

Merifield Acres Newsletter
Vol. XV, No. 1
March 10, 2009

*Every Merifield Acres property owner, whether or not accompanied by children, is cordially invited to the annual **Easter Party and Egg Hunt**, picnic and party games, Saturday, April 4, in Oak Park at 1:00 p.m.—“the more the merrier”. Hot dogs and beverages provided. Kindly RSVP Jill Allen (374-0399) or Nancy Dahl (374-2161) immediately, indicating the number attending and the side dish or dessert sharing. Volunteers are very much appreciated for stuffing plastic eggs, setting up, placing eggs, helping with games, and cleaning up—please contact Jill or Nancy. Rain date is the following Saturday, April 11; a sign would be posted on the Oak Park gate.*

At its December 9, 2008, meeting, the MALA Board of Directors approved **MALA Dangerous Tree Rules and Regulations**. At its February 10, 2009, meeting, the Board approved **MALA Runway Safety Rules and Regulations**. Both documents are published at the back of this Merifield Acres Newsletter for property owners' information and comment. Dangerous tree rule is final and runway safety rule is proposed for comment. MALA will consider any relevant comments or documents submitted to the Board by Friday, April 10, 2009, that may be critical to the effectiveness of these rules and regulations. Please contact President Ben Jackson (374-5085; bjackson39@netscape.com) or, as appropriate, Clint Dalton, Common Areas and Facilities (374-2338; cdalton@kerrlake.com) or Bill Woodfin, Roads and Maintenance (374-3889; the.woodfins@kerrlake.com), or FJ Hale, Aviation (374-9922; [919] 787-4965; foxtrot7@mindspring.com), or written comments to Martha Day, Governance Committee (mcday@meckcom.net). The first and second sample letters of dangerous tree notification are for Merifield, Inc., lot owners; the third sample letter is for non-Merifield, Inc., lot owners.

No Open Burning, states the sign on the right after entering Merifield Acres. Burning should be done in a closed incinerator only. Homebuilders are advised to instruct contractors and subcontractors not to leave smoldering fires unattended. **No speeding**. All drivers of vehicles must be alert to children who may have not yet learned to stay away from roadways. At its February 10, 2009, meeting, the Board reaffirmed that **golf carts** are not permitted on MALA's roads, their use a risk to occupants as well as potential distress to automobile drivers. Per Merifield, Inc., covenant 4, “**Pets** shall be restricted to the Lots, and will not be allowed to run at large”.

Merifield, Inc., property owners are reminded that the Virginia Property Owners' Association Act (VPOAA) requires that a person selling a property shall disclose in the contract that the property is located within a common interest community that mandates an assessment and is therefore subject to the VPOAA that requires the seller to obtain an association disclosure packet and provide it to the buyer. The **MALA Disclosure Packet** is requested from the MALA Treasurer.

In order to preserve the natural landscaping of Merifield Acres, owners and/or builders are to schedule a site inspection with a member of the **Architectural Committee** before removing trees and proceeding with construction. Henceforward, the Roads and Maintenance Committee Chair will receive a copy of each Architectural Committee construction approval letter. Progress is being made toward resolution of the derelict property on Merifield Drive.

Come springtime, **Appearance and Beautification** will be mulching the main entrance plantings. The Committee is most appreciative of residents' tending the plantings around their street sign. If

residents wish their street sign repainted this year, and offer to help paint, fine; otherwise, the repainting can be put off until next year.

Aviation Chairman FJ Hale provided input to the MALA Runway Safety Rules and Regulations as well as the X-shaped cloth panel weighted at the four ends with rebar and stored in a red all-weather storage container on FJ's back porch to be laid out at the approach to the runway in the event the runway must be closed to ensure safety.

Common Areas and Facilities reports progress toward widening the main entrance ten feet to the left upon entering Merifield Acres. Historically, accidents occur on the right.

Community Events is most appreciative of the help of numerous volunteers in pulling off this past fall's Halloween Party, in particular Allen Dahl, who borrowed the two trailers, obtained the hay, and led the construction of the reusable railings, Don Bright, who volunteered his truck and drove, and those residents who welcomed the children at their homes for Trick or Treating.

Deer Control reports that as of March 10, 2009, so far this hunting season 14 deer have been harvested, 4 bucks and 10 does. The hunt has been extended to the end of March, does only. Of twenty approved bow-and-arrow hunters, six to seven are actively hunting.

Finance reports that the two CDs, one of them carryover road maintenance monies, are stable and earning interest. The Fidelity mutual funds the Board agreed to leave allocated as they are in expectation of an eventual market rebound.

Governance has assisted President Ben, who prepared the initial drafts, and Chairs of the Aviation, Common Areas and Facilities, and Roads and Maintenance Committees, and Maintenance Contractor Ralph Moore with developing the MALA Dangerous Tree Rules and Regulations and the MALA Runway Safety Rules and Regulations published at the back of this Newsletter for property owner information and comment.

Because of a statute new as of July 1, 2008, to the VPOAA, Section 55-509.3, that prohibits assessments, charges, and fees unless for services provided or for a specific use of the common area, the Committee advised the Board at its December 9, 2008, meeting to convert the Impact Fee levied on new construction or additions to a Road Damage Charge, details to be worked out by appropriate members of the Board and Architectural Committee. It is the Board's intent that this Road Damage Charge provide that after determination of actual road damage that the balance of the charge be returned to the lot owner.

Proceeding with caution and due collaboration, the Governance Committee is attending to the seven concerns currently remaining on its 2008-2009 agenda:

- the working relationship between the MALA Board of Directors and the Merifield, Inc., Architectural Committee;
- a proposed Committee for the Non-Mandatory Units (Fielding and Holly Park, RP 2 [lots 1-10], Lower Cedar Lane, Lots 19, 21, Holly Point, Maplewood Lane);
- getting right the MALA Disclosure Packet (required)/Merifield Acres Information Packet (voluntary);
- several revisions to the MALA Bylaws;
- the Architectural Committee and MALA Internal Complaint Process, required as of July 1, 2008, Common Interest Community Ombudsman, Section 55-530;
- revisiting for MALA Board approval the MALA Roads Rules and Regulations; and
- revisiting the Governance Committee, Finance Committee, and Community Events Committee descriptions, all as of August-September 2007 left in draft form.

Currently, three Fielding Development Co., Inc., property owners serve on the MALA Board and one of the three on the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee that rotates its meeting place among Committee members welcomes comment from Board members and property owners on mutual concerns.

Political and Environmental continues to monitor the management of Kerr Reservoir water levels.

Roads and Maintenance is soliciting bids from paving contractors for work this summer on MALA's 12.5 miles of roads.

Security reported to the authorities a break-in during the Christmas/New Year Holidays on Hazelnut Drive.

Since the October Newsletter, **Welcoming** has greeted four additional families to the neighborhood with indoor or outdoor perennials and the current Merifield Acres Directory, answers questions, and obtains correct contact information. Genny Glorius, Fran Townsend, and Gail Treglown happily offer home-baked goodies. Should you have surplus plant pots (and saucers or unwanted dinner and salad plates), please leave them at Martha Day's garage door. As you become aware of a new resident, kindly let her know, telephone number, too, if possible.

The entire MALA Board of Directors constitutes the **Nominating Committee** that nominates property owners who are willing to serve as candidates for election. Many residents in both the mandatory as well as the non-mandatory units have already served on the MALA Board, in many cases more than one term. MALA maintains a blanket fidelity bond policy to cover all members of the Board. The day-to-day business of Merifield Acres has a tendency to converge on a few people. Let a Board member or committee chair know of your willingness to lend a most welcome hand.

Another "big thank you" to those property owners who make voluntary contributions and contributions over and above their annual assessment to a budget that per Merifield, Inc., Covenant 10 (c) may not exceed income. All suggestions returned with assessments and contributions will be presented to the Board and assigned for action and or response.

The **2009 Merifield Acres Directory** of full- and part-time homeowners that was mailed to all Merifield Acres homeowners in December of 2008 publishes in the opening pages all members of the Board, current Officers, committee chairs and members, and responsibilities of each committee. On the **MALA Website** (<http://www.kerrlake.com/mala>) is posted the updated history of Merifield Acres, the Merifield, Inc., covenants and MALA Bylaws, Annual Association and bi-monthly Board meeting minutes, and Open Forum that invites property owners to provide the Board with input to an issue under discussion. Should any Merifield Acres property owner wish information of urgency or interest to the general Merifield community considered for inclusion in the October 2009 **Merifield Acres Newsletter** kindly communicate the item to Editor Martha Day by mid-September. The **Merifield Acres email address book** (mala@kerrlake.com) is used by Merifield Acres property owners to communicate with the Board and its Officers and committee chairs, by MALA to announce community events, and for communication within the community generally.

The next bi-monthly meeting of the MALA Board of Directors will be held Tuesday evening, April 14, 2009, in the room to the rear of the Clarksville Public Library at 7:00. (Should there be a last-minute change, contact President Ben Jackson for verification of place and time.) ***Scheduled early on the agenda is an Open Forum during which time your Board-member neighbors hope to hear in what ways property owners and residents in Merifield Acres would wish our common interest community improved.***