



THE "OVERLOOK"

Vol.6, No. 1, MARCH 2014

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

From your Editor... Are we ready for spring?? For snow lovers (and I am in that crowd being a Yankee) it has been a banner winter. Sleet, ice, snow, frigid temperatures—we've had it all. The snow is on the ground as this newsletter is being written; however, a promise of spring-like weather has been made by the forecasters. Visiting birds to our feeders has almost cost us an increase in our food budget—don't remember refilling our feeders this much in nine years. Yes, neighbors, we 'S.O. pioneers' are celebrating our nine-year move-in date: March 24, 2005, here in Snowden Overlook. And we are enjoying it more every day, week, month and year, thanks to you, our wonderful neighbors. Happy Spring!



Master Board News

Lou True, President...

Tile in the Clubhouse—Thanks to all users of the Clubhouse for your patience over the weekend of Feb. 7-9 when all of the main floor (except the gym) was closed off to permit a professional cleaning of the tiled areas. This included a staining and sealing of the grout that should make it easier to keep the floors clean for years.

Pool repair—This spring, significant repairs to the lining of the pool will get underway. We

nonetheless intend to open the pool in May as we did last year.

Current Topics—SOCA board meetings in the near future are expected to include consideration of the following topics, among others, that may be of special interest:

- Adding storage rooms to the main floor by removing showers and moving saunas downstairs
- Possible move of gym downstairs
- Possible addition of an elevator
- Possible enclosure for pool.

A few months ago, SOCA formed an Information Technology Committee. Members have been hard at work on the Snowden Overlook web site, assisting office staff with data systems operations and backup, and audio-visual technology. We are still looking, however, for someone to serve as chair of the committee by coordinating meetings, etc. If you are interested in serving please contact Mark Bloom at mbloom0720@aol.com

SOCA also has formed a Snow Committee with each condominium association invited to participate. The goal is the formulation of guidelines that all of our associations may choose to use, to achieve a measure of uniformity in our approach to this important association function. Topics are expected to include such issues as when to pretreat, chemical treatments to be applied, when and where to clear before end of certain storms, etc.

Still missing and missed—We await the return of a bird repellent in the form of a rubber rattlesnake apparently taken hostage last year from beneath the Clubhouse awning. Her friends and family have not given up hope of seeing her again for use in the fast-

approaching bird nesting season. No questions asked upon safe return.



COMMUNITY PRESIDENTS

Kendall I, Bob Brady... Winter has hit us hard with very cold temperatures and a continuous snowstorm for two months. Our snow budget is being depleted rapidly and we will need our contingency fund to bail us out. Thank goodness we have one.

Our pot luck gathering at the Clubhouse on January 19th was a complete success. It was so well received that we are thinking of having this event three times a year, with the next one probably in April or May. The Committee will sort this out and let us know.

At our Board Meeting on January 8, 2014, we elected Marion Thompson and Pat Harrington to a three-year term on the Board. The officer structure remains the same:

President: Bob Brady
Vice President: Marion Thompson
Treasurer: Joanne LaPorte
Secretary: Pat Harrington
At Large: Larry Lassen

As *WE* get older, and our *UNITS* get older, more unpleasant things can happen. Watch out for each other, and check your unit often for water leaks, etc. This is still a great community to live in; let's keep it that way.

Kendall II, Karen Paciarelli... I know we all can agree this has been a cold winter and too much snow! Snow removal has been a challenge throughout Snowden Overlook this season, but I am confident warm weather is near which brings blooms and colorful flowers, as well as grass mowing.

This past January we welcomed our new management company, Metropolitan Mgmt Group, led by CEO Natalie Collier. We all are delighted with the proactive way they have led us thus far and know this change is a blessing for Kendall II.

We had a nice response for the K2 Winter pot luck dinner. It was a good opportunity for us to learn more about our neighbors. We are starting to plan a summer K2 event.

The new year has brought changes for K2. One specific is our new schedule for Board meetings. Routinely they have been monthly, but this year it has been changed to bi-monthly, every other month, with a couple of exceptions. June is our Elections, and November-October is budget time. We traditionally do not have a Board meeting in August or December. Your attendance is a benefit to you! You may hear new information that does not come out in an e-mail. Keep your eyes out for my e-mail announcements.

Villas I, Lou True...

Vinyl siding—We had a good turnout of residents for our December 2nd meeting on this topic. The Board plans to attempt an experiment by mounting screens on some windows that are reflecting focused sunlight on vinyl to see if that will arrest the melting/distortion of the siding. So far, that approach seems most likely to provide a practical solution to the problem.

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We have received complaints about individuals, apparently residents of Villas I, cutting through on foot the front yards of other residents' homes. Please remember that front and rear yards and side yards for end units are the private property of the unit owners. So let's be considerate and use the sidewalks.

We also have received complaints about prolonged parking of vehicles on the street in front of units. In some cases vehicles were parked with wheels on the sidewalk. Street parking is prohibited in most circumstances in Villas I because the streets are not wide enough to permit safe passage when cars are so parked. Also, please note that the sidewalks beside all roads in Villas I are commonly-owned (common element) and intended for pedestrians. It is inconsiderate to block these sidewalks with vehicles. Remember that at the age of many of us have attained, some may need the full width of the sidewalk for mobile devices (i.e. wheelchairs). Finally, the sidewalks were not designed to hold the weight of motor vehicles and could be damaged by such parking.

Special thanks are due to Mary Anne Dupon for providing refreshments at recent board meetings. We all join Mary Anne in hoping that this will encourage more residents to attend.

Ovation (Kendall III), Carole

Liberman...In the September "Overlook" newsletter I wrote: "We can only hope that the predictions for a 'wet and cold' winter do not come true." Unfortunately, this long-range weather forecast was right on target. So, everyone has been coping with snow/ice removal and keeping residents safe.

Ovation had a wonderful Chinese Buffet on February 1, 2014. A few of our guys picked up the 'wonderful' food at Hunan Express in

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Elkridge. It was a wonderful evening. We chose this time to express our good wishes and bid farewell to Pat and Herm Trabbic who are moving to California. Pat and Herm have been such an integral part of Ovation and will really be missed.

Our Ovation Outreach Committee, chaired by Helen Nuttall, held their second annual donation drive for Grassroots, a crisis intervention center located in Columbia. Just like the first drive, the second one was very successful.

We are now in the planning stages of our Third Annual Progressive Dinner. This event has always been so successful and well attended. We look forward to another fun event this year.

*Villas II, Mark Bloom...*Welcome to our new neighbors, Ken and Joyce Henderson, who just moved in at the end of January.

Everyone will soon be receiving copies of the updated Architectural and Landscaping guidelines and a summary of Owner vs. Association responsibilities. We are also working on an updated Villas II directory. If you want to be included and haven't yet given permission to Mike Goldblatt or me (per previous e-mails) to publish your e-mail address or unlisted phone number, please do so. This directory is separate from the private e-mail list I use for BCCs on my mailings.

Per several owner requests, the Board and Arch./Land. Committee is looking into getting bids for tree trimming and tree replacement if individual owners want to have that work done. We are also investigating "pet and human" friendly fertilizer, weed, and insect control in lieu of our current service. We will start re-investigating the Vast Rose "rust

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problem” as soon as the weather warms up a little, and we may get bids on voluntary individual unit power washing. We are not ready to do that as a Villas II project yet.

I want to also give a special thanks to Pete Gratton who is surveying and studying the warped siding problem due to the sun reflections off the windows.

Before we know it, June will be here and we will be looking for at least one new Board member; new members are always welcome on any of our committees.



WEBSITE
Michael Goldblatt

There are several pages at our website, SnowdenOverlook.com, to help you stay informed about upcoming activities and community news. Check the Front Page (SnowdenOverlook.com) of the website which contains upcoming events and community news, like trash pickups, special events, etc. The Subscription Page (www.snowdenoverlook.com/Subscribe.html) enables residents to sign up to receive an e-mail when documents are published, including the weekly E-Alert, the monthly Activity Calendar, and the quarterly “Overlook” Newsletter. The Newsletter page (www.snowdenoverlook.com/Newsletter.html) provides access to an archive of back issues of the “Overlook” Newsletter and monthly calendar. And the Future Events page (www.snowdenoverlook.com/Future.html) contains a list of activities that are scheduled for the next few months. If you need help to sign up, contact Michael

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Goldblatt at 410.929.4709. Stay informed and enjoy the activities and amenities available to residents of Snowden Overlook.

CLUBHOUSE

NEWS

Ronni True...I think we can all agree that this was quite a winter. We started the season with the holiday decorating of the Clubhouse, which looked beautiful. Thank you to all who helped and to my committee that removed, reboxed and labeled all the decorations. In February, the Clubhouse tile was thoroughly cleaned and repaired. We think it looks great. New entry foyer rugs will be coming soon. Now that spring is approaching, we are looking forward to using the deck and awning. We checked out the canopy cover, fans and lights and all seem to have weathered our snowy onslaughts. The Clubhouse will receive a spring cleaning of carpets, etc., once we are assured the ice and snow are over.

We thank everyone for their patience with the snow removal. It is very hard to remove all the ice on our sidewalks and streets on the “shady” side as it melts and refreezes. A better job could be done if everyone would remove their vehicles to their driveways and garages when a snowfall is forecast. The plows cannot get close to the curbs and we end up with piles of ice narrowing our streets. So think daffodils and cherry blossoms—they are coming soon!



Military-Gov. Club

Bob Brady

I thought this would be a good time to share with everyone the flags that have flown at our Clubhouse since November 11, 2011:

1. Sharon Lee Vogel donated the flag that covered her father's casket (COL Dwight Johnson) at Arlington National Cemetery in 1990. Raised 11 November 2011 – Lowered 25 May 2012
2. Robert E. Brady donated the flag that was raised at the State Capitol of Connecticut on the occasion of his promotion to Brigadier General on 1 May 1989. Raised 25 May 2012 – Lowered 8 October 2012.
3. Leon LaPorte donated the flag that covered his father's casket (Rear Admiral Louis LaPorte) at Arlington National Cemetery in January 2003. Raised 8 October 2013 – Lowered 14 June 2013.
4. Paula Gaither donated the flag that covered her husband's casket (Specialist 4 Harold Gaither) at Arlington National Cemetery in April 2006. Raised 14 June 2013 – Lowered 6 February 2014.
5. Dennis Eichenlaub donated the flag that covered his father's casket (Private First Class Valentine Eichenlaub) at Locustwood Cemetery, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, in November 1982. Raised 6 February 2014 –

We are attempting to use flags that are of great significance to the members of the Snowden Overlook community. So far, we have been successful with possibly two more flags available. It is important to us to

fly flags of our military personnel because it is our way of saying "Thank you for your service to our country."

If you have such a flag and would like to donate it so that it can be flown in front of our Clubhouse, please contact me at 410.290.1914.



SOCIAL

COMMITTEE

Karen Paciarelli

We already have started out the new year with 'fun events for everyone'. These events and activities are for all residents. We would love to see some new faces and always welcome our regulars.

We offer a smorgasbord of monthly potluck dinners in the colder months. February was our International Potluck theme and March will be our Club Cook Off. But warmer weather is not far away and we will be starting up our "Dinner Outs" again and are always looking for volunteers to host these every-other-month Sunday dinners. This involves choosing a local (or not) restaurant, informing the office staff so a flyer and sign-up sheet can be made. Those signed up should meet at the Clubhouse at a specified time to carpool to the restaurant. These events traditionally are set for the 4th Sunday of the month at 5:00 p.m.

Other events at the S.O. Clubhouse have been the vast array of entertainers for our Sunday concerts. Look for the posters at the Clubhouse entrance. Sign-up sheets always are out, *but you have not reserved a seat until your SOCA check is received in the office.* Some events have cut-off dates for receiving checks. This occurs primarily when we have

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catered events. When in doubt, contact the office or website for clarification.

Bingo Night, Trivia Games, Gestures Games, Monthly Summer Outside Movie Nights are just a few of many happenings at S.O.

We love our Grillin' & Chillin' Happy Hours that will be back soon. For this gathering, we do ask residents to bring salads, sides, and/or desserts. The burgers and dogs are furnished by SOCA.

Many 'club activities' are offered, the newest one being a Knitting Circle. Look for details at the Clubhouse and on our website.

March 15 at 6:00 p.m.: There will be a special St. Patrick's Day celebration dinner catered by "Sonny". Don't forget to sign up early and secure your reservation by bringing a check to the Clubhouse office written out to SOCA for \$10/pp.

Our monthly "Coffee with Carol" will end in May and start back up in September. This year we have had a variety of informative speakers, from how to de-clutter your home to a presentation by Councilman Calvin Ball. Always interesting topics are presented, with a wonderful spread of refreshments put out by Carol.

Summer events will start out with the return of the Retro Rockets. We received such a wonderful response to their last party that we decided to bring them back this summer. [Retro-Rockets return for our 1st summer Bash.](#)

Is there something you think the community will enjoy? Let me know: karen8870@verizon.net and the Social Committee will research it.

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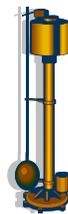


FITNESS CENTER

Linda Bloom

I'm so glad to see so many residents using our wonderful gym facility. The quarterly gym preventive maintenance was done in January. One problem that was brought to my attention was the accumulation of salt in the motors of the treadmills from the snowstorms. The salt is brought in on residents' shoes. To address this problem, a larger mat was put outside the door to the gym for residents to wipe their shoes on before entering. The small mat that originally was outside the gym is now on the inside to catch any additional salt. There is the possibility that the maintenance company will be called back an additional time to clean the motors.

We also will be installing a larger mirror in the gym which was donated by a resident. We also have plans to purchase a new weight rack, since the one we have is filled to capacity. If anyone has any comments/suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me.



HOUSEHOLD HINTS

Ray Hurst

SUMP PUMP REVISITED...Spring is on the way and along with the warmer weather and spring rains, the ground will become wet to the point of saturation. Our sump pumps play an important part in keeping

our basements dry, and should be checked for proper operation on a regular basis.

- ❖ Test your pump periodically: this can be achieved by filling the crock (sometimes called a sump pit) with water until the pump starts. Some pumps (generally those in the Ryland homes) have a double electric cord. Pumps with this wiring can be tested by separating the two plugs and inserting the plug with the red label into the outlet—this bypasses the float and will start the pump. If the pump doesn't operate, call a plumber.
- ❖ *Homes with exterior stairways to the basement (non walkouts) must keep the entryway drain clear of debris and dirt. This drain leads directly to the sump crock. A strainer type cover should be present on the drain.*
- ❖ Keep the end of the sump pump discharge clear. Debris, dirt, and grass can clog the pipe and result in a backup in your basement.
- ❖ If your pump runs more than several times a day, or if it runs often during heavy rains, a battery back-up system should be considered.
- ❖ A simple and inexpensive alarm (such as the "Watchdog" alarm) can be purchased at local hardware stores in the plumbing department for less than \$15.00. This alarm can be placed near the sump pit (and near water heaters, washing machines or any other potential water problem area) and will alert you with a loud buzz when water is present on the floor



INSURANCE GUIDELINES

Fred Merther

HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE CHECKLIST

Consider these tips to control your premiums and renovate your coverage:

Update any of the information on your policy declaration page.

Has your mortgage been paid off, the address changed, or have you added a second mortgage?

Report any new burglar or fire alarms, new additions or alterations to your home in the last year.

You may be eligible for a protective device credit. You may also need to update your policy to adequately insure your home improvements.

Protect yourself against identity fraud.

Some insurance companies offer an endorsement that will help protect you against identity fraud.

Protect your home from changes in laws and building ordinances.

Many insurance companies offer an endorsement that can save you the expense of bringing your home up to code, should you experience a partial loss.

Notify your insurer of valuable purchases within the past year, such as jewelry, a computer or big screen television.

These new items may not be adequately insured. Let your insurance company or agent know, so they can help you make informed decisions.

Evaluate your liability insurance coverage.

Did you know that increasing your included-

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liability limit or purchasing umbrellas liability coverage to protect your assets could be relatively inexpensive?

Consider increasing your deductible. A higher deductible can reduce your premium, saving you a significant amount over the years.

Consider replacement cost coverage in the event you do not already have it.

Increases in construction costs, along with other factors, can make the amount of insurance insufficient to rebuild.



CAR CARE—Dave Davis

Wow! What a winter. This weather—snow, etc.—sure put pressure on windshield washer fluid and wiper blades. Your car for sure is coated with salt. Be sure to get it washed as soon as possible and be sure to pay extra attention to rims and wheels—they have salt packed into them and the wheels will be destroyed if you don't take care to wash it out of there. This is a good time to take your car to your servicing dealer; he will check your tire pressure and under carriage for damage from any objects that were on the road that could have done damage to Constant Velocity (CV) joints, transmission case, etc.

We found an 8" nail in our rear tire. The tire pressure light came on to warn us of low tire pressure. Good thing it did, as it only had 10 lbs. of air in it! I called the dealership and he sent out a flatbed truck to take my car back

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into the shop, and dropped off a car for me until my car was fixed. Fortunately the tire was repairable with no damage underneath.

After you wash your car, put another good coat of wax on it to protect it from the next round of salt coming in March! I'm sure your dealer will check all fluid levels, power brakes, transmission, power steering—these are the fluids I'm talking about. He will also make sure your windshield washer fluid has been refilled as well as checking your tire pressure.

I'll bet you were glad that you had that all checked before winter started—as I mentioned to do in our September newsletter before winter began. Hope you all 'weathered' the winter well, and have a great spring. Looking forward to flowers again.



TECH NEWS

Steve Reading

SMART CARD TECHNOLOGY....Most people carry one or more credit cards. These provide a fast means of accessing available credit via a small, plastic card with a magnetic strip. So when you go to a shopping mall or restaurant, you normally use your credit card to make payment. And, prior to the "Target-Gate" scandal of last December, you probably considered this a relatively safe venture. However, *the scope of that credit security intrusion was made worse by the fact that most credit cards issued in the United States use 'magnetic stripe' technology (not the best way to store sensitive information).*

In an effort to counter the threat of future 'credit theft', the US credit card issuers are viewing smart card technology (similar to the

Subscriber Identity Modules—SIM—in our cell phones) as a viable option. So, although both smart cards and ‘regular’ credit cards allow you to make everyday transactions, smart cards have taken credit cards to a more secure level where theft of your information is difficult to accomplish.

Smart cards, invented in 1968 by a rocket scientist, were first introduced in Europe nearly three decades ago. A smart card is a plastic card with a small, built-in microcomputer chip and integrated circuit that can store and process a lot of data, and more importantly, acts like a technologically advanced credit card. Thus, it resembles a credit card in size and shape, but inside it is completely different. First of all, it **has an inside** whereas a normal credit card is a simple piece of plastic. The inside of a smart card usually contains an embedded microprocessor (individually encrypted). Think of the microprocessor as replacing the usual magnetic stripe on a credit card or debit card.

Smart card technology entails the use of a microprocessor to transfer information rather than a magnetic strip. A smart card works in much the same way that a magnetic strip card works, but differs in that a smart card can process the required information itself through the use of an embedded microprocessor. A magnetic strip card must have its information sent away for processing. Thus, because of security benefits smart card technology is becoming more prevalent.

We have come a long way since Diners Club introduced the first plastic card to use for financial payments in the 1950s.



SAVE THE BAY

Pat Harrington

The 10 largest Maryland counties have been developing ways to fund State-manded improvements of stormwater infrastructures. (Howard County’s storm water management motto is “Slow the Flow”.) Opponents to Howard County’s efforts coined the catchy little phrase “rain tax”.

Well, it really isn’t rain that is the culprit but the **runoff** that happens when rain cannot soak into the ground. Runoff starts to flow across the land and along the way collects various types of pollution, like fertilizer, sediment, pet waste and litter. This runoff, if not managed, will find the shortest path, frequently via the storm drains that are close to your home, to a low-lying creek, stream or river. Once into the streams, the polluted runoff causes erosion and degrades the quality of our rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. It is the runoff, not the rain, that necessitates the funding of a utility to maintain, repair and improve our stormwater infrastructure in order to protect our water resources for the future.

To quote Jim Caldwell, Howard County’s Stormwater Manager, “It seems pretty clear this is not a case of the government taxing the rain, but instead a case of runoff taxing the environment.”



KNITTING AND
CROCHET GROUP

A new group has been formed at the Clubhouse. It is the “Knitting and Crochet Group” that meets weekly on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Approximately 15 residents have signed up to bring their current projects and share advice with one another regarding current and future projects.

All are familiar with knitting and crochet techniques; however, Christy Wilson, Administrative Assistant at the Clubhouse, suggests that any person interested in either/both crafts is invited to come to a meeting and perhaps get some starter tips from members. FYI: the meeting time may change to a daytime activity; however, they presently are meeting in the evening.

For more information, contact Christy at the Clubhouse 410.872.9311.



CRAFT CORNER
Sheila Wolf

The next craft is planned for March 26th at the Clubhouse from 10:00-12 noon. We will be making spring wreaths. The sign-up sheet will be at the Clubhouse, and a flyer will give detailed information. You can also get this information on our S.O. website. Call Sheila Wolf at 410.290.1006.

**DR. CALVIN BALL, HOWARD
COUNTY COUNCIL DISTRICT 2
REPRESENTATIVE**

has a website for all citizens to read. It includes county government issues, plans, votes, and also ‘happenings’ in the county. GO TO cball@howardcountymd.gov for this pertinent and timely information from our County Representative. Dr. Ball gave a moving presentation at our recent “Coffee with Carol” event at the Clubhouse. He is interested in hearing your thoughts about our county.

**HAPPENINGS IN HOWARD
COUNTY**

- ❖ Wegman’s has a marvelous service/event: “World Languages Café”, 4th Wed. from 7-9 p.m. in the upstairs café—14 languages spoken!
- ❖ April 26th: “Walk MS: MARYLAND” to support research and services for multiple sclerosis patients/families. Go to www.walkMSmaryland.org



Closing Thought:

*“Pessimists complain about the wind.
Optimists hope it will change.
Realists adjust the sails.”*

Jan Brady, Editor
jrbobbrady@comcast.net

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

