

# ***Pheasant Tales***



**December 2017**

## **Community Updates**

The next homeowner's quarterly meeting will be held on **Monday January 22, 2018** beginning promptly at 7pm in the New Life Christian Center located at 9844 Mallard Drive Laurel, MD 20708. We are thankful to NLCC for allowing us to use their space for this purpose. The board would like to present a couple of proposed changes to the community for input prior to the next meeting:

- We propose lowering the number of board members from nine to seven. The number required for a quorum would remain at five.
- Debra McKoy has been assisting with the transition of community finances to our new management company. Based on her contributions, she has been asked to serve as a board member and HOA treasurer.
- We would like to post an initial inquiry to the community for support or opposition to assigning one assigned parking spot per property. Based on feedback, we will determine if this is a feasible option to pursue.

## **Winter Weather Alert**

*Helpful Info for owners*



With the decrease in temperatures that the winter season brings, also comes the potential for frozen pipes! Many homeowners experience burst pipes causing flooding and costly water damage. Please take the necessary steps to avoid this! Follow the link below to identify where your home's outside faucet shut off valve is located. A little prevention today can save you a lot of heartache later!

<http://www.pheasantrunhoa.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Frozen-Pipes.pdf>

## **Homeowner Assessments Update**

The quarterly assessment fee was increased by ten percent effective with the fourth quarter for the 2017 year. The board has recently contracted with **Tidewater Property Management** based out of Owings Mills, MD for managing our bookkeeping and finances moving forward. A Tidewater representative was present for an initial meeting with our community on Tuesday December 18<sup>th</sup>. All homeowners will be receiving a coupon book from Tidewater within the next couple of weeks. Please use the information that will be provided to register your account and to make your payment for the first quarter of the 2018 year. Due to the timing of this transition, the due date for January assessments will be deferred to February 1<sup>st</sup> and late fees will be waived for payments received by February 15, 2018.

## **Calling all Volunteers!**

Do you want to become active in our community but don't know how? Well, consider joining one of our committees! We need folks to get involved! We have openings on our architectural, parking, maintenance committees and more! Would you like to learn more about community needs prior to formally committing? Well, reach out to our HOA president Jamar at [president@pheasantrunhoa.info](mailto:president@pheasantrunhoa.info). We'd love to hear from you!

## Back to Basics....



What exactly is a homeowner's association/HOA? Well to put it simply, it is a private association that is formed by a real estate developer to market, manage and sell homes in a residential subdivision. It is standard for the developer to transfer ownership when a predetermined number of lots have been sold. Any person who purchases a lot/home within the area of the HOA must become a member and obey the governing documents. There are pros and cons to HOAs.

Some of the cons are:

- There are restrictions in certain modifications that you may make to the exterior appearance of your home without first getting approval from the board (i.e. color of roof, changes to style or color of fence, color of home's siding or paint, etc). This rule is in place to ensure that the homes maintain a uniform appearance. In our community's case, we strive to maintain the original colonial look established by the developer. So before you get that roof ripped off, or repaint your siding, please ensure that you submit any proposed changes in writing to the architectural board to obtain approval.
- We as a community are responsible for the majority of the maintenance of our community common areas unlike those who live on county owned property. This can be costly, especially in an aging community where repairs will inevitably be necessary to the infrastructure (i.e. road repairs). Our community was established in the 1970s so there are many repairs we need to undertake.
- The HOA has the authority to proceed with foreclosure on your home for failure to pay your assessments.

Some of the pros are:

- As part of your HOA dues, the common areas are maintained. For our community this translates to landscaping, maintenance/removal of trees, snow removal, repairs to other common areas, dog waste stations, playground equipment.
- We have control over who makes the repairs and performs the maintenance in our community. We have the authority through our elected board officials to contact various contractors for bids from tree removal, landscaping, any other necessary improvements. We can also prioritize what projects we wish to proceed with based on our budget.
- Having a community run organization can enhance the relationships and communication among residents especially for those who are involved an active toward the shared goal of a well-maintained neighborhood.
- Maintaining property values. When all members of the community adhere to the rules (paying your dues, taking care of your lot) it translates to a more aesthetically pleasing community and maintains or increases property values. Our homes are our one of our biggest investments!

The bottom line is that we need to do better in coming together as people who live in a shared community to make our neighborhood one we are proud to call home. Be active! What are *you* doing to make a difference? Do you have complaints? Well, the best way to provide input is to show up to a homeowners meeting. Something to ponder: Are you a part of the problem or are you willing to step up and be a part of the solution? New Years is right around the corner. Make one of your resolutions one for increased community involvement!