

The Forest News

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Ashley Forest Homeowners' Association

President's Corner

Marty Sas

How time flies! Here we are rapidly rushing into summer, kids are out of school, and vacation time is upon us. Here, too, is the second edition of The Ashley Forest Newsletter, your source of community information and a forum for your active participation. Your Board of Directors needs your involvement. We want to hear from you! Together we can grow as a community and keep Ashley Forest the community YOU chose to live in.

First, let me thank everyone who provided their email address with payment of the annual association fees. Some of you did not indicate if you had an email address. Others have yet to pay their 2007 association fees, so we cannot assume that you do or do not have an email address. We would like to set up a group distribution that will permit your Board to contact you or provide important information to you more quickly than with conventional mail. If you have an email address **please** provide that to us by contacting any of the Board members

Hardly a week goes by

without someone approaching a Board member asking them what the annual association fee provides them. Why do they have to pay the fee? Why should they pay a late fee? When we bought our homes in Ashley Forest, we were made aware that Ashley Forest had a Homeowners Association requiring an annual fee. Basically, the annual fee provides for the maintenance and repair of common areas, such as the front entrance, water for irrigation of the front entrance, drainage ditches, and ponds within the development, and legal fees associated with enforcing adherence with the Association Covenants and the management of the association. To meet these requirements, our annual budget depends on receiving your annual fee during the first quarter of the year. The operating expenses are no different from your mortgage payment. If you are late you are assessed a fee and interest.

Not receiving your association fee until very late in the year places an undue burden on the Board by requiring us to withdraw funds

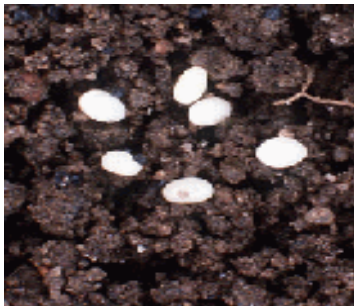
from our reserve (i.e., emergency) fund to pay for operating expenses. The reserve fund exists to cover emergency repairs, such as the work done this month on the drainage ditch between Eagles Nest and the pond at Falcon Ridge. Extensive repair of the ditch and pond was done to prevent further erosion and to restore the drainage system to its original design capability. Therefore, please help us to help you by sending your annual dues to the Treasurer by the end of the first quarter annually. For those of you who have not yet turned in your fee please do so.

Refer to the article on page 3 – Curl Up With The Covenants: The Annual Assessment – for another perspective in response to questions about the Association.

Thank you!

Marty Sas

The Beetle Invasion



A typical cluster of Japanese Beetle eggs

Not to be confused with the British Invasion or Ringo, Paul, John, and George, I am referring to Japanese Beetles. Those annoying insects that wreak havoc on our shrubs, flowers, and even lawns.

Japanese Beetles were first identified around the turn of the century as being a problem pest in the United States. They probably arrived in our country by being transported in the root system of some plant. Once planted in our soil, this pest quickly took advantage of the luscious plants, shrubs, and trees gardeners and homeowners like to grow. Today, this beetle emerges in early summer and will eat just about anything we like to grow around the home. The end result will hurt the

tree or plant they are feeding on and may lead to its death if left untreated.

The life expectancy of Japanese beetles is one year. Eggs hatch in the fall, feed before winter and then over winter by going deep into the soil below the frost line. In the spring, they will come back up to the top of the soil, pupate to adults and then emerge as the flying pest we all love to hate. Initially, the adults will seek just about any plant on which to feed. They love roses, birch trees, purple plums, crepe myrtle's, dogwoods and cherry trees. However, no plant with succulent leaves is safe. This feeding will lead to massive destruction of leaves within a short time. The loss of leaves can be devastating to certain plants

making them more vulnerable to fungus and drought.

Homeowners may be tempted to use beetle traps. However, the big problem with traps is they lure many beetles to your property that may never come there in the first place. Japanese beetles are not the best flyers and tests show they will actually miss a trap by several yards about half the time they are following the scent from the trap.

Beetle traps and/or bags are NOT allowed in Ashley Forest. The best method of controlling Japanese beetles is by applying Milky Spore (see article below). In a unified effort, Milky Spore has been applied to all properties within Ashley Forest.

Milky Spore



Milky Spore is a naturally occurring host specific bacterium (*Bacillus popilliae*-Dutky). This product is lethal to a familiar destructive summer-time pest. It targets and discriminately works to attack the white grubs of Japanese Beetles.

The adult beetle feeds on fruits, flowers, shrubs, garden plants and the foliage of some field crops. At the immature beetle stage, the grub enjoys feeding on the roots of grass and other vegetation to include stems of plants. Turf inoculation

treatments / applications with MILKY SPORE puts in place an on-guard protective blanket on your lawn.

Considered the weakest link in the chain and the most vulnerable point to introduce an infection, resident spores in treated turf are swallowed by grubs during their normal pattern of feeding; this starts the demise of healthy grubs. Milky Spore disease then begins to cripple the grub, and within the next 7-21 days will eventually die. As the grub decomposes, it

releases billions of new spores. Milky Spore is not harmful to beneficial insects, birds, bees, pets or man.

The product is approved and registered with EPA; Milky Spore will not affect wells, ponds, or streams.

The ideal way to combat area infestation is through organized community efforts. Large areas treated with Milky Spore can result in long-term control.

Neighborhood Block Party Update

Clovis L. Jackson

In our first Newsletter, we introduced the idea of a **Neighborhood Block Party**. We now want to turn the notch up a bit and turn this thought into a reality. That will require your support, ideas, active participation, and committed attendance.

In Board discussions, the thought has been to keep the **Neighborhood Block Party** simple, concentrate on having the event in the early fall, and holding our “maiden” event on one of our four cul-de-sacs. Of course, once a Planning Committee is in-place, it will finalize just how this reality will unfold.

Therefore, we are solicit-

ing two volunteers from each street in our subdivision, except Ashley Forest Drive, which we are asking for three volunteers. That will compose a Planning Committee comprised of nine, plus a Chairperson. Hopefully that will minimize the additional help needed prior to, during, and after the event.

Your thoughts and ideas are welcomed, even at this early stage. We hope to hold our first planning session the week of July 9, 2007; therefore, we will go door-to-door starting the week of June 25 to make sure our team of planners have ample time to gather their thoughts and ideas to execute this

reality.

We have formalized a set of “heads-up” questions mentioned in our first Newsletter into the enclosed survey. This will provide an overall pulse of our subdivision regarding the **Neighborhood Block Party**.

Please complete the survey and either drop it off with any of the Board Members or return mail via the Ashley Forest post office box (refer to the article on page 8 – Ashley Forest Post Office Box).

*Residents interested in serving on the Block Party Committee should contact Board Members **Clovis Jackson** or **Sarah Blum** (770-719-1282)*

Calling All Writers

*Do you have a knack for writing? Do you want to learn more about a particular topic? We're looking for your comments, articles, or ideas for future newsletters. Please contact **Debra Rector** at director01@comcast.net*

CURL UP WITH THE COVENANTS: The Annual Assessment

Max Bruni

At the home closing, every homeowner agrees to live within the articles set forth in the Covenants. We have all agreed to do this, because we know that setting standards for the neighborhood is the best way to maintain and improve the value of the neighborhood and our properties.

We have also agreed to pay our annual assessments, or dues. As stated within the Covenants for Ashley Forest, these dues shall be used exclusively for promoting the beautifi-

cation of the Property, the health, safety, and welfare of the Owners, and the improvement and maintenance of the common areas.

Expenses include taxes for the common areas, insurance premiums, HOA operating costs, landscaping, and neighborhood improvements. The HOA has a very tight budget to fulfill all of these needs, so it is vital that everyone pay their dues on time.

The annual dues are collected each year, and are

considered delinquent if not paid by the end of March.

When one property does not pay their dues, it costs the whole neighborhood. HOW? Well, the costs associated with collecting late dues, the interest, late fees and even legal charges we must incur to collect dues (up to and including liens or foreclosures) comes out of everyone's pockets through dues.

Additionally, dues are not negotiable and may not be

withheld due to Homeowner dissatisfaction. Owners may contact the Board should you have issues that need attention.

Contact Maximiliano Bruni, Treasurer, prior to the due date for consideration in light of a proven hardship.

Homeowners may contact any Board Member should you have any questions regarding the Covenants listing of the annual dues and payment.



Newsletter Issues On-Line

Download past copies of newsletters right from your e-mail. Contact Debra Rector at drector01@comcast.net with "Newsletter" as the SUBJECT.

Note: You'll need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the Newsletter.

Landscape Maintenance

Our Homeowner Covenants, By-Laws, and Architectural Guidelines provide basic responsibilities and guidelines for both the Homeowners and Homeowners Association for maintaining a consistent community-wide standard of appearance of all properties, individual unit properties as well as common areas (reference Article 5.2).

Landscaping and property maintenance is an essential element of design within Ashley Forest and requires all of us to do our part in maintaining the high architectural and landscape standards we all thought were desirable qualities for the place we wanted to live.

Please maintain lawns and edging, control

weeds, and refresh all pine straw or pine bark mulch annually as needed. For the common area at the entrance to Ashley Forest, the HOA is committed to providing fresh pine straw mulch twice a year, cutting the grass weekly or as needed, controlling weeds and maintaining the general appearance of the landscaping.

Remember also, that woodpiles and equipment are to be kept and maintained in the rear yard only and must be screened by adequate planting and/or fencing so as to conceal them from view of neighboring residences and the streets.

It is everyone's responsibility to know and comply with the Homeowner

Marty Sas

Covenants, By-Laws, and Architectural Guidelines. Together we can ensure an appealing landscape and architectural appearance in Ashley Forest is maintained for the benefit of everyone.

Finally, during this drought, please comply with the current watering restrictions. (Refer to article – Fayette County Watering Restrictions on page 6.)

Thank you for your assistance in maintaining our community standards.

Financial Update

As of May 1, 2007, two Homeowners (3%) still owe their 2005, 2006, and 2007 annual assessments. Thirteen Homeowners (17%) still owe their 2006 and 2007 annual assessments. Eight Homeowners (11%) still owe their 2007 annual assessment.

This is not a good start to 2007. The two Homeowners that have not paid dues and late fees

[as stated in section 8.1b] in three years have been issued a final notice to pay by May 11 or liens will be issued [as stated in section 8.7]. Any Homeowner that fails to pay their dues and late fees by the end of June will be issued a final notice to pay by June 15 or liens will be issued shortly thereafter.

If you have any questions or if you want to

Max Bruni

see if you are documented as being current, please contact Maximiliano Bruni, Treasurer, at 404.432.9697 or at fsu-max@yahoo.com.



Summer Safety Tips

Clovis L. Jackson

With Memorial Day behind us, the 101 Days of summer follows. Many of us dwell on spending time with our kids who are now on break, or soon to be, from the chores of school. We also look forward to spending time with family, friends, co-workers, and yes - OUR NEIGHBORS.

Vacation plans and time carved out for plain ole fun are now being executed. I hope that the "TIPS" below will serve as a reminder to keep safety at the forefront of all our summer activities. Unbelievably, we can be safe and not take the fun out of summer **activities**.

So please join the ASHLEY FOREST HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION in wishing all a fun-safe summer of 2007.

Keep your family safe this summer by following these tips from the **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**.

FUN IN THE SUN

Babies under 6 months:

- Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats that shade the neck are still the top recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn. However when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a minimal amount of sunscreen with at least 15 SPF to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands.

Young Children:

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15.

Older Children:

- The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand as they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.

HEAT STRESS IN EXERCISING CHILDREN

- The intensity of activities that last 15 minutes or more should be reduced whenever high heat and humidity reach critical levels.
- At the beginning of a strenuous exercise program or after traveling to a warmer climate, the intensity and duration of exercise should be limited initially and then gradually increased during a period of 10 to 14 days to accomplish acclimatization to the heat.
- Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced, for example, each 20 minutes, 5 oz of cold tap water or a flavored sports drink for a child weighing 90 lbs, and 9 oz for an adolescent weighing 130 lbs, even if the child does not feel thirsty.
- Clothing should be light-colored, lightweight, and limited to one layer of absorbent material to facilitate evaporation of sweat. Dry garments should replace sweat-saturated garments.
- Practices and games played in the heat should be shortened and more frequent water/hydration breaks should be instituted.

(Continued on Page 7)



E-Updates

*What is the best way to stay informed of Ashley Forest news, events, and happenings? Sign up for the e-mail tree! Send a message to **Debra Rector** at drector01@comcast.net with **SUBSCRIBE** in the subject line.*



Drought Resistant Landscape Plants

Paul Thomas

Annual and perennial flowers that thrive even in a drought are already out there – hundreds of them – in Georgia nurseries and garden centers. Several Georgia landscape and greenhouse experts recently listed more than 200 mainstream plants that, if you get them established properly, need precious little water in hot, dry conditions.

Most of these plants are truly prolific bloomers. For example, Lantana 'New Gold' loves 100-degree heat and needs watering only once every two weeks to bloom solidly through the summer. We often don't use these drought-resistant wonders because we are more drawn to the many exciting new annuals that, unfortunately, are water hogs.

Who waters our native woodland flowers? These plants have lived in Georgia

droughts for eons with no water fairies caring for them.

Native plants can take the heat, and they are adapted to drought. Hundreds of native flowers and flowering bulbs can brighten your garden. Moreover, many garden centers and nurseries carry natives.

You can learn more about native plants and where to buy them from the Georgia Native Plant Society Web site (www.gnps.org/).

Don't like bed preparation and all the fuss? Natives are the best way to responsibly landscape and garden without the extra effort. Here are just a few plants we recommend.

Perennials for sun: Lantana 'Miss Huff,' Helianthus angustifolia, Salvia guaranitica, Salvia leucantha, Ruellia brittoniana, Rudbeckia triloba, Stachys byzantina,

Artemesia 'Silver King' and Kniphofia uvaria.

Perennials for shade: Helebor hybrids, Japanese autumn ferns, Aspidistra eliator, Monarda didyma (it wilts but comes back), Iris reticulata, Sedum 'Autumn Joy', Iris siberica and Hosta hybrids.

Annuals: Lantana camara hybrids, Catharanthus roseus, Amaranthus caudatus, Celosia cristata, Portulaca hybrids, Melampodium paludosum, Petunias (especially old-timey and "Wave" petunias), Passiflora 'Byron's Beauty'.

(Paul Thomas is a horticulturist with the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. You can get a complete list of recommended plants at www.geofaces.caes.uga.edu/)

Fayette County Watering Restrictions

Debra Rector

Little if any widespread, sustained relief from the drought is anticipated. The long-term outlook is for the drought to continue to intensify.

If extremely dry conditions continue into the summer, afternoon temperatures between 100 and 105 will be common across the Coastal Plain and Piedmont regions of the state. Temperatures in the 90s will be common across the mountains.

The entire state remains under the level-2 outdoor water-use schedule. Outdoor watering is allowed from **midnight to 10 a.m. on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at odd-number street addresses and on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays at even-number addresses. It is banned all day on Fridays.**

Local water authorities may further restrict out-

door watering.

Get updated drought information at the web site www.georgiadrought.org. The state drought web site includes information on how to deal with the drought.

Updated weather information is at the web site www.georgiaweather.net. This University of Georgia network has 71 automated weather stations.

Summer Safety Tips (continued from Page 5) Clovis L. Jackson

POOL SAFETY

- Install a fence at least four-feet high around all four sides of the pool. The fence should not have openings or protrusions that a young child could use to get over, under, or through.
- Make sure pool gates open out from the pool, and self-close and self-latch at a height children cannot reach.
- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook - a long pole with a hook on the end - and life preserver) and a portable telephone near the pool.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children may not be developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under 4 should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision."

BUG SAFETY

- Don't use scented soaps, perfumes, or hair sprays on your child.
- Avoid areas where insects nest or congregate, such as stagnant pools of water, uncovered foods and gardens where flowers are in bloom.
- Avoid dressing your child in clothing with bright colors or flowery prints.
- To remove a visible stinger from skin, gently scrape it off horizontally with a credit card or your fingernail.
- Combination sunscreen/insect repellent products should be avoided because sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours, but the insect repellent should not be reapplied.
- Insect repellents containing DEET are most effective against ticks and mosquitoes, and can prevent Lyme disease.
- The concentration of DEET in products may range from less than 10 percent to over 30 percent. The benefits of DEET reach a peak at a concentration of 30 percent, the maximum concentration currently recommended for infants and children. DEET should not be used on children under 2 months of age.
- The concentration of DEET varies significantly from product to product, so read the label of any product you purchase.

LAWN MOWER SAFETY

- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
 - Children younger than 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers. Children younger than 12 years should not use walk-behind mowers.
 - Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
 - Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
 - Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
 - Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
 - Do not allow children to ride as passengers on mowers.
-

Board Members

President

Marty Sas

Vice President

Rob Fleming

Treasurer

Max Bruni

Secretary

Debra Rector

Member-At-Large

Sarah Blum
Jim Bridgeman
Doug Main
Clovis Jackson

We're coming to the web! Stay tuned...

www.ashleyforest.us

(Under construction)

What is a Homeowners Association?

A homeowners association is an organization established to govern a private community. By buying a lot and/or home, an owner automatically becomes a member of the HOA of which it is a part. Most HOAs are corporations established under the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. An HOA is similar to other corporations -- it is governed by a board of directors elected by the members and a set of rules called by-laws. Books and records of financial transactions must be kept, taxes paid, and certain services provided to members. The board prepares an annual budget to estimate expenses, and then assesses each member a share of the costs. The primary purpose of the association is to protect and preserve the value of the privately and commonly used property. In furtherance of that goal, there are restrictions concerning pets; requirements as to fence height; or limitations on the number of cars allowed in the

driveways. These rules often conflict with the desires of an individual owner but exist for the general good of the entire community. In addition, the association may have the responsibility to repair and maintain portions of the community, such as streets, common landscaping, and community entrance.

The individual owner in a homeowners association has the opportunity to become involved and participate in the on-going affairs of the community, and the responsibility to assure that the association's actions conform to the by-laws and declaration.

Board members of Ashley Forest serve a two-year term subject to continuation by vote of homeowners. Acting through the board as a whole, a board member should:

- Enforce the documents
- Establish sound fiscal policies and maintain accurate records

- Develop a workable budget, keeping in mind the needs, requirements and expectations of the community
- Establish reserve funds
- Act on budget items and determine assessment rates
- Collect assessments
- Establish, publicize, and enforce rules and penalties
- Authorize legal action against owners who do not comply with the rules
- Review local laws before passing rules or sending by-laws to membership for approval
- Appoint committees and delegate authority to them
- Select an attorney, an auditor, insurance agent and other professionals for the association
- Inform board members of all business items that require their vote
- Inform members of important board decisions and transactions
- See that the association is protected for the acts of all parties with fiscal responsibilities
- Attend and participate at meetings

Your volunteer participation in serving on the board or a committee, either now or in the future would be greatly appreciated!

Ashley Forest Post Office Box

The Board has received comments from Ashley Forest residents regarding confusion when mailing correspondence or dues to the Board.

Because Board Members serve a two-year term alternating every year, we addressed this concern by opening a post office box.

This standard mailing ad-

dress will alleviate the problem of changing a mailing address as the Board members change. It will be more convenient not only for our residents but also companies and vendors doing business with the Ashley Forest Homeowners Association.

Residents, of course, may at any time contact a Board member by phone,

Sarah Blum

e-mail or at their home.

The address for the post office box is:

**Ashley Forest Home Owners Association
PO Box 262
Tyrone GA 30290-0262**

A Board Member will check the box weekly for incoming mail.

