

The Courts and Ridges of Ashburn

Issue 45

October–November 2011

UPCOMING BUDGET FOR 2012 AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Karthik Srinivasan
bot@courtsandridges.org

2012 is around the corner and the Courts & Ridges HOA has started working on the 2012 budget numbers. We have made some good progress against the 2011 budget and ensured tight control on the costs. Our reserves continue to maintain the desired levels based on our reserve study. Our expenditure from the blizzard in 2009 is still being recuperated from the townhouse HOA dues for the next two years. Our reserve savings have been well managed by our treasurer and companies such as Edward Jones to ensure risk-balanced returns to the HOA.

We have managed our expenses for the pool maintenance and open space maintenance as much as possible with the budget numbers, and utilized reserve expenses wherever necessary. Our new accountants have managed to obtain a refund on our IRS tax return for 2010. The budget numbers for 2012 will continue to have tight controls on expenditures while focusing on ensuring minimum increases for any HOA dues if required to balance the budget.

What can you do to help the HOA budget? Please be a part of our committees or the BOT to participate and act on any areas of cost savings or volunteer work that will reduce our HOA expenses. You can engage in community cleanup, open space cleanup, and cautious use of common area including swimming pool and tennis courts to reduce potential damage to equipment. You can make a difference in being part of managing “your” HOA contributions. Wishing you all a wonderful upcoming



We Want You!

ing Holiday Season and stay warm!

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COURTS & RIDGES COMMUNITY NEWS

Trash and Recycling Reminders

As we all enter the busy Holiday season, American Disposal Services (ADS) would like to remind you of the upcoming trash collection schedule and inclement weather policies.

Since Christmas Day and New Year’s Day both fall on a Sunday this year, there will be no interruption in service collection days. However, yard debris collection ends on December 29th. If you have yard debris to be collected after this date, place your items curbside on your 2nd collection day (Friday) until the yard debris season resumes the 1st week of March 2012. After the holiday season, Christmas trees will be collected on Fridays. We ask that all tinsel and decorations are removed. Please do not place trees in plastic bags.

Safety in your community is ADS’s primary concern. Roads and/or areas that are deemed unsafe due to snow or ice will be suspended for collection. If suspension occurs, services will resume on the next regularly scheduled collection day.

We thank you for the opportunity to serve you and your community. If you have any questions, please call our customer service department at 703/368-0500, Monday through Friday, from 8 am to 4:30 pm or visit us on the web at www.americandisposal.com.

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Courts and Ridges of Ashburn website:
<http://courtsandridges.org>

Tot Lot Reminders

The tot lot located along Susan Leslie Drive behind the pool has recently been cleaned of graffiti markings. Acts of vandalism such as graffiti not only limit the use of the lots but also increase the costs to homeowners for repairs that are ultimately reflected in increases to the HOA monthly dues. Residents have also found trash, broken bottles, and other inappropriate items at the tot lot located on Matchpoint on the Courts side. Please note that the tot lots were designed for use by younger children only and may not be used after dark.

If you see inappropriate or destructive activities happening anywhere in the Courts and Ridges, please contact the Sheriff's office at 703/777-1021. Let's all stay involved to keep our community safe and attractive!

Community Association Banking Introduces New Payment System

Community Association Banc has introduced a new HOA payment system. When users visit the website, they can take advantage of many new payment features including: 1) The option to schedule payments on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis; 2) The ability to manage payment and property information through their personal homeowner profile; 3) Access to transactions for up to 13 months when the homeowner creates a user profile; 4) Real-time credit card payments (subject to processing fees). View our enhanced site today: www.cabanc.com.

Committee Dates

- Pool: November 1
- Open Space: November 7
- ARB: November 9
- BoT: November 14
- Swim Team: November 16
- Open Space: December 5
- BoT: December 12
- ARB: December 14
- Swim Team: December (TBD)

Note: Always check the Courts and Ridges website for changes and times.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE NEEDS A NEW CHAIR

The Open Space Committee (OSC) has had a fairly quiet year, mainly due to limited funding as a consequence of the need to pay back reserves used for the winter storm of 2009/10. Those funds that we did have were quickly depleted in paying for watering contracts for tree replacements completed in 2010 and removal of dead and dangerous trees.

While we have submitted a request for additional funding for 2012, it is anticipated that the OSC will continue to have limited budgets for another couple of years until reserves are replenished.

The main reason for highlighting the above is for those living in our community to understand why we cannot always act on a request to replace dead trees and shrubs. In many cases, it is OSC members that are pulling up these dead trees and shrubs—but obviously we can only deal with the small items. Larger items depend on funding and priority is given to any dangerous items.



The current OSC chair has indicated that he wishes to step down. The other member of the OSC is on the BOT and cannot act as chair of a committee as well. So the OSC is looking for HOA members who are willing to help on the OSC and also one person to act as chair. If you are willing to help out on the OSC and help keep the community in good shape, please contact the OSC at open_space@courtsandridges.org.

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HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

The Department of Construction & Waste Management will another Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection event in November. The next household hazardous waste event is on Saturday, November 19 from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm and is for Loudoun County residents only.

Saturday, November 19, 2011
Heritage High School
520 Evergreen Mill Road,
Leesburg, VA 20175

HHW includes items such as fluorescent bulbs, oil-based paints/stains/varnishes, paint thinners, metal polishes, rust removers, wood preservatives, furniture polish, waxes, bathroom, kitchen and oven cleaners, pool chemicals, old fuels including gas/oil mixes, kerosene and diesel fuel, and many others. Latex or water-based paints are not a hazardous waste and can be dried or solidified and disposed of in your household garbage.

Used motor oil, antifreeze, automobile batteries, lead-acid batteries and propane tanks will not be accepted at any HHW collection events. They can be recycled year round at the Loudoun County Solid Waste Management Facility at 21101 Evergreen Mills Road in Leesburg.

More tips on proper paint disposal and identification of HHW are available at www.loudoun.gov/hhw or by calling the Department of Construction & Waste Management at 703/777-0187.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE LIGHTNING 2012 SEASON

*Rodger Williams, Swim Team Chair
swimteam@courtsandridges.org*

The Courts and Ridges Lightning Swim Team is already planning for summer 2012. The team cannot function without active volunteers from the Courts & Ridges families. According to community policy, only residents can serve as committee officers and voting members. We are seeking residents for the positions of vice chair, secretary, and several at-large members.

Please come to our November 16th meeting, or drop us an email at swimteam@courtsandridges.org.

ASHBURN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS AVAILABLE

*From Lori Waters, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors,
Broad Run District*

I am pleased to share with you the results of the Ashburn Community Survey, which are now available at www.loudoun.gov/ashburn-outreach. In July, two surveys were activated to begin gathering data from the Ashburn community as part of the Board-directed outreach effort. The first survey was geared toward residents of the community and the second was designed for business owners and operators in the Ashburn community. Both surveys closed on September 12, 2011. The county received 1,687 residential surveys and 52 business surveys.

Based on the responses received, the report on the results is organized according to topic: quality of life, transportation, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, housing, county facilities, and business activity. The report does not provide a full analysis of all survey data but is intended for the public to use the information as a resource for their participation in the outreach workshops. The first outreach workshops were in October. There are two workshops scheduled in November:

Thursday, November 10th at Eagle Ridge Middle School
Thursday, November 17th at Stone Bridge High School

Workshops will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

I encourage you to read the report and remain engaged in this effort to prioritize the needs of the Ashburn community. Please contact the outreach office (ashburn.outreach@loudoun.gov) or my office if you have questions.

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EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TRAINING PROGRAM DEADLINE APPROACHING

November 1 is the early-bird registration deadline for those interested in the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer (EMGV) training program. The program is offered through the Extension Office to train volunteers to assist the Urban Horticulturist in providing service and educational programs for Loudoun residents. EMGVs are involved in various educational activities, including Help Desk Office, Demonstration Garden, Garden to Table programs, Gardening Clinics at local Farmer's Markets, Children's Gardening programs, speakers to club and group meetings.

To join the program, you must complete and return an application form to the Extension Office. Applicants are asked to attend an orientation meeting on November 21 at 7 pm, and are personally interviewed by EMGV and Extension personnel before being accepted into the training program (interviews will begin on November 28).

The training program in basic horticulture is held Tuesday and Thursday mornings beginning February 7, 2012. Topics covered include botany, soils, entomology, propagation, water quality, fruits & vegetables, ornamental plants, pathology, diagnosis skills, and landscape design. Once the classroom portion of the training is complete, Extension Master Gardener Trainees become Interns and continue learning by contributing 75 hours of hands-on volunteer internship by the end of the calendar year in order to become a certified Extension Master Gardener.

Application packets can be downloaded from the Loudoun County Master Gardener website at www.loudoun-countymastergardeners.org.

OCTOBER GARDENING TIPS

Debbie D. Dillion, Urban Horticulturist, Loudoun County Extension

- Fall is the best time of year for moving many plants. Transplant deciduous trees and shrubs when they are dormant. Evergreen trees or shrubs, however, may be transplanted earlier in the fall, before they go dormant.
- Water evergreens thoroughly before the ground freezes. Evergreens continue to lose water by transpiring during the winter, but when the ground is frozen they cannot replenish the water.
- In deciding on new trees or shrubs to plant around your home, remember to select varieties with a mature height and width to fit the desired location. This will greatly reduce pruning and other maintenance in the future.
- When selecting trees for fall color, keep in mind that color is more strongly influenced by genes in the plant than by the environment. Trees selected in the fall when they are in full color can be expected to produce the same colors in future years. Red Maple cultivars that display outstanding colors include 'Red Sunset,' 'October Glory,' and 'Autumn Flame.'

UPCOMING LWC PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats throughout Loudoun County. LWC offers a wide range of field trips and nature programs throughout the year, and all events are free unless noted in the description. Registration is sometimes required due to space limitations.

Plant a Tree—Saturday, November 5, 9 am. Join LWC, Loudoun County, and the Town of Leesburg at Ida Lee Park for a tree planting event designed to improve the water quality of Big Spring Creek and create new wildlife habitat in the park. Bring work gloves and, if you have one, a shovel with your name on it. Questions: contact Scott Sandberg at 571/258-3304 or scott.sandberg@loudoun.gov.

Reading the Land—Saturday, November 5, 10 am–1 pm. Registration Required. Join Emily Southgate at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship (BRCES) on a walk to discover man's impact on the land. Dr. Southgate, a historical ecologist, will describe what and how we can learn from studying human impact on the land and ecology. The Blue Ridge Center, which is cosponsoring this field trip, is located just north of Neersville at 11611 Harpers Ferry Road (Rte 671). Meet at the Education Center. Detailed directions can be found on the website, www.brces.org. Limited to 15 participants. To register, sign up online at <http://brces.org/calendar>.

Birding Banshee—Saturday, November 12, 8 am. Join the LWC and the Friends of Banshee Reeks at the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve in Leesburg for the monthly bird walk. Because of its rich and varied habitat, this part of the county is a birding hot spot. Please bring binoculars. All experience levels welcome! Questions: contact Joe Coleman at 540/554-2542 or jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

Sunday in the Preserve—Sunday, November 20, 1 pm. Join a naturalist from Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Friends of Banshee Reeks for a free, informal family walk around the preserve. Search for the many natural wonders that make this a special place. For information, call the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve at 703/669-0316.

Birding the Blue Ridge Center—Saturday, November 26, 8 am. On the fourth Saturday of each month (except December), LWC leads a free bird walk at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship (BRCES). This beautiful 900-acre preserve is located on Harpers Ferry Road, Rt. 671, in northwestern Loudoun County. The property includes meadows in the valley and heavily forested slopes on the Blue Ridge. Meet at the Visitor Center. Detailed directions can be found on the website, www.brces.org. Questions: contact Joe Coleman at 540/554-2542 or jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

For up-to-date information on our programs, check our website at www.loudounwildlife.org.

THE CRITTER CORNER

By Dr. Steve Velling

“Don’t Cut to the Quick!”

When you hear the telltale “click-click-click” as your dog walks across the tile floor, you know it’s that time again—time to trim the toenails. Trimming your dog’s nails is not just a part of grooming; it’s important for your pet’s health as well. You should remember that untrimmed nails can cause a variety of problems including broken nails, which are painful and can bleed profusely.

While some dogs don’t seem to mind when you’re trimming their nails, others just don’t like it. If your pet is not used to having his nails trimmed, start slowly and work up to it. Following these suggestions for a proper nail trim might help you give your dog a more pleasant pedicure.

- *Start young.* The earlier you start clipping your dog’s claws, the better used to it he will be. Frequent trims when your dog is young will help diminish any fear. Have your veterinarian show you how to do it the first time.

- *Learn the anatomy.* Within the center of each toenail is the blood and nerve supply for the nail called the quick. In clear white nails, you can see the quick, a pinkish area in the middle of the nail. The common black nails do not allow an easy view. Cutting into the quick will result in pain and bleeding. Cut dark colored nails in several small cuts to reduce the chance of cutting into the quick. Before you start clipping, determine how much needs to be trimmed.

The basic rule of thumb is that the nail, which curls downward, should be even with the paw pad.

- *Use the proper instruments and technique.* Use only nail trimmers that are designed for dogs. There are a variety of nail trimmers available at pet stores or your veterinarian’s office. You may want to sit on the floor with your pet, hold your pet in your lap, or have someone hold your pet on a table. If your dog has light colored nails, eyeball the quick and aim a few millimeters away from it.

Cut the nail below the quick on a 45-degree angle, with the cutting end of the nail clipper toward the end of the nail. In dogs with dark nails, make several small nips with the clippers instead of one larger one. Trim very thin slices off the end of the nail until you see a black dot appear towards the center when you look at it head on. This is the start of the quick that you want to avoid. The more diligent you are about trimming, the more the quick will regress into the nail, allowing you to cut shorter each time. Trim nails so that when the animal steps down, nails do not touch the floor.

- Sometimes accidents happen and you will cut into the quick. Have silver nitrate products on hand—you can get them at your veterinarian’s office or pet store. You can also use flour or cornstarch to stop the bleeding. If that doesn’t work, apply a light bandage for about 15 minutes. If the bleeding continues, call your veterinarian.

I hope that helps you with your doggy pedi’s!

Till next time, Dr. Steve, Ashburn Village Animal Hospital, www.ashburnanimals.com; 703/729-0700

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COMPOST—CREATING BROWN TO BE GREEN

Debbie D. Dillion, Urban Horticulturist, Loudoun County Extension

Many gardeners refer to compost as “Black Gold” because of the many benefits associated with adding it to the soil:

- increases the water-holding capacity and reduces the chance of erosion
- improves soil tilth, making it easier to cultivate and allowing better root penetration
- prevents soil crusting, aiding in seedling emergence
- provides a food source for earthworms and other desirable soil organisms
- increases the fertilizer-holding ability of the soil by increasing the cation exchange capacity (CEC)
- provides some nutrients (mainly micronutrients) for plant growth improving the overall physical, chemical, and biological properties of soils

Processing yard and kitchen vegetable wastes at the point of generation not only has a positive environmental impact, but reduces the costs of collecting, transporting, and processing by municipalities, so everyone benefits.

Composting is the natural decomposition of organic material by microorganisms in a warm, moist, aerobic (oxygen-demanding) environment. These microbes are common in nature, normally found on the surface of leaves, grass clippings, and other yard wastes. When the composting process is complete, it produces an earthy smelling, crumbly substance called humus that is an excellent soil amendment. Yard waste such as leaves, grass clippings, immature weeds, and shredded woody waste can be successfully composted. From the home you can compost shredded paper and vegetable scraps. Materials that should not be composted include meat, bones, fish, fatty food wastes (cheese, oils), dog and cat litter, perennial weeds, and diseased plants. *Warning*—if you use broad leaf herbicides on your lawn some of those chemicals can persist through the composting process and harm plants when the compost is used as a soil amendment. If you use herbicides on your lawn, don't add the grass clippings to your compost pile—simply leave them on the lawn and as they decompose, nutrients and organic matter are added to the soil benefitting your lawn.

Composting can be done either passively or actively. The difference between the two methods is in the amount of time/work required and how quickly the compost is produced. Passive composting is simply creating an open pile of material and letting it sit for months—decomposition will occur, but very slowly. This method is not as neat as using some sort of compost bin, so it may not be suitable for urban neighborhoods. With active composting you use some sort of bin and layer the organic wastes, maintain proper moisture, and turn the pile on a regular basis.

The microorganisms that decompose yard waste and other materials turning it into compost require oxygen, moisture, and nutrients to thrive. The oxygen is supplied

by aerating (or turning) the pile. Moisture should be added to the pile as the material is layered if it is not already sufficiently moist (you want it at the level of a wrung out sponge – just a few drops coming out when you squeeze a handful). You may need to add more water during dry spells. Organic material contains carbon and nitrogen, the nutrients necessary for energy and growth. The microbes are most active when the ratio of carbon to nitrogen is about 30 to 1. Materials such as leaves, straw, and sawdust are high in carbon; grass clippings, manure, and vegetable scraps are high in nitrogen.

Compost bins can be constructed using wire or snow fencing, wooden slats, or even old shipping pallets. There are also many different types of commercial composting bins available. The bin should be large enough to contain a pile capable of holding heat while small enough to allow air to the center of the pile. Generally, the minimum dimensions should be 3' square to hold heat. If the bin is too large, air flow will be restricted to the center of the pile and turning it will become quite a chore. Turning the pile is probably the most important and often the most ignored step in producing compost. Do your part to be “Green” and contribute to a healthy environment by creating “Brown” through composting your yard and kitchen wastes.

To learn more about composting, bins, and use of compost go to <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/category/gardening-the-environment.html>. If you have questions on composting or other garden problems visit or contact the Loudoun County Master Gardener Volunteers at their Help Desk at 703/771-5150 or ex107mg@vt.edu.

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NEW TO THE COMMUNITY OR CHANGED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

For those new to the community, we have a great communications structure. First we have a community website at www.courtsandridges.org where you can find out about community events, HOA committee meetings, trash information, and how to contact our management company or our Board of Trustees.

Second, we have a community newsletter (well, you know that as your reading it). It is published every 2 months, available online at our website and delivered to everyone's home in the community. It provides information from our community manager, Board of Trustees, and committees as well as other interesting articles. Be sure to use our advertisers when the need arises as they help to keep the newsletter self-funding.

Finally, we have an email distribution list where you can be notified by email about the C&R Newsletter, important dates, event changes, snow removal updates, and much more. You can sign-up at <http://www.courtsandridges.org/mail/subscribe.htm>. We value your privacy and your details are never shared outside of the community and will only be used for community and other local notifications.

If you are already subscribed and need to change your details or unsubscribe, you can do so at <http://www.courtsandridges.org/phplist/?p=preferences>.

BLADE RUNNERS IS USING A NEW NO-PHOSPHORUS FERTILIZER PRODUCT

Eric G Storck, President, Blade Runners

Our competitors use the lowest common-denominator fertilizers for cost savings, while Blade Runners thinks about both the customer and the environment. Read more about the newest No-Phosphorus Environmentally Friendly fertilizer product we're using and how it's protecting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed at <http://blade-runners.com/blog/2011/09/21/blade-runners-is-using-a-new-no-phosphorus-fertilizer-product>.

COURTS & RIDGES ODD JOB SQUAD

If your child is interested in making a little extra cash helping out his/her neighbors, let us know and we will add their names to the list. Please provide the Child's Name (only first names will be published), Phone Number, and Service(s) offered. We encourage parents to meet or speak to the requester of services.

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Caitlin	703/724-7733	Babysitting
Emily	703/724-1904	Babysitting
Krista, Julie, Jamie	703/723-3342	Dog walking, pet sitting, babysitting
Leah	703/723-6947	Babysitting
Melissa	571/291-3580	Dog walking, pet sitting, house sitting, errands

Community Contacts

Courts and Ridges website: www.courtsandridges.org

Community Manager (Audra Wallace): 703/771-9355

PMP after-hours emergency #: 800/336-8009, press 6

Sheriff, non-emergency: 703/777-0445, 703/777-1021

Deputy Craig Schleiden assigned to Courts and Ridges: 703/771-0581, x123

Trash Removal/Recycling (American Disposal Services): 703/368-0500

Loudoun Hospital (main): 703/858-6000

Snow Removal: Contact PMP for townhouse areas or VDOT (703/383-8368) for single family homes

Offenders website: <http://www.familywatchdog.us>

Call Miss Utility 811 before you dig

Further contacts for local utilities available at: <http://courtsandridges.org/Community/utilities.html>

Crime Reports: www.loudoun.gov/crimereports

ADVERTISING RATES

Full details about advertising in the Newsletter are available at: <http://courtsandridges.org/Communications/Newsletter.html> or contact communications@courtsandridges.org

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