



CLIFFNOTES

The Newsletter of the Clifftops Property Owners Association

March/April 2010

Calendar of Events

April 9: "Second" Friday, Lake Club, 6:00 p.m., hosted by Hope and John Baggenstoss and featuring Clifftops artists (see article)

*** note date change ***

May 2: CPOA Board of Directors meeting, 2:00 p.m., Lake Club
note date change

May 7: First Friday, 6:00 p.m., Lake Club, hosted by Marietta and Jim Poteet

From the President

I'm eager, but probably no more than you are, for spring weather and warmer temperatures. This certainly has been a harsh winter at Clifftops: cold, snowy, and gray. The winter was hard on animals and plants, on roads, and on emotions. I'm ready to be done with that!

This winter did take a toll on our roads. Not only the freezing and thawing, but also the snow accumulations that required sanding and plowing-- all had an effect. The Board continues to monitor the condition of the roads and to find ways to extend the life of the pavement. Roads consume a very large portion of our monthly dues, and we reserve funds years ahead so we have the money to do what is required when

needed, avoiding assessments.

This year's weather also called for extra attention from Ty Burnette, our Property Manager, and from Charlie Meeks and Amos Dixon, our dedicated maintenance crew. During the bad weather, Ty was in Clifftops late in the evening, in the early morning hours, and on weekends to assess road conditions.

When each snowfall stopped, Charlie and Amos began the process of spreading sand and scraping the roads as needed. With our more than 13 miles of roads, the time needed to make one pass over all the roads ranges from 2-4 hours, depending on conditions. At our March Board meeting, both Board members and CPOA members expressed their appreciation to the staff for their great service through this winter.

As we do get to spring, I hope you will take advantage of the natural beauty in Clifftops. We have a wonderful trail system throughout our property. Also, go to the Bluff Club and enjoy the improved vista that was created over the winter at the bluff overlook. A new fence is being constructed along the bluff drop-offs around the Bluff Club area. By the time the pool is open in May, there will be a new pool equipment building, and the entire area should be even more attractive.

Clifftops Lake is also worth a visit. We reconfigured the lake drain last year and

expect improved nutrient quality for the fish and vegetation in the lake. Lake water quality is healthy, and we have an ongoing monitoring plan provided through the University of the South. Additional boat/canoe racks will be installed for summer use.

Finally, we are approaching the climax of the Strategic Planning II (SP-II) process. Three community meetings are planned for the end of May and early June for members to learn more about what is being proposed and to ask questions about the plan. SP-II will guide our development over the next ten years to ensure that Clifftops reflects what we value and want here. This plan will impact our budget and therefore our dues. It is vital that all of us understand this process and the recommendations that the Board is charged to act on.

Howard Smith

April “Second” Friday

The second annual Clifftops Arts & Crafts show is just around the corner. At the “second” Friday get together on April 9 (rescheduled from First Friday to avoid Good Friday), artists will have an opportunity to show their stuff at the Lake Club.

Clifftops artists and craftspeople are invited to bring two or three examples of their work for a show-and-tell at our monthly social gathering. The event is hosted by Hope and John Baggenstoss.

Artists are asked to bring their works and easels to the Lake Club by 5:30 p.m. on the 9th and set them up before the social hour begins at 6 p.m. A few

easels will be available, but it is better if artists provide their own. For more information, contact John at 924-3276 or email jbaggenstoss@yahoo.com

See you there!

Board Meeting Summary

The regular meeting of the CPOA Board of Directors was held on March 14 at 2:00 p.m. at the Lake Club.

Treasurer Baker Walker reported that income is on target with the budget, and that expenses are under budget, despite payroll overtime due to winter road conditions.

Lake Committee chair Dennis Raines noted that the lake is under-fished and that some 3000 small fish need to be removed. A live fish box will be obtained for disposal of caught fish that are unwanted. More information about these plans will be developed and reported to the membership.

Ty Burnette indicated that a preliminary report has been received from Volkert Engineering about the front gate area. Discussion about the report will continue with the Board, the Roads Subcommittee, and the Manager.

Only eight residents requested inspection of their driveways and fire control issues on their property by the Fire Safety Committee. If others are interested in this service, please contact the Office. (See article below.)

Clifftops will continue to offer employees a benefits package that includes

employee health, short-term disability, and life insurance.

The next Board meeting will be held May 2 at 2 p.m. at the Lake Club, instead of May 9, since that is Mothers' Day.

Note: the full text of the minutes of Board Meetings is posted on the Clifftops Website, www.clifftops.net, once the minutes are approved. In the meanwhile, copies of the unapproved minutes are available at the Office.

Community Meeting Notes

The February annual Community Meeting was held on February 7 at 2 p.m. at the Lake Club. Vice-President Henry Blizzard conducted the meeting.

About 15 CPOA members attended. Treasurer Baker Walker presented a report about the current finances of the Association. He noted that, given the ongoing Strategic Planning II effort, recommendations for increased expenditures may well be made. These recommendations may well result in dues increases.

Bill Longwell, co-chair of the Road and Gate subcommittee of SP-II, announced that there would be a community meeting on this topic on February 13 at 10 a.m. at the Lake Club. The primary topic of this meeting is to be the proposed redesign of the gate area.

Greg Magavero, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, encouraged CPOA members to take advantage of the free evaluation of driveways for fire and emergency equipment access.

Other topics raised included dead trees on common property (please contact the Property Manager), security concerns related to decreased staffing of the gate (most attendees felt they and their property were secure), tailgating by unauthorized persons through the gate (contact the Property Manager with time and date so that the video-camera recorder can be checked), gratitude for the dumpster (please be responsible and deposit only household trash there), and the need for a new fence at the Bluff Club overlook because of vegetation clearing (the Board will consult with our property insurance company to determine our responsibility).

The meeting was adjourned after about an hour. The next Community Meeting will be held August 8 at 2 p.m. at the Lake Club.

Strategic Planning II Update

All nine committees and subcommittees of SP-II have been working to address the thirteen strategic objectives identified at last Spring's workshop. Initial reports from these groups were submitted to the Strategic Planning Committee, and final reports will be completed by the end of March.

The members of the Strategic Planning Committee will take the information provided in these reports and fold it into the 2010 Strategic Plan. The first draft of the Plan will be submitted to the Board by the end of April.

The SPC and the Board are co-sponsoring three community sessions to present the draft plan to all interested CPOA members. Please plan to attend

one of these sessions, all of which will be held at the Lake Club.

Dates are: Saturday, May 29, 10 a.m., Saturday, June 5, 2 p.m., and Sunday, June 13, 2 p.m.

Greg Magavero, Chair, SPC

Fire Safety in Clifftops

Over the past few months, the Fire Safety Committee has recommended the use of the “Firewise Community” guidelines. These include maintaining a thirty-foot buffer around your home and outbuildings.

Now is the perfect time to remove dead limbs and the last of the dead leaves from around your home. It is also a good time to thin and prune overgrown shrubbery that could become “balls of fire” in the event of a woods fire.

We have completed all of the driveway inspections requested by homeowners to ensure that emergency vehicles have adequate access to these residences. The recommendation is that access be 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet.

If you would like an evaluation of your drive or outside landscaping, please contact the Clifftops Office. For more information about the “firewise” landscaping plan, see www.state.tn.us/agriculture/forestry

Ray Banks, Fire Safety
Subcommittee

From the Property Manager

First of all, thank you to all of our residents who have shown patience and understanding over the past few months when we were attempting to clear roads of fallen trees or snow. We know that you would like to get around as soon as possible, but we also believe that you don't want Clifftops staff to endanger themselves when the conditions are truly dangerous (as when we were under a tornado watch in January or when snow accumulation makes road travel treacherous).

I have had the opportunity to talk with many of you under these less than optimal conditions in January and February, and I appreciate your understanding as we attempted to do our best in difficult circumstances.

On another matter, many of you have small caves or abandoned “dog-hole” mines on your property. As the milder weather encourages you to take to the woods, I'd like to remind you that these caves and mines are potential home sites for bats. Did you know that Tennessee bats are currently suffering from a disease called “white-nosed syndrome”? This disease is spread by foot traffic from cave to cave.

So, please consider staying out of caves and old mines to help protect our bat population. For more information, see www.state.tn.us/twra/tnbwg/wns.html

Another way to protect animals is to refrain from “adopting” what appear to be orphaned young animals. Many animal species have their young in the spring, and their natural defense

mechanisms include attempting to go unnoticed by staying in place when approached by strangers.

The Clifftops Office gets several calls each spring about what appear to be “abandoned” animals. Let me share the following information from the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency:

*It is best not to pick up any wild animal. Most “orphans” have parents nearby waiting for you to leave. If you know for certain the animal is orphaned, call the nearest of TWRA’s four Regional Offices, and they will put you in touch with the nearest rehabilitator. **DO NOT** try to take care of the animal yourself.*

Clifftops is in Region 3 of the TWRA. The office is at 464 Industrial Boulevard in Crossville, and the numbers are 931-484-9571 or 1-800-262-6704.

Finally, if you are like me, spring brings a strong urge to do a little fishing. Clifftops Lake needs this activity, as noted earlier in this issue. In consultation with the University of Tennessee Extension Office in Grundy County, we can recommend that you remove any fish you catch from the Lake. We especially need to remove smaller fish, so if you catch any fish you do not wish to keep, please release them in the creek below the dam. Two particularly harmful species, crappie and green sunfish, should be targeted for removal by fishers.

Thanks for your help in ensuring the ongoing health of our Lake.

Ty Burnette

Roads and Front Entrance Subcommittee Community Forum

The Roads and Front Entrance Subcommittee of SPII held a community forum on February 13 to solicit comments and concerns about the front entrance area. Convened by co-chair Bill Longwell, the meeting was attended by fourteen CPOA members, with an additional fourteen persons submitting comments by e-mail.

These comments were forwarded to Volkert Engineering, the firm contracted to study the front entrance, to help them understand the preferences, concerns, and suggestions offered by property owners. Information gathered during this process will also be used in preparing the subcommittee’s report to the Strategic Planning Committee.

Relay for Life Update

Since there was no interest in forming a team for Relay for Life, Clifftops will not have a team this year. However, everyone is invited to the 2010 Relay, scheduled for June 4-5 at Grundy County High School. If you would like to make a contribution to this effort, please make your check payable to The American Cancer Society and leave it at the Office or send it to Elaine Goleski, who continues to be a member of the county-wide Steering Committee. Thank you!

Men's Bridge Group

Jim Poteet reports that the men's bridge group has been formed and is meeting the first and third Mondays of each month at 1 p.m. at the Bluff Club. New members are always welcome. For more information, contact Jim at 924-7666 or jimpoteet@blomand.net.

"Sunset Serenade"

St. Mary's Sewanee is hosting a "sunset serenade" on Saturday, May 8, beginning at 6 p.m. Featuring music by Burns, Dawson, and Friends, and a picnic supper from Julia's Fine Foods, the serenade will also benefit the programs at St. Mary's Retreat and Conference Center. Tickets are \$30/person.

For more information, contact St. Mary's at 598-5342.

Comings and Goings

Welcome to:

Shawnee and Randall Gibson,
Sassafras Court, Lot 20WL
Mary Heath and Nick Roberts,
Sarvisberry Place, Lot 126

Goodbye to:

Waymon Anderson, Sassafras Court,
Lot 20WL
Phyllis and Charles Kinder, Sarvisberry
Place, Lot 126