

CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2007



Page 1

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

On behalf of the Homeowners' Association, the Board of Directors wishes you all a happy and safe holiday season!!



HOLIDAY REMINDERS

Remember to observe the 25 MPH speed limit. We are noticing a lot of speeding cars on Carriage Drive and Conestoga Way. During the winter months, the early darkness and the weather are a dangerous combination. **Slow down!**

We love to see the neighborhood decorated for the holidays but remember to remove all decorations three weeks after the holiday season (by January 21).

In the past, there have been incidents of mailbox theft during the holidays. Remember to pick up your mail on a daily basis and don't leave it in the box overnight.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

This newsletter is accompanying your annual dues statement. We want to remind you to promptly pay your dues, which are due on December 1, 2007 and are considered late/delinquent after December 31, 2007. If there is a balance forward on your bill, it means that you owe money that is already late, delinquent and due now. Delinquent accounts may be sent to collections after 120 days. You may set up an automatic payment plan by calling Common Interest Management.



HOME IMPROVEMENT

Remember to get an **Architectural and Landscape Approval Form** before you begin any work on the exterior of your home or lot. We see many projects in progress that have not received prior approval. Call Common Interest Management (Jeff at 925-743-3080, Ext. 237 or at, jgollihar@commoninterest.com) to request a form. Projects in violation of the CC&Rs will have to be removed or redone. To avoid this scenario, get prior approval.

We appreciate the fact that residents are beginning to replace or repair fences and repaint their houses. If you have received a letter asking you to replace your fence or paint your house, the deadline for doing so is **JULY 31 2008**. Fines will be imposed after that date.

The CC&Rs state that fencing should be maintained in its natural finish, a clear finish or the fence stain "Kelly Moore Loam #413." Other earth tone colors or Kelly Moore colors can be considered, but require prior approval. The fence height should not exceed six feet.

The Kelly Moore color chart for house paint is on the mailbox bulletin boards or at www.kellymoore.com.

LANDSCAPING

Don't forget to turn off your automatic irrigation system during the rainy season. Water your lawns manually as needed. Your landscape still requires maintenance during the winter so remember to rake the leaves, mow, edge, and weed etc.

There are a number of trees that have been over-pruned in the neighborhood. Over-pruning can kill the tree and it certainly doesn't add to the aesthetics of the neighborhood. Here are some tips:

CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Page 2

- Topping, the pruning of large upright branches between nodes, is sometimes done to reduce the height of a tree. Tipping is the practice of cutting lateral branches between nodes to reduce crown width. Both are pruning practices that harm trees and should not be used. Crown reduction pruning is the preferred method to reduce the size or height of a tree, but is rarely needed and should be used infrequently.
- When deciding how much to prune a tree, as little as possible is often the best rule of thumb. All prunes place stress on a tree and increase its vulnerability to disease and insects. On no account, prune more than 25% of the crown and ensure that living branches compose at least 2/3 of the height of the tree. Pruning more risks fatally damaging your tree.
- The dormant season, late fall or winter, is the best time to prune although dead branches can and should be removed at any time.

CARS, BOATS & RVs

Just so you know, storage of boats and RVs are not allowed in the driveway (as per the CC&Rs) or on the street (per the Richmond City Code). The same is true for inoperable and/or unregistered vehicles. The Richmond parking code requires that vehicles not be parked in the street for more than 72 hours. You will also get a ticket if you park in the street on a street sweeping day. Isn't it amazing that with all the three and two car garages around here, that so many cars are parked in the driveway and on the street!!!! Maybe the Richmond City clean-up this Spring will help us clear out space in our garages.

PETS AND WILDLIFE

For those of you experiencing raccoon problems, remember that wildlife should not be harassed, captured, domesticated or fed. Raccoons, like all wildlife need food, water, and shelter. If your yard or home is pro-

viding any one of these three items you may be attracting raccoons to your home. Remove all food sources (fruit from trees, vegetables, pet food, bird feed, accessible BBQs or trash cans) water sources (ponds) or shelter (block entry under a deck, trim trees, seal entries to attics etc.) You can find tons of prevention tips on the internet. If your house is welcoming to raccoons, remember that it also affects your surrounding neighbors' yards as well.

Our CC&Rs state that only two household pets are allowed. We have received a number of complaints about barking dogs, households in excess of two pets and residents feeding feral cats. Please be a responsible neighbor. If the animals are a nuisance, the HOA can demand their removal and animal control will be contacted.



COMMUNITY UPDATES

The public works crew has been patching the cracks along Carriage Drive. According to the City Engineer, Carriage Drive is the only street scheduled to be resurfaced in the summer of 2008. Obviously, there are many other streets in the neighborhood in poor condition so we may need to pressure the city by signing petitions. If you haven't sent your email address to Common Interest Management, now is the time so we can quickly contact you. Send it to jgol-liar@commoninterest.com. You may see Board Members out with petitions to sign in the near future.

Some repairs were done to Castro Ranch Road and we understand that the drainage problem at Conestoga and Castro Ranch is being considered. Accidents continue to happen along Castro Ranch which would indicate that the road needs to be redone and reconfigured.

One new development has been approved: Canyon Oaks II at Castro Ranch and San Pablo Dam Road. It probably won't greatly impact our neighborhood

CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Page 3

except that a four way light will be installed at the Castro Ranch/San Pablo Dam intersection next year. Three other developments along Castro Ranch between Amend and Conestoga are planned but not currently active. The housing/building market is depressed at the moment, which has stalled the projects. We will keep you updated.

The Board attended the Richmond General Plan meeting last month at Sheldon School. Although most of the evening dealt with issues facing El Sobrante, which is in the County, the issues important to us are on the table. The biggest challenge will be how to interface smoothly with the County on issues of roads, developments, parks, fire and public safety.

UPCOMING 2008 BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of the month: January 15, February 19, March 18 and April 14. All residents are invited to attend any of the monthly meetings.

ELECTIONS

There will be no Annual Meeting in March this year as we now vote for directors via a mail-in ballot. Kaye McKleroy and Alan Heynssens are up for re-election this year. Any resident in good standing can run for a seat on the board of directors. Included in this mailing is a candidate information form. If you are interested in running, please return the form to Common Interest Management C/O Lindsay Fox-Cardin before February 1, 2008 to be included on the ballot. Voting will take place in March with the results announced in March or April. We need a quorum to elect directors, so please remember to vote.



Carriage Hills Residents Association

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