist you. If not, they will transfer you to the Communication Team who will be able to assist you.

Armstrong Management is excited about the New Team Concept. They believe the New Team Concept will ensure that homeowners are assisted when they call with any questions or concerns quickly and efficiently.

WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS, LINDA BOONE & JOAQUIN TREMOLS!

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such as the Chase Manhattan Bank and has served on the Supervisory Committee to the Board of Directors for a large Federal credit union. Mr. Tremols holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware and a Juris Doctor degree from the George Washington University Law School.

DEER IN THE HEADLIGHTS

contributed by Pam Paroline

The deer seemed to come out of nowhere as they rounded the bend one cold evening. Knowing deer rarely travel alone, he slowed the Jeep Wrangler. Suddenly, they felt a jolt as a second deer barreled headfirst into the driver's side door.

This is one of many stories insurance companies receive during deer season. The Insurance institute for Highway Safety estimates that more than 1.5 million deer-vehicle collisions occur each year resulting in more than \$1 billion in vehicle damage.

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BOARD ELECTION RESULTS!

THREE DIRECTORS ELECTED TO LVCA BOARD

Following a detailed review of LVCA records by Armstrong Management, it was determined that in fact the terms of three members of the Board expired this year. As a result, at the annual meeting held on October 28, 2004, three directors were elected to the LVCA Board. They are:

- Linda Boone - elected to a three term and will serve until October 2007;
- Joaquin Tremols - elected to a three year term and will serve until October 2007;
- Mary McFadden - elected to a two year term and will serve until October 2006.

The Board of Directors agreed to serve in the following capacity at the present time:

- Mary McFadden – President
- Mary Jo Kellgren -Vice President (her term on the board will expire in 2005)
- Linda Boone - Treasurer
- Joe Braceland - Secretary (his term on the board will expire in 2006)
- Joaquin Tremols - Member -At- Large

The board is committed to improving communication and building trust with the homeowners; along with improving service provided by Armstrong Management Services. Please feel free to contact any board member with a question or concern you may have. Following is contact information for each board member:

Mary McFadden	President	703-560-1555	mmcfadden1@cox.net
Mary Jo Kellgren	Vice-President	703-795-1642	tangomjk@aol.com
Linda Boone	Treasurer	703-698-0338	linda.boone1@verizon.net
Joe Braceland	Secretary	703-641-9477	jbrace@wizard.net
Joaquin Tremols	At-Large	703-876-0313	joaquin.tremols@usda.gov

LAFAYETTE VILLAGE HAS A NEW WEBMASTER

Sean Smith is a relatively new community member, having moved to Lafayette Village in the summer of 2003. He works for a small computer software company in McLean. Since he was bold enough to point out the need for some content updates during the last annual association meeting, he decided to do something about it! Many thanks to the previous webmaster, Joe Braceland, who was hosting it free-of-charge on his company's web server. Going forward, please send any suggestions for the website (outdated information, changes, etc.) to him at sean@e346.com.

REMINDERS: *The LVC web-site address is www.layettevillage.org! The first all-electronic newsletter will be published on or about January 5, 2005. The deadline for submissions is December 30, 2004. Future deadlines will be published to the web-site. Thank you for your contributions!*

LVCA COMMITTEE UPDATES

COMMUNITY LIGHTING PROJECT UPDATE

submitted by Linda Witham

Last spring, the ACC submitted a list of ten locations in the community where additional lighting is needed. Most, but not all, were next to mailboxes that currently don't have lights. (The list of locations was provided in the Summer newsletter.) The Board approved the ACC's recommendation at the May board meeting and instructed Armstrong to get bids on this work. Armstrong only got a bid from Dominion, and the bid was not received until October 27, although it was originally requested on June 2.

Due to the costs of the lighting project being considerably higher than Armstrong had led us to anticipate, the lights will not be installed this fall as originally anticipated. We are currently investigating alternatives to having Dominion do this work. If any residents are aware of an electrical contractor who might want to provide a bid on this work, please let Linda Witham (703-698-7455) or one of the Board members know.

WANTED: YOUR INPUT REGARDING CONTRACTORS!!

Wouldn't it be nice if, when you need work done on or around your home, you had a trusted source of information about contractors? From roofs, siding, fences, and landscaping to painting, interior design, electrical work and HVAC, I'm sure we've all encountered contractors who didn't arrive on time, left a mess, underbid, overcharged or finished a month behind schedule. Or all of the above.

On the other hand, perhaps some of us have experience with vendors who said and did all the right things. It would be a shame to keep quiet about these extraordinary businesses, so please share your experiences with the community.

While I personally wasn't living here at the time, I see that a list was compiled in the Fall of 2002. The ACC would like to add to and update that list, as well as incorporate the information into a more comprehensive database. This way, when you need a roof replaced, you can use the community list as a starting point (even an ending point) for your search. But before that happens, we need to hear from you!

Please contact John Alexander by sending an email to jmalex14@msn.com or calling 703-208-9614 with your recommendation. Have ready as much of the following information as possible:

- 1) Business name
- 2) Date of service
- 3) Name of individual(s) who performed service
- 4) Service performed
- 5) Time contractor required to perform service
- 6) Approximate charge
- 7) Would you be willing to discuss your experience with another LVCA member?
- 8) Your name
- 9) Your address

Thanks for your input! Information regarding list access will be provided in future newsletters.

ACC MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 7pm. Please contact Linda Witham at 703-698-7455 or Linda.L.Witham@verizon.com for the location of the meeting.

LVCA COMMITTEE UPDATES

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ACC REMINDERS: EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS

Please remember that any improvement, or change, to the exterior of your home needs the approval of the ACC. Simply submit an “ACC Request for Exterior Improvement Form” and the committee will review the request at our next meeting. Your cooperation will ensure that our community remains beautiful and retains its unique charm. Plus, should you ever need to sell your home, you can rest easy that your improvements will not be the cause of any violations.

ACC CORNER

Each month this section will feature household tips. This month, read about some of the outdoor tips found in the September 16th Pennysaver.

Fall Backyard Cleanup 101

1. Rake those leaves. Once the snow flies, an unraked layer of leaves can become matted down over the turf and smother it all winter. Raking in the fall helps avoid dead patches in the spring. Don't worry about getting every last leaf, especially in the garden. Leaves help insulate plants and, as they decompose, provide valuable nutrients.
2. Feed the grass. Using a slow-release fertilizer allows the grass to soak up nutrients and spend the cool days and nights of autumn recovering from summer heat and stress. Building a healthy, rejuvenated lawn is one of the best ways to protect against heat, cold, drought, insects, and other stresses.
3. Water trees and shrubs. Dehydration during the colder months is an all-too-common cause of tree damage, but it's easily preventable. To sustain them over the long winter, it's important to give trees a drink before putting them to bed for the year.
4. Clean out your garden. Fruits and vegetables left in the garden can rot all winter long, and provide a comfy home for insect eggs. Now is the time to get rid of diseased plants, but keep them out of the compost pile so the problem doesn't spread to the rest of your garden next year.

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The fall marks deer season in more ways than one. Studies show the greatest percentage of collisions occur during mating and hunting season in October, November and December. Most of those crashes happen between dusk and dawn.

Although there are various methods to help lessen the number of deer-related car accidents, motorists can also take steps to reduce the risk of wildlife collision. Among them are:

Always Be Aware – When driving at night, use highbeam headlights when there is no approaching traffic. Deer generally travel in pairs or groups, so if you see one deer expect more will follow.

Drive Defensively – Always stay alert, awake and sober, particularly when driving during peak collision times.

Increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you, especially in wooded areas.

Remember Deer Are Unpredictable – Deer may stop in the middle of the road, cross quickly or even move toward an approaching vehicle. Slow down and honk the horn to urge the deer to leave the road.

Sometimes A Crash Is Unavoidable – Never swerve to avoid striking a deer. If a collision with a deer is imminent, hit the animal while maintaining full control of the vehicle. Many serious crashes occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars.

Keep Your Distance – If you do strike a deer and are uncertain whether or not the deer is alive, stay away. Deer have sharper hooves than can inflict injuries. Report the accident to your local police.