



THE "OVERLOOK"

Vol. 4, No. 2 JUNE 2012

"An independent Newsletter by and for the Residents of Snowden Overlook"

From your Editor..."June is bustin' out all over", as Rogers and Hammerstein's "Carousel" musical exclaims. Our front yard gardens and common areas are truly lovely, evidence of many hours of work on residents' behalf. As your editor is into her eighth year (is that truly possible?) living at Snowden Overlook, the transformation from Spring 2005 is remarkable; at that time we had NO grass, NO streetlights, NO trash pickup, NO mail delivery (true!), NO Clubhouse nor pool, and of course no stunning flowers blooming. Now our community is a showplace for the town of Columbia. Enjoy!



MASTER BOARD NEWS

*Lou True, President...*Our new pool season has begun! It should be a great one, with thanks due again to our volunteer Certified Pool Operators whose efforts give us all the opportunity for safe swimming during extended hours. The new pool heater allowed us to have a successful early opening in May. In addition, the board has decided to add an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and oxygen supply to the pool level, like the units in the craft room upstairs. I do have one request: if you see an umbrella left up but unused on the patio or the pool deck, please help us avoid wind damage by putting it down, even if you didn't put it up.

Many thanks to the Greenbriar garden club for donating and planting flowers along the back of the Clubhouse parking lot.

The concrete replacement in front of the Clubhouse is finally complete. We will now turn our attention to other repairs to the parking lot: cracked concrete near the pool gate, tiling at the front door, etc.

The new Lending Library in the Craft Room offers many books of wide interest. Check it out.

Thanks to Mark Bloom and Mike Goldblatt for setting up two **WiFi range extenders** in the Clubhouse. These devices should allow you to connect to the internet anywhere on the main floor of the Clubhouse, and even on the pool deck. When you check for 'hotspots' on your device, three icons for SOClub may now show. Pick the strongest signal and enjoy. Starbucks and Panera's have nothing on us!

As you've no doubt observed, we've had a spate of problems with the entrance gates. The entrance gate controller has been sent out for a factory diagnosis. On a brighter note, once the entrance gate is again functioning, we have installed a device that ensures that emergency vehicles can open the gate just by sounding their sirens. This is a backup to the existing key-based system to help ensure that emergency vehicles can get to S.O. quickly.



I regret to report that Kim Tosh has accepted another job and resigned as a member of the Clubhouse staff. We wish Kim well, and have begun recruitment for her replacement.

Finally, if you have not yet submitted your data form to the office, please do so soon. On last count, about 80 units of our 343 have not submitted forms. Among other things, these forms will allow SOCA staff to register your 'swipe' cards that allow entry into the Clubhouse and your vehicle transponders that operate the gates. At some point, SOCA intends to disable all cards and transponders not registered.

MESSAGES FROM OUR COMMUNITY PRESIDENTS...

KENDALL I, Bob Brady...It has been a fast-paced three months since our last Newsletter. Our HOA took on its biggest project yet when we, the Board, decided to caulk and paint all the wood trim of each unit in Kendall I. All 78 units were completed by Certa Pro and accepted by the Board. This all required a diligent approach to understanding our Bylaws, Declarations and Reserve Study. Timeframes for certain projects were altered, consistent with the lifespan of certain materials when our units were built. The entire community was given an opportunity to question us at a Special Meeting before we voted, and the project was overwhelmingly accepted by the community.

There are two more projects to be

undertaken this summer. The first will be the painting of the rear stoops in the inner ring, which will be covered by the HOA. The second project will be the wood trim and supports of the rear decks on the outer ring. Since the rear decks are the property of the unit owners, it will be more time-consuming to complete this project.

I would be very remiss if I did not publicly thank our Treasurer, Bill Fisher, who has been with this Board for the 2 ½ years with me, and for some time before. Bill has resigned as of 31 May 2012 because he is marrying a wonderful woman from Australia, and they have elected to live "down under". Thanks, Bill, for all you have done and for keeping us on track with our money.

Joanne LaPorte has agreed to be our Treasurer until the end of the year when we will have elections for two positions. Joanne brings a wealth of experience to the position, having previously been on the board, and as a CPA she will make sure we are correct in how we spend our money.

Have a great summer and I will report back to you in the fall.

KENDALL II, Karen Paciarelli...Our Board has been in place for a year now and has made a difference in our community. We have made a conscious effort to keep the residents informed of all goings on. From the feedback I receive, they are pleased with our efforts. We will continue on this path of



communication in the year ahead. Attending our monthly Board meetings affords residents the opportunity to contribute ideas and comments that can benefit all of us.

K2 has also been moving forward with maintenance and upkeep of our units. The Board walked the community with the contractor hired by the Hardie Company to perform warranty work on buildings in Kendall II. The contractor expects the work to begin during the first week of June. This includes: 1) replacing some siding on buildings, 2) replacing both side panels and the kick panel of the bottom step on rear stairs of units with stairs. This work will be done at no cost to Kendall II.

This month we had a wonderful turnout for our Cookout under the tent. Special thanks to our K2 Social Committee and all their efforts to make this happen.

Villas I, Lou True... "Birds Entering Attics": several years ago, we sealed openings in many of our units to stop the entrance of birds. It now seems that the birds have found additional points of entry into some units. While we already know about these units, if your unit has birds roosting in openings that allow them to actually enter the building, please let board member George Warde know at 410.953.0035, or email him at _glwards1@juno.com mail to: villas1atsnowden@aol.com Unit owners are responsible for their vent openings, and use of vent covers is recommended to prevent entry by

birds.

On a related note, please be aware that leaving garage doors open invites invasion and damage by rodents and other unwelcome guests.

Landscaping: While we have had some well-spaced rain this spring, we are still in a drought situation for the year so far. Therefore, please be alert for the need to water your planting beds, trees and grass this summer. Also, dead plants from last year should be removed from your gardens. Villas I has water bags you may borrow for your trees. Fill them once a week or before you go on vacation. They may be picked up at 8715 Warm Waves Way.

Committees: We are pleased and grateful to announce that Gloria Brown has agreed to serve as chair of our Landscaping Committee. Still, we need additional volunteers for our committees. These include Architectural, Landscape, Parking/Traffic, Social and Maintenance. If you have an interest in any of these areas and can spare some time to help out, please let any board member know, or attend a board meeting to volunteer.

On the Green: come join your neighbors every Wednesday night on the Green (our garden area at Secret Waves Way). Bring a lawn chair or sit on our benches and enjoy an evening, talking with friends. Weather



permitting, we will have a "dessert" night once a month in the summer on the Green. Notice will be given to your email from villas1atsnowden@aol.com. If you haven't given us your email address, do so now so you won't miss out on important community notices.

Architectural: our Board passed the new Villas Architectural Guidelines at the May 17 meeting. If you misplaced the guidelines that we sent you, check them out by clicking on the link at www.snowdenoverlook.com (<http://www.snowdenoverlook.com>) Follow the path: Residents, Associations, Villas1, Policies, and Guidelines. You can also find them on the Villas I website under the Documents tab at villasoneatsnowdenoverlook.hoaintouch.com. We can also send a pdf copy to your email if you let us know at villas1atsnowden@aol.com. Our management company WPM may check our houses for compliance with the guidelines. If you are not in compliance, a letter will be sent informing the unit owner.

Dryer Vents, a reminder: Most homes in Villas I have a long clothes dryer vent tube to the outside. Lint can build up and make our dryer less efficient. It can also create a fire hazard. As a result, dryer vents should be cleaned periodically.

Ovation, Carole Liberman...Life at Ovation gets better and better. Our

Social Committee always has something in the works and these events are very successful. On May 12, we had a wonderful Grilling Party and dedication of a rose garden in memory of those who have lived in Ovation and passed away. It was a touching event. We also celebrated May birthdays and enjoyed delicious food and great company. We also had a lovely gathering for brunch by the pool that was very enjoyable.

Also, many of our residents were given the option and have ordered Key Safes. These devices allow emergency personnel to enter your apartment or home if you have Life Alert (or other similar system) if you are unable to answer the door. The combination is given to the Life Alert company. The key is kept in the key safe on the door frame outside your door and the combination is given only to emergency personnel by the Life Alert company. Many folks also ordered them for the convenience of having a spare key safely available outside their door.

Villas II, Shirley Freto...Summer has arrived and when I'm driving thru the development I see such beautiful flowers the homeowners have planted. A really great assortment. Thank you to all.

The swimming pool has opened and I hope everyone turned in their surveys to the Clubhouse; otherwise you will not be able to use the amenities. Also, you will not be able to pass thru the



Security Gates unless you have returned your survey.

As always, Villas II is recruiting volunteers for committees. I would like to **reach out to all of the residents** to step up to the plate and volunteer. We thank those who devote their time.

Policy on Resident Profile &

Directory: This will be updated and you can retrieve it on our website. You will be notified when that is available. *In addition, we remind all that parking is not permitted on the street, and guest parking spaces are not to be used by residents.*

Reminder of our Board of Directors meetings and work sessions. They are:

- Board of Directors meetings: 4th Tues. of each month at 7 PM
- Work Sessions: 2nd Wed. of each month at 6:30 PM

All are invited to attend if only to catch up on "What's Goin' On". In June we will be having our Annual Meeting and all should be advised.

As President, I am currently doing an update of our directory of homeowners in Villas II. If you do not see your name, email me at spfreto@comcast.net



WEBSITE

Michael Goldblatt...Remember to visit our community website,

www.Snowdenoverlook.com for information about weekly activities and special events. Also remember to use the "Subscription Page" at the website, <http://snowdenoverlook.com/Subscribe.html> to receive an e-mail with the monthly activity calendar, or quarterly issues of "The Overlook" newsletter. And use the "Contact Page" at the website, <http://snowdenoverlook.com/Contact.html> to submit suggestions or to let me know if you would like to receive a weekly e-mail with a listing of activities and community news. [Ed. Note: this is a terrific service to keep all residents on track to all our events at the Clubhouse]

Also, the Clubhouse WiFi network, "SOCLUB", has been improved to reach throughout the building and onto the pool deck. Residents can use this WiFi network for free access to the Internet on their mobile devices (smartphones, laptops, iPods, iPads, etc.). Residents are not required to use a password to access the WiFi network. Thanks go to Mark Bloom (Villas II) for setting up the equipment that extended the reach of the WiFi network.

Regarding the Swipe Cards and Transponders: please contact the Clubhouse office at 410.872.9311 if you have questions or need another copy of the Form. There is a link to the Form on the SOCA page at our community website

<http://snowdenoverlook.com/SOCA.html>

**SECURITY
CORNER***Jeff Medwid*

After significant debate and research, I'm now happy to report the security cameras are now installed and operational in both the Guard House and the Clubhouse.

A recent incident has already proven that *the cameras are effective and beneficial to our community security*. At approximately 7:30 PM on May 30th a couple—man and woman—walked boldly into one of our resident's villas, which just happened to be unlocked. The owners—present at the time!!—heard them as they were walking up the stairs. After a brief verbal exchange, the intruders hurried out of the unit. The owners pursued them in their own vehicle out of our complex as the intruders sped away, driving thru two red lights.

Our security cameras were able to identify the license plate number and make of the intruders' van. This information was turned over to the local police, and in turn, the police talked with the intruders who claimed that they entered the wrong villa.

Lesson learned: **KEEP ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS TO YOUR HOME LOCKED AT ALL TIMES, EVEN WHEN YOU ARE PRESENT!!** And promptly call 911 if you observe ANY

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (persons, vehicles), especially late at night and during early morning hours. After you call 911, call the **Guardhouse at 410.312.0423** [Ed. Note: KEEP THIS NUMBER HANDY] to alert the security guard that you have called 911 so they can direct responders to the area where there is a problem. Additional resources about personal security are available on the Security Page at our website:

http://www.snowderoverlook.com/SOC_A_security.html

**SOCIAL COMMITTEE...Karen
Paciarelli**

We have wonderful and exciting entertainment contracted for the summer and months ahead. Continue to check the website for calendar of events at www.snowdenoverlook.com , <http://www.snowdenoverlook.com> We just experienced the now-annual Corvette Car Show followed by a Mexican dinner at the Clubhouse. Here is a sample of what is ahead:

Sat. June 23rd: Deck Party, Kenny Jones Duo, 6 PM, catered dinner: \$15/pp.

Sun. July 22nd : Deck Party, Panharmonia, Steel Drum, 6 PM, catered dinner: \$15/pp



Sat. Aug. 11th: Poolside Party, "Big Daddy" Stallings, Blues/Jazz Group, 7PM, appetizers/desserts, \$20/pp

Sun, Sept. 9th: Concert: opera singer/accompanist from Lyric Opera House, 7PM, dessert and drinks, \$15/pp

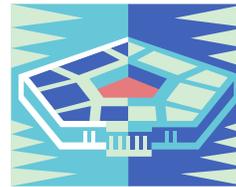
Sun, Oct. 21st: Concert: "Champagne Hour", dessert/drinks, 7PM, \$15/pp



FUTURE BIKE GROUP AT S.O. ?

Your editor received an email from resident Dennis Eichenlaub, who has a penchant for bike tours; go to his website at <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/b2b> to confirm his status. He has learned that several people in Snowden Overlook like bike riding. He writes: "It would be nice if we had a bicycling group. We could ride around our neighborhood, or ride in Columbia a few miles to get coffee/lunch/snack, or load bikes in cars and ride out in the country. ...other bicycling groups in the area ride a lot faster than my old legs can go. I was thinking of a group that would do relaxed recreational rides, share interesting destinations, and in general have a good time. If anyone is interested, you can post in my B2B guestbook, or drop me a line at deichenlaub@gmail.com" {Ed. Note: this sounds like something many of us have been looking for, and what this Newsletter is all about: great ideas for residents from residents.}

On May 7th, Dennis left on a solo bike tour from Baltimore to Bangor, ME— "Baltimore to Banger or Bust", which is 1,900 miles roundtrip. He will return to Columbia mid-June. If interested in his progress, you can follow along on his blog, previously mentioned.



RETIRED MILITARY CLUB

...*Bob Brady*...As many of you have noticed, the American flag we raised on November 11, 2011, has become faded and the edges are tattered. We feel fortunate that our flag sustained us for seven months, and on June 10th we lowered it, removed it, and raised a new flag. Our old flag will be disposed of in a proper manner consistent with it being our American flag.

We have every intention of meeting this summer, and will do so if we can get a time convenient for everyone. If you are new to our community and are retired military, you are most welcome to join us. Call me at 410.290.1914, or email me at reg-sg@comcast.net

INSURANCE GUIDELINES



...*Fred Merther*... "Travel Insurance" As summer approaches, planning for vacations takes place with the possibility that travel insurance might be needed in some cases. While travel



insurance is not something I've had a lot of experience with, I will try to give a brief outline of the subject.

What does travel insurance do? If something goes wrong on your vacation, you can recover some or all of your costs, depending on the kind of insurance you buy. Most policies cover trip interruptions and cancellations and pay for emergency medical and dental care and, if necessary, a medical evacuation.

What kinds of policies are out there? A standard travel insurance policy lets you cancel your trip for a covered reason and has significant limitations; the most frequent 'gotcha' is an exclusion for any preexisting medical conditions. However, some policies eliminate this exclusion if the policy is purchased within 14 days of booking. A 'cancel for any reason' policy pays for a percentage of your trip if you decide to stay home.

How much does insurance cost? A standard policy typically costs 4 to 8 percent of your trip's prepaid non-refundable price. A 'cancel for any reason' policy, however, can run you 10 percent or slightly more. Your policy may be more expensive if you are older or are engaging in a risky activity that makes a claim more likely. (This is not always true.)

Do I need insurance? Maybe. Experts recommend it if your vacation costs \$10,000 or more. Also consider a

policy if you're cruising or taking a package tour. Both have unforgiving cancellation clauses, which could result in your losing the entire value of your trip. If you have a complex or lengthy itinerary, insurance can protect your investment. And you should always think about a policy when you're leaving the country, when your medical insurance might not cover you.

Where can I buy insurance? You can buy directly through the insurance companies. The largest are ALLIANZ GLOBAL ASSISTANCE (formerly Access America), CSA TRAVEL PROTECTION and TRAVEL GUARD. You can also buy through a travel agent or a third-party Website such as SQUAREMOUTH, TRAVEL INSURANCE REVIEW, TripinsuranceStore.com, and InsureMyTrip.com. And finally, you may be able to purchase coverage from the tour company or cruise line you are traveling with.



CAR CARE

Dave Davis

Where does the time go? Here we are in late spring, early summer, and we will be wanting to get on the road to visit friends or go to grandchildren's graduations and weddings. Before we do that, however, we need to have those tires inspected for wear, tread depth and air pressure. And even if we have not driven 3,000 miles this winter, the oil and filter need to be changed.



Now is a great time to wax the car using a good carnauba wax that will not hurt or scratch the paint. We can do that in our garage where the car is out of the sun. Never wax hot sheet metal! Also, don't forget to dress the wheels with a good quality wheel cleaner, normally a spray. Just spray on a sponge some soapy water after the spray has set a few minutes, and rinse. All of that brake dust comes off and your wheels are shiny again instead of being black from the dust which also eats into alloy wheels. You still have to have all the belts and hoses inspected along with the wiper blades, and I hope you had that fuel filter changed.

Now the car is ready to go without the worry of the car leaving you stranded along the turnpike or interstate highway. Have a wonderful drive and a safe one, too.

**HOUSEHOLD
HINTS**

Ray Hurst



"Electrical Quirks"...Loss of electric power at an electrical outlet can present many different problems, all bad. It could mean the loss of power to a computer, a refrigerator or even worse—cable TV! Several residents have experienced a loss of power in an outlet. The problem stemmed from a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) type electrical outlet that had tripped.

You can recognize the GFCI outlet (a safety device) by the two buttons between the slots which are marked 'test' and 'reset'. It trips, much like a circuit breaker, when an imbalance of electric current is detected. This can be caused by equipment failure, a power surge caused when a motor or compressor starts, or by an electrical storm. Here's another twist. An electrical outlet may not have the test/reset buttons, but can still be protected by a GFCI outlet at the beginning of the circuit. If the GFCI on a circuit trips, none of the outlets on that circuit will operate.

There is no firm rule for placement of the GFCI outlet. They are usually near the main electrical panel, in garages, bathrooms and kitchens. If you have an outlet that doesn't operate or one that stops for no apparent reason, check the GFCI outlets by plugging a night light into the non-working outlet and pushing the 'reset' button. The light should be out and come back on when the reset button is pushed. *It is recommended that GFCI outlets be tested monthly using this method.*



BAY WISE

***Pat
Harrington***

"Water Conservation" This is everyone's job and it is simple and cost-effective. Tips:

- A fully-loaded dishwasher is more efficient than hand-washing



dishes.

- If hand-washing dishes, do not rinse in running water. Fill a basin with water or a double sink for rinsing.
- Run your washing machine when full and use cold water.
- Check faucets and pipes for leaks and have them fixed. A small drip can waste 20 gallons of water per day!
- Water only newly-planted grass and water in the morning. Allow lawns to go dormant during dry spells.
- If using a sprinkler, make sure it is adjusted so that water is directed only on what needs water, not on driveways, sidewalks or the street.
- Reduce use of garbage disposals. They require high water use and add to the amount of water treatment required at the treatment plant.

Pollution: Remember that our storm drains lead straight to our waterways! Help prevent liquid waste which includes runoff from car washing, fertilizer spilled on driveways or sidewalks, or any household chemicals from reaching a storm drain. Also, fats, oils, and grease (FOG) should NEVER be poured down any drain storm or sink.



TECH TALK
Steve Reading

The I-Word...or How to Pick the 'Best' PC tablet. Which is best...better, or at

least, not the worst decision you've ever made? As one watches TV, listens to the radio, or talks with friends and neighbors, a topic that frequently comes up is which of the PC tablets is best and why. There are more than 45 different PC Tablet products available.

First, what IS a PC Tablet? It is a touch-screen media device that is similar to a portable media player, but with a larger screen. Tablets have an advantage over both laptops and phones, offering a portable way to check email, browse the Web, video chat, watch movies, listen to music, and play games. Other key characteristics are shape: slate, booklet, hybrid, and size (7" to 12").

Although they trace their lineage back to the 1950s, they became of age in 2001 with the XP Tablet and leaped to the forefront of the "must-have gadgets" in 2010 with the iPad. Here are a few 'discriminators' you may want to take into consideration when selecting a tablet.

Which operating system—Apple, Android, Blackberry, Microsoft. There are pros and cons to each.

Size: The weight (about 1 lb) and size of the tablet are a major factor when it comes to tablet portability. Ten-inch tablet (refers to the size of the screen measured diagonally, not the size of the tablet itself) are pretty much the standard size, but manufacturers have started experimenting with 7-inch



tablets.

PC Features: processing and battery power. Storage capacity—more is better. Wi-Fi or SIM connectivity; and of course available Apps (applications). Screen resolution is important, too, especially for ebook reading and Web surfing.

Price: they range from the Coby Kyros 7024 at \$145 to the Samsung series 7 at \$1,575.

Ease of use: finally, before you buy, get hands-on time with some different tablets so you can see which 'feels' and works the best for you.

Most tablet buyers make the purchase an emotional decision rather than a logical and well-thought-out one. Depending on your needs of apps, resolution of the screen, quality of camera, ability to play back HD Videos and many other requirements, there is a tablet that fits almost every need. But remember, there is nothing like a perfect tablet; it's a myth in a world where technology is obsolete **every few months**.

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL

Our representative: Dr. Calvin Ball,
Howard County Council, District 2, 3430
Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD
21045; cball@howardcountymd.gov
The following information was included
in Dr. Ball's May newsletter:

- 1) Replacement of the concrete on the Snowden River Parkway Bridge over Robert Fulton Drive (before Oakland Mills Rd) is planned.
- 2) Neighbor-Ride: volunteer opportunity to drive Howard County older residents to various venues, to improve their quality of life; call 410.884.7433 for information; or e-mail: volunteer@neighborride.org
- 3) Medicare Patients: looking for a local doctor who will accept Medicare? call 1-800 MEDICARE or go to www.medicare.gov/find-a-doctor
- 4) Alzheimer's Early Stage Programs available; call 1-800-272-3900; go to www.alz.aorg/maryland

In and around Howard County



This Sunday we will be finally able to say "Wegman's is Here!" After years of waiting, the jewel in the crown of national supermarkets will be within walking distance as the new sidewalk alongside Apple Ford on Snowden River



Parkway is complete. The store has its grand opening at 7:00 AM (yes, you read it correctly) this Sunday, June 17th, with many free samples and prize giveaways. Your Editor contacted Wegman's headquarters for information. Aside from grocery shopping, Wegman's will have cooking classes for crowd-sized cooking, celebrity appearances, special deals re. "eat well, live well". It also will house a café which will make food shopping a 'destination' trip for many of us. All those contacted who have shopped at Wegman's firmly agree their prices are definitely competitive, being very reasonable. They also sell items under their own brand name, with many of these items packed in bulk, similar to the 'big-box' stores. There are 80+ stores in their chain. Also, 17,000 pounds of food is being donated for the Community Action Council at Howard County's Food Bank. See you at Wegman's!



CASINO TIME AT MARYLAND LIVE!
@ Arundel Mills

By now you surely have heard that Maryland's newest casino has opened not 15 minutes from S.O. It opened with 3,500 slot machines working, to be increased by 1,500 in the fall. It has electronic black-jack etc., with the hope that 'live' tables will be in effect soon. Also, the following restaurants will be up and running in the near future: The Prime Rib, Cheesecake Factory, Phillip's Seafood Restaurant, and Bobby Flay's Burger Eatery. Start saving your quarters, dimes, nickels and yes, pennies!



Closing Thought: *"Give to the world the best you have and the best will come back to you."* (Anon)



COLUMBIA FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS
June 15, 16, 17

With live music all weekend long, variety of activities for all ages. At Columbia Town Center. Fine Arts & Craft Sale; Author Presentations; Marching Band; Flying Karamazov Brothers; The Second City improv pioneers. Go to www.columbiafestival.com

Jan Brady, Editor

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[This newsletter is the sole responsibility of the Editor.]