

Seneca Whetstone Homeowners' Assoc. Inc.

P.O. Box 2825 ♦ Gaithersburg, MD ♦ 20886-2825

NEWSLETTER

September 2006

GREETINGS FROM THE SENECA WHETSTONE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/swhoa>

IMPORTANT DATES:

NEXT BOARD MEETING: September 21, 2006 7:30 p.m.

December 6, 2006

Place: Gaithersburg Public Library

Annual Meeting: December 6, 2006 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Place: Forest Oak Lodge
(Rt. 355 & Game Preserve Rd.)

Message from the President:

Hi neighbors,

This quarter and the next few will find us in the process of managing the effects of changes over which we have little control, as three construction projects in our area (please see details below) will likely significantly change how we use Old Game Preserve Road.

We really can't influence short-term traffic disruptions and noise, but please know that I and the other SWHO A Directors are committed to attending planning meetings and applying due influence on Montgomery County and the City of Gaithersburg to make sure these changes don't cause long-term harm to our way of life. We may even accomplish improvements by asking for badly needed repairs along the length of Old Game Preserve Road.

Next Monday's (9/18/06) meeting will be the public's chance to voice opinions on the self-store facility zoning change. Please attend if you can.

Next Thursday (9/21/06), we'll have our regular quarterly Board meeting. You are welcome to voice your opinions at that meeting as well.

To ensure change is for the better, stay in touch with your community. We're listening, and your voice counts!

Winn

NEIGHBORHOOD SECURITY

Many of you recall that we had a couple of incidents of a naked man wandering in the neighborhood, and one person was apparently chased down the street by this man. From what we have been able to ascertain, the man was hospitalized for approximately 38 days and has returned to his home. Afterwards he was reported as having left the house unnoticed by family members and the police were looking for him in the woods along Game Preserve Road. If you see or encounter this person, do not hesitate to notify the police right away.

Very recently someone stole a container topiary the Longs had by their mailbox on Game Preserve Road. SSWHOA has had numerous cases where seasonal lawn decorations have been removed (typically left in a neighbor's yard), but this appears to be an actual theft—with a replacement cost of just over hundred dollars.

Reminder: Please do not leave garage doors open or doors to the house unlocked, even while doing yard work. It also is helpful to get to know any new neighbors, as we all benefit from looking out for each other. We all need to keep an eye out and contact the local police and/or the Board if we notice any suspicious behavior in our neighborhood.

YARD SIGNS

Recently the Board was contacted by a couple of homeowners regarding the fact that some people have placed signs in their yards in support of someone running for elected office. It was noted that the SSWHOA covenants specifically limits signage to those for houses for sale or rent. Nancy Jacobsen from CPWI has provided us with information that The Maryland Homeowners Association Act overrides covenants and permits campaign signs (The MHHA is included in the legislative notebook given to the Board.):

30 days before to 7 days after:

- primary
- general election
- vote on proposition

Homeowners who choose to place political support signs in their yards are reminded that they should only be there within the times listed above. This year's Primary was on September 12, 2006 (yesterday). The General Election is on November 7, 2006.

CONSTRUCTION MATTERS

There is a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, September 18 at City Hall regarding the proposed self-storage facility, Travis Avenue Self-Storage LLC (represented by Jody Klein of Bethesda) on property off Travis and Old Game Preserve Road. This could have a major impact on traffic along Old Game Preserve Road. Gaithersburg is handling the zoning request and plans to coordinate with the County to get road improvements (widening, sidewalk) if the project is approved by the city council/mayor. Anyone wishing to speak at the hearing will be given three minutes. There is no need to sign up in advance.

Please consider attending this meeting and speaking out on behalf of Seneca Whetstone. Go to the city's website at www.gaithersburgmd.gov for more information.

There continues to be a problem with water run-off from the Fitzgerald car dealership. Improvements have been made, but the road continues to be damaged from erosion due to the run-off. The dealership did arrange for a stop sign, which the City of Gaithersburg has agreed to put up. The dealership also has ordered bolt-down speed bumps to put in their parking lot.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS

We still have nine (9) homeowners who have not paid their annual assessments to date. Late fees will be assessed to those who have made no attempt to bring their accounts current. If you are not in a position to pay your dues at this time, please contact the SWHOA Board so an appropriate payment plan can be worked out.

ANNUAL PICNIC

If there is any interest in having a fall picnic, please contact a Board member so we can make arrangements for this activity.

TRASH COLLECTION

Trash in Seneca Whetstone, including Badger Drive, is picked up on Tuesday and Friday morning every week by B&B Refuse. Recyclables are picked up by Montgomery County every Tuesday.

All containers for the storage of trash or garbage must be rigid containers of metal or plastic, having tight-fitting, overlapping lids, with a capacity of not less than fifteen (15) and not exceeding thirty-two (32) gallons. No responsibility can be assumed by the County or Contractors for damages to plastic containers.

Disposable plastic liners, if used, must be made of heavy, waterproof paper or plastic and must not exceed thirty-two (32) gallons in capacity. Such container liners must be kept in approved containers when storing trash between collections. In other words, **do not leave your items out in plastic bags alone.** Crows, squirrels and other critters love to get into their contents and would have easy access.

Uncontained piles of trash, garbage, and overflowing containers cannot be collected. Containers which have ragged, sharp edges or other defects liable to hamper or injure collectors must be replaced.

Trash that is not normally collected:

Bookcases, desks, shelves, large doll houses, televisions, and other bulky items are not normal household trash.

Choose from these options:

- Request a special bulk trash collection. Contact B&B Refuse at (301) 424-1427.
- Take the items for disposal to the [Shady Grove Transfer Station](#) yourself.

If any of the items are in usable or reparable condition, consider offering them to others through [The Freecycle Network](#).

Recycling crews place orange tags on your materials when they are not accepted for pickup that day. The tag should be filled out, explaining why the material was left at the curb. Please [contact Montgomery County online](#) or by phone at 240-777-6410 if you have questions about the tag or why your items were not collected.

Common reasons for tags:

[Leaves, grass, brush, and other yard trimmings](#) must be packaged in paper bags, reusable cans, or with twine, as relevant; NOT in a plastic bag.

Choose from these options:

- [Repackage your yard trim properly](#), and set out on your next recycling collection day.
- Take the yard trim bag directly to the Shady Grove Transfer Station. If you go to the Transfer Station, you do not need to repackage, because you can simply empty your plastic bag(s) of material onto the yard trim pile, and then put your bag(s) into the trash.

Blue recycling bins are for ["commingled" materials](#) -- cans, bottles, and jars -- only. Items like toilet seats and furnace filters should go into your normal household trash.

Choose from these options:

- Place trash items into your normal household trash on your next trash collection day.
- Take the items for disposal to the [Shady Grove Transfer Station](#) yourself.

[Large appliances](#) are recyclable through the County's scrap metal recycling program.

Choose from these options:

- [Request a scrap metal collection online](#) or by phone at 240-777-6410. Requests must be received by 9:30 a.m. on the business day before your collection day.
- Take the items for disposal to the [Shady Grove Transfer Station](#) yourself.
- If any of the items are in usable or reparable condition, consider offering them to others through [The Freecycle Network](#).

Reminders...

Election of new officers will take place at the December Annual Meeting. Please consider running for a position on the Board. It's a great way to get to know people in the neighborhood and provide a valuable service to Seneca Whetstone at the same time.

Please remember to maintain a maximum speed of 25 M.P.H. in the neighborhood. It's the law, and more important, our children's lives depend on your safe driving.

Yield and Stop signs have a purpose. Please observe them—particularly the Stop sign at the end of Gatlin Drive. There have been several near-misses recently.

School is back in session, so please be especially careful during bus pick-up and drop-off times of the morning and afternoon.

If the translation of the President's Message into Spanish in the previous newsletter was helpful, please let us know. We may be able to provide that service again if it is useful to our residents.

Please remember that **Montgomery County law** requires pet owners to clean up the mess left by their pets. You can be fined \$100 if someone files a complaint.

Montgomery County Code, Sec. 5-203 (a)(2):

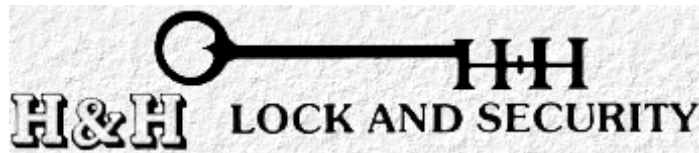
An owner must not allow an animal to damage or defecate on property outside of the owner's property. An animal may defecate on public property or the common area of property in which the owner shares an interest if the owner immediately removes and disposes of the feces by a sanitary method approved by the Director.



Important Phone Numbers

Abandoned Vehicles	301-840-2454
Animal Control	240-773-5960
Consumer Affair	240-777-3636
County Call Center	240-777-6000
CPWI Resale/Mortgage Assistance	301-309-8977
Housing Code Enforcement	240-777-3785
Landlord-Tenant Affairs	240-777-3609
Police (non-emergency)	240-777-2600
Snow Removal/Potholes	240-777-7623
Street Lights	240-777-2190

See <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgtmpl.asp?url=/apps/Phonebook/phonebook.asp> for a full listing



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