To all of my Fox Chase Neighbors,

I am honored to serve on the board of directors as President for Fox Chase. I have lived here since May of 2002 and served on the board as Treasurer from 2004 through 2008. Since I have lived here, I have seen the priorities of the board change over the years from the development of new homes to the development of the amenities complex. When the neighborhood was first developed, there were little options for buyers looking to purchase homes with the “rural” or “suburban” feel this far west of Fredericksburg. Homes were selling fast and the values of properties were high. Now homes are selling at 20% to 25% less than they were in 2007. One thing we still have over those neighborhoods is land size, but we are competing with a very limited buyer pool. For those of you who may have to transfer with their jobs or for those of you thinking of retiring in a few years, the appearance of our neighborhood is becoming very important in order to attract those buyers. New neighborhoods are cropping up offering the same amenities but with a fresher appearance than we currently have.

This year I would like you all to think of “renewal.” What can you do to update or clean up the appearance of your home? How’s your mailbox? Does it need painting? Do you need fresh paint on your shutters? Do your bushes need trimming back?

The ARC has a very important role in this neighborhood and that is to address property appearances from the curb. This committee addresses the visual imperfections that we may not notice. The Grounds and Maintenance committee is responsible for the appearance of our front entrance way and the amenities area. They are searching for volunteers to help with mowing, street maintenance, and painting.

Let’s all work together to insure that this is a premier neighborhood to move into. All of us have had to re-surface driveways or combat roof mold. Many of us have teenagers willing to do odd jobs or gain community service hours for school. We are a small enough neighborhood where working together “truly does work.”

I look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

Barbara Shevchuk
Amenities

The opening of the community pool is planned for Memorial Day weekend. Operational hours will be 6 am to 8:30 pm. You can sign up to close the pool for a week (Sun to Sat) through the website by clicking on the amenities/pool/grounds link. If you are a new member to our community, please contact us at amenities@fox-chase.org.

Jennifer Stockli
Chair, Pool & Amenities

Did you know?
The neighborhood is fortunate to have a lake that homeowners can use for recreational purposes. Canoeing and fishing are fun activities you can enjoy especially when the weather is nice. Keep in mind there is a $25 fee annually to store your canoe or paddle boat on the amenities property. All canoes/paddle boats owners that are storing them on the amenities property whether in the rack or not are required to pay the fee. Pay your storage fee with your HOA dues to avoid having your canoe/paddle boat removed.

Treasurer’s Report

Good news! Based on our current fiscal situation and outlook, the board has decided that no increase in dues will be needed for 2012. The dues will remain $660 for single lots and $1,110 for double lots. The dues will be collected in two installments. The first $330 will be billed 4/23 and due by 5/31 and the remaining $330 will be billed 9/24 and due by 10/31. Those of you with double lots will be billed $550 on 4/23 and $550 on 9/24. Last year we introduced the PayPal option for paying your dues and we will continue to make that option available for 2012 through the website.

For those of you who did not attend the Annual meeting this past January, I’ll highlight a few of the key points. We came in under budget in 2011 by roughly $15,000. In doing so, we were able to reduce the 2012 budget to $77,000 from $80,000 in 2011. Our reserve goal was exceeded last year as we continue to work towards the balloon payment for the end of the amenities loan and prepare for any capital expenditures for the coming years on the amenities property and front entrance. The board will continue to monitor our current fiscal needs as well as the projections for the next 5, 10, and 25 years.

We always encourage you to volunteer in the community. Thanks to our volunteers who serve on the Board, various committees and those who sign up to do mowing and/or pool closing, we’ve been able to keep costs down by not having a Property Management Company or Pool Management Company. Keep up the good work!

As always, the board prides itself on transparency with the community. If at any time you would like a copy of the financial reports that are presented at the board meetings each month, please do not hesitate to ask. Look forward to seeing you out and about in the community soon!

Dave Frey, Treasurer
Gardening Tips

As I write this, it is the first day of spring! The garden centers are open and full of flowers to choose from. Here are a few tips to make the most of your purchases.

Annuals: When you want a fast jolt of color, these are the plants to go for. They are typically fast growing, and their flowers are long lasting. Look for healthy plants free of disease spots or damage from insects. Often it is best to purchase a plant that has buds instead of blooms. The reason is that sometimes the blooms are an indication of over fertilization or that they have been in the pot for too long. Both cases can make the successful transition to your garden less likely.

Perennials: For those who want to do it once and be done with it, perennials are the way to go. Since these plants will be with you for years, select well-rooted plants with healthy foliage. Because these plants will not likely be in bloom when you purchase them, check their size at maturity for best placement. Look for a plant with healthy roots. If you do end up with one that is pot bound, make sure you cut away the circling roots and gently tease the root ball apart.

In addition to the return of flowers is the return of hummingbirds. They migrate here from the middle of April through May. You can increase your chances of seeing these amazing creatures by putting out a feeder for them. There is no need to purchase a commercial food for them—make your own. Use one part sugar to four parts water. Boil the mixture and allow to cool before filling your feeder. You do not need to color the water because the birds are attracted to the red flowers on the feeders. This leads to a second way of attracting the hummingbirds. Plant a red garden or group of flowers. They will feed on any color but are especially attracted to red.

Enjoy your spring!

Sarabeth Truebenbach

Grounds & Maintenance

Thank you for allowing me to serve as the Grounds and Maintenance Chairperson for the second year in a row. We have many changes to look forward to this year. Spring has sprung early this year, so we need to get started right away!

1. The Front Entrance has been slowly deteriorating. Over the last several years we’ve been minimally maintaining it with the funds that have been allocated. However, we need to do some major renovations. This area is the first thing guests and future homeowners see when they enter our community. This will be one area of focus for the Spring Clean-Up. If we are unable to get this back under control with volunteers, we may have to expend more HOA funds to get it back in shape.

2. **Spring Clean-Up** is scheduled for **April 21 & 22, 2012**. We will meet in the parking lot in the pool area at 9:00 AM on both days. It is vitally important that we have enough residents supporting this event. The HOA has several pieces of maintenance equipment that is used for the routine maintenance of the HOA properties (i.e.: 2 backpack leaf blowers, 2 grass trimmers, etc.). However, I would encourage folks who can bring some extra equipment to do so. I would anticipate that grass trimmers, leaf blowers and chain saws would be needed. Also, we will need one or two utility trailers to assist in moving the debris to the dump.

3. Most of our school-aged children are encouraged or required to do community service projects. This is a great opportunity for our kids to meet this goal, as well as participate in improving the appearance of their neighborhood. I would encourage residents to bring their appropriately aged children to help out with **Spring Clean-Up**.

4. I want to thank all of the residents who assisted me last year with the routine maintenance of the common areas. The grass-cutting schedule for this year is up on the HOA website. Please take some time to see where and when you can assist. I will be happy to show any new volunteers how to use the equipment and the delineation of the mowing areas. Lastly, many of our neighbors have difficulty in maintaining their properties, especially spring-time projects. Please keep in mind our community spirit and help our neighbors in need.

Christopher Espenshade
Chair, Grounds and Maintenance Committee

Reminder: **Spring Clean-Up is April 21st starting at 9AM!**
Household Hazardous Waste Tips

Many residences are concerned about the condition of our environment. One way that we can all do our part is to properly manage and dispose of household hazardous waste, or HHW. In broad terms, HHW are those chemicals that we use in our homes, generally for maintenance purposes. It is estimated that U.S. households generate more than 1.5 million TONS of HHW per year.

Spotsylvania County offers an option for residences to properly dispose of these chemicals, rather than tossing them out with regular trash. A collection event is scheduled for April 30, 2011 from 8AM until 4PM at:

Chancellor Public Use Area
5917 Harrison Road
Spotsylvania, VA 22553

The HHW will be collected at this site then transferred to a hazardous waste processing and disposal facility to properly manage these wastes.

Acceptable wastes include, but are not limited to; aerosol cans, oil based paint, corrosive cleaners, gasoline, motor oil, fluorescent light bulb (including the small compact fluorescents), pool chemicals, pesticides, batteries and electronic waste (TVs, computers, etc.).

Many people ask about latex paint and batteries. There are no hazardous chemicals in latex paint. The best management method is to remove the lid from the paint can, allow it to dry out, and then dispose of with regular trash. Alkaline batteries (non-rechargeable D, C, AA, AAA, 9V, etc) are not hazardous and can be disposed of in regular trash.

Below is a partial list of waste that is unacceptable at this collection event, with alternative disposal options:

Smoke detectors – These are unacceptable at the collection event and can be tossed out with the regular trash. However, smoke detector manufacturers are required to accept back used detectors from consumers for reprocessing or proper disposal. Please contact the manufacturer of your detector for instructions.

Ammunition – One simple way is to use the ammunition, if it is safe to do so. If this is not possible, The Spotsylvania Sheriff’s Office will accept old ammunition for proper management and disposal. Contact them directly for more information, 540-582-7115.

Prescription Medication – The proper disposal of medications is a current hot topic. Some communities are hosting medication disposal collection events. First, do not dispose of medications by flushing them. Some environmental agencies are starting to do ground water testing and these medications are showing up in the analysis.

Currently, Spotsylvania County does not offer a collection event. However, one option is to remove the medications from their container, place into a plastic bag, and crush them. Then, mix the crushed medications with coffee grounds. At this point it would be very difficult for someone to try to extract and use the medication. The coffee ground mix then can be placed into a coffee can (with lid) and disposed of with regular trash.

Medical Wastes (including sharps) – Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center will accept medical waste and sharps containers from Spotsylvania residence. Please contact the hospital at 540-498-4249 (environmental services). They will direct you when and how to deliver the waste.

For additional information, contact the Spotsylvania County Solid Waste Division at 540-507-7728 or visit their website at www.spotsylvania.va.us/content/2614/147/2744/223/1112.aspx

Fox Chase HOA Website

The website has been updated and we are looking for volunteers to assist in the following areas:

(1) Community committees—www.fox-chase.org/committee.htm

(2) Pool closing (close pool every night at 8:30pm for a week) - www.fox-chase.org/PoolSchedule.htm

(3) Amenities property mowing (mow the area one time during your week—equipment training and reimbursement for gas is provided) - www.fox-chase.org/MowingSchedule.htm

We have also updated the calendar page with upcoming events—www.fox-chase.org/calendar.htm

Please let us know if you can help out.