

MILL CREEK

Homeowners Association

Fall 2004

President's Message

Please mark your calendars for our annual Homeowners Association meeting (see back page for details). This meeting is your chance to review the events and issues of the past year, and to have a voice in the future of Mill Creek.

The annual meeting is typically the second-most attended community event of the year, surpassed only by the summer block party. However, it may be surprising to learn that only about 50 people attend the annual meeting, representing fewer than one-quarter of the lots in the association.

This year, I would like to encourage each person attending the annual meeting to bring a neighbor. In order for our community to thrive, homeowners must be involved in the governance of the association. During the past year, the efforts of the Board have been dramatically hindered because there are too few Board members. At times, regularly-scheduled Board meetings have been cancelled because we could not organize a quorum of members. In other instances, issues that were important to the Board simply could not be addressed because there were too many other Association matters to consider.

There are more than 200 lots in the Association, but cur-



Fall brings bright colors and eye-catching patterns to Mill Creek's trees.

rently only five people are on the Board.

If you can contribute one to two hours of your time each month, I strongly encourage you to become a member of the Board. If you feel like you would like to contribute, but can't offer this time commitment, please consider becoming a member of a committee. Committee members are called upon only when a specific issue is facing the Board.

If you still do not have the time to commit to these efforts, you can help out by volunteering to help with Association activities. Some of the homeowners who have contributed in this way are listed in this newsletter.

Past and present Board members will tell you that the

experience is very rewarding, and does not take much time. Please consider serving our community by becoming an active participant in the Association in any way that you can.

*Kurt Illig, President
1235 Copperstone Drive*

In This Issue:

- Winterize your home
- Holiday Home Safety
- ANNUAL MEETING:
Jan 19, 2005 at 7pm
National Guard Armory

Winterizing Your Home

by Lynn Guthrie

With winter upon us, getting your home ready for the winter saves you both time and money. Here is a checklist of regular maintenance items that your home may need this time of year.

Following these tips will help keep you warm and protect your investment:

FURNACE Is your thermostat in proper working order? Change the filter now and every month during the winter.

CAULKING Is the condition of caulk around your windows and doors in good repair? Check for peeling or cracks in the caulking. Replace the caulking if necessary.

FIREPLACE Before starting a fire this winter, have your fireplace cleaned to prevent fires and smoke caused by animals or accumulation of soot.

SMOKE DETECTORS You should have a smoke detector near the kitchen and one in the hallway near your bedrooms. Are these in good working order? Do they have fresh batteries? Even if the smoke detectors work, you should change the batteries at least once a year.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS If you have one, check to be sure it is working. As with smoke detectors, batteries should be changed in CO monitors once each year. The old batteries are probably still good and would work in a battery

operated clock or remote control, so you won't waste them. Carbon monoxide is deadly and this simple device can save lives.

FOUNDATION Inspect this area of your home for cracks. Repair any cracks you find using heavy caulk or ready-mix cement. This will prevent any cold air from seeping into your home and save you money in energy costs.

DOOR SWEEP Install a door sweep to keep warm air from escaping from your home. These are easy to install and inexpensive. You can also use a door 'cozy,' a pillow about 2-1/2 inches high and 36 inches long. Keep it in front of the door to stop cold air from coming into your home.

DUCTS AND VENTS Inspect and clean ducts and vents throughout your home. This will ensure that there are no blockages, and will make sure your furnace doesn't need to do any extra work to keep your home warm. Another benefit of cleaning the ducts is that the air in your home will be cleaner. This should be done once every five years.

RAIN GUTTERS Remove any debris clogging your gutters. When the temperature drops, standing water in your gutters may freeze. This could cause your gutters to crack, making for an expensive home repair in the spring.

Although these may be time consuming tasks, regular

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We need you! Please consider becoming a Board Member and help Mill Creek become a better community.

home maintenance is well worth the effort. The energy you expend now will be paid back by the energy savings you will experience this winter.

Do you have an idea for a story that you would like to see included in the newsletter? Would you like to help write stories for the newsletter? We want you! Contact a Board member for details.

Albemarle County Police Department has some pointers for residents while they are away from their homes for any length of time. While our neighborhood is a great place to live, we should never forget some basic safety guidelines follow to protect our homes while we are away:

NOTIFY – Notifying neighbors that you'll be away is always good policy. If you are unfamiliar with your neighbors or feel uncomfortable letting them know you'll be away, then don't inform them of your plans. If you have a neighbor or two you feel you trust and know well, let them know the dates when you'll be away, and leave them a number where you'll be in case of emergency.

LIGHTS – Making your home look as if someone is home while you're away can be achieved by turning on a few lights or having them turned on and off by a timer. Installing motion detector lights is also an effective way to keep unwanted visitors away.

CLOSE – Don't leave blinds or curtains open when you are away for extended periods of time. Double-check the locks on windows and doors to be sure they are secure.

CALL - Albemarle County Police provide a community house check service. If you are going to be out of town for a week or longer, you can call the police at 296-5807 and ask for a house check. The police will not go into your house while you are gone, but they will periodically drive by and check for any suspicious activity. By leaving your contact information or a designated representative, the police can call in

the event there is any suspicious activity to report.

Following this simple checklist to secure your home while you are away protects your home, and helps to ensure a worry free vacation. Remember, making your home look as if you are there is the most important part in helping to ensure that there are no unpleasant surprises when you return home.

THANK YOU!

These homeowners have helped our community this year by volunteering in various ways. Please thank them when you see them around the neighborhood!

- Pauline Davis for distributing fire safety brochures throughout the neighborhood
- Lynn Guthrie for writing articles for the Newsletter
- Rose Van Epp for organizing the summer block party
- Miles Weiss for printing the Mill Creek Newsletter

Annual Meeting January 19, 7pm

The Annual Meeting of the Mill Creek Homeowners Association will take place on January 19, 2005 at 7:00 pm at the National Guard Armory on Avon Street Extended. Please mark your calendars for this important event, which features an update on Association activities and the election of new members of the Board of Directors.

Your presence at the meeting is important for the future of the Association! Exercise your right to participate in the governance of Mill Creek by attending the Annual Meeting this year!

TAKE OUR ONLINE SURVEY

Another easy way to let the Board of Directors know what you think about the issues facing our community is to take the survey on the Mill Creek Homeowners website. Results of the survey will help the Board as they consider the future of the Association.

The survey can be found at

WWW.MILLCREEKHOMEOWNERS.ORG