



Ridge Rambler

Annual Meeting

Put July 16 on your calendar.

That will be our annual meeting.

It normally begins at about 10:30 a.m. and ends in a potluck lunch. We will elect three directors to the board and give reports on developments during the past year.

We will meet at the East Walland Primitive Baptist Church – the adobe-type church on the right side of East Miller's Cove Road.

See you there!!

Please Slow Down!

With the advent of spring (Hurray!!), Saddle Ridge residents often take to the roads – on foot.

For the safety of the walkers and for your own, please observe the 20 mile-per-hour speed limit.

And please stay on the correct side of the road. Granted, the roads are narrow but taking your half in the middle or on the wrong side of the road coming around a curve can prove disastrous.

Saddle Ridge to Fight Woolly Adelgid

At its meeting on March 23, the board of directors of the Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association set in motion attempts to fight the woolly adelgid, a tiny insect which may destroy all eastern and Carolina hemlock trees (according to a U-T entomologist and plant pathologist) within the next four to 10 years.

The insect was introduced into the U.S. through Canada and has decimated the hemlock forests down the Appalachian chain (up to 80 percent of the trees have died in the Middle Atlantic and southern New England) before reaching this area in 2002. The Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina has been fighting the infestation since 1995, first using soapy-foam sprays and now tree injections and the raising of two strains of beetles whose sole source of food is the adelgid.

Hemlocks in Saddle Ridge are becoming infested. Many already have the adelgids present (turn the branches of trees over and little white specks are evidence that they are present or examine higher trees with strong binoculars to spot the white specks). Those that don't, according to the experts, probably will be infected through birds.

Mountain Homes, the residential development behind Blackberry Farm, has had a plan for the past year with the help of Bob Merriman, who has researched the matter by reading almost all available materials. Each resident was assessed a certain amount to finance their three-year project.

Bob Hood and Hugh Pearson here in Saddle Ridge have also read voluminously on the subject and are qualified HAZ-MAT (capable of dealing with hazardous materials) handlers.

They appeared before the board of directors on March 23.

There are four major methods of fighting the infestation. One is to spray the entire tree with the soapy foam. This is effective only if 100 percent of the tree is covered. Usually only about four-foot-tall or smaller trees can be effectively treated by this method. Second is applying a systemic poison around the base of the tree infected. This method poses major problems to animals and to streams and is only effective under certain soil and moisture conditions. Third is the use of the beetles. There simply are not enough beetles at the present time to do the job. The University of Tennessee is raising beetles as fast as possible. But they still remain

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New garbage unit Now is in place

A new bright green garbage building is now in place.

The board of directors in January voted to replace the then-decrepit white building at a cost of no more than \$2,500.

Animals were becoming a major problem since they could gain access to the interior of the old building.

Since the replacement, some problems which at that time were jeopardizing our garbage pick-up service have lessened. With a nice facility, residents seem to be more careful with their garbage.

However, it is imperative that residents follow a few simple directions. If pick-up becomes too problematic, our garbage service could be discontinued by the vendor.

See next page for Rules

SRPOA Officials Tour Homestead

During January, Bob Frink, president of Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association, and Jim Clinansmith, vice president, toured The Homestead, the development which is being constructed next to Saddle Ridge land.

Conducting the tour was Ed Garrett, project manager since The Homestead first began in Sevier County more than four years ago.

Frink told Garrett that he was more interested in what Naterra, the company behind the development, planned for the Blount County part of the project.

Roadways, 24 feet wide with two-foot shoulders, are being bulldozed on the Blount County side and are visible from various parts of Saddle Ridge.

A roadway from that part of the development which has already been approved by the Blount County Planning Commission (actually through a court order rather than by vote of the commission) is now under

construction and will connect The Homestead with East Miller's Cove Road.

Garrett has said that the roadway is required to allow emergency vehicles access to the Blount County portion of the development. He said that the gate would not be used for every-day access at the present time but did not rule out eventually having permission for normal, every-day use.

The road connecting The Homestead to East Miller's Cove Road has been a major sticking point in approval of Phase 2 of the construction. Studies show that East Miller's Cove Road already has too much traffic for its width. Naterra had indicated it was willing to help finance the widening.

However, the county highway department does not use the right of eminent domain and several property owners along the road have indicated their strong opposition to using their land to allow the road to be widened. Frink and others have appeared before the planning commission to

voice disapproval of the project's expansion into Blount County.

At the current moment – and this could change at any time – the planning commission has delayed The Homestead's latest request for approval of Phase 2 because of the roadway dilemma.

The Sevier County portion of the huge development has almost been totally sold. Phase 1 in Blount County is proceeding because of the judge's decision.

Naterra is one of the largest development corporations in the nation, if not the world. Most of the owners of property and homes (all of which must be built to exacting requirements such as being of "log" construction) are from Florida. Streets are paved and "unbuildable" areas have been turned into hiking trails, etc. The development can be reached from Wear's Valley Road (U.S. 321) and turning at the camp sign across from the new RV park. There is no gate or security. The Homestead's headquarters is farther toward

New Garbage Unit, continued

Rules:

- Always put garbage in plastic bags! This could be referred to as the "prime directive." The vendor can't and shouldn't be expected to hoist other containers filled with garbage.
- Always flatten cardboard boxes and place them on the floor. There usually is already a pile.
- Don't discard major items like discarded furniture, other large items in this garbage unit. Talk to your neighbors and coordinate a trip to the dump together with those larger items.

Remember, motorcycles, ATVs, motor bikes are banned

According to Section A-5 of the land use restrictions, protective covenants and building standards, all are banned from the development.

Wooly Adelgid, continued

prohibitively expensive and simply are not available. In a few years perhaps there will be sufficient quantities and the cost will be lower.

The fourth method is to inject each tree (4 inch diameter and up), using special equipment, with a nicotine-based poison. Cost is also high – about \$40 to \$60 or more a tree, depending on its size (and there are some towering hemlocks in Saddle Ridge). The board voted to purchase the equipment (about \$1,000) and to spend up to \$5,000 for the poison to treat the entrance and right of way.

The board discussed the possibility of doing nothing and letting the adelgids destroy the hemlocks in Saddle Ridge. However, since these are some of the most beautiful of all evergreens in our development, all property owners' property values would decrease.

Expenditures would also be necessary to remove the dead and fallen trees from across roads and power lines. There would also be a major inconvenience involved (blocked roads and no power).

The board also heard a letter from Kathy Wilbanks, chairman of the beautification committee, detailing the need to save the hemlocks for the ecosystem's balance.

The beautification committee will select trees most visible near the entrance to Saddle Ridge and along its roadways for first treatment since losing these trees would be the most unsightly and most damaging to the overall beauty of the area (and therefore to property values).

Residents who wish their trees treated should contact Bob Hood at winterhaw@bellsouth.net or Hugh Pearson at hubertp@esper.com.

There are only two windows for injection during which time the tree can absorb the poison and when is the most effective time in the life cycle of the aphid – April/May and September/October. Hopefully the first injections, mainly to trees poisoned out by the beautification committee, can be done this spring.

Anyone with questions should contact Hood or Pearson.

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*Denotes members of road committee.

Welcome to New Owners In Saddle Ridge

We extend a warm welcome to new owners of property in Saddle Ridge. Here are their names and addresses. If we've omitted someone, please let us know by sending an email to Nancy Cain (ncain69665@aol.com). Some of the more recent purchases will probably be announced in the next newsletter.

Wayne and Anne Anderson
3154 Kings Arms Court
Atlanta, GA 30345-2153
They bought Marie Morton's home on Skytop.

Jeff and Joan Falk
4194 Grand Champ Circle
Palm Harbor, FL 34685
They purchased Bo Key's house.

Paul and Barbara Gabel
(We don't have an address but they purchased one of the lots on Oakwood formerly owned by Steve Eubanks.).....

Nancy Grieco
2820 D Stoneway Lane
Fort Pierce, FL 34982
She purchased two lots on Oakwood next to Jack and Juanita Davis and above the Suggs.

David and Carroll Jackson
2706 Magnolia Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37914
They purchased another of Steve Eubank's on Oakwood.

Joe Kolba
14813 Seminole Trail
Seminole, FL 33776
Exact location of his lot was not announced.

Alex and Alane Wyss
1832 Chilhowee Loop Rd
Walland, TN 37886
They purchased the home of Danny and Beverly Carrigan.

Saddle Ridge 04/05 Budget

	Budget Spent FY 03/04	Budget FY 04/05
Road Maintenance Acct		
1. Dues income FY 03	\$40,982.73**	\$37,500
2. Expenses		
A. Emergency Fund	5500/5500*	5500
B. Equip. replacement	5000/5000*	5000
C. Maintenance		
(1) Supplies- rock, fuel, drain tile, etc.	18,000/11,864.52	18,000
(2) Labor	00/65	
(3) Security Gate	00/672.94	
(4) Bushhog sides of road	2500/1822.50	2500
(5) Tractor maintenance	660/1165.11	660
(6) Widen/repair Elk Point	00/2460	
D. Garbage Pickup	2500/2640	2640
E. Utilities & Phone for gate	1600/1537.35	1600
F. Postage/Admin Supplies/Misc	600/350.21	600
G. Beautification Projects	1000/265.78	1000
H. Legal & Attorney Fees	00/385	
Total Spent FY ending 30 June 04	\$24,528.87	
Total Budget for next Fiscal Year		\$37,500

* These funds will transfer into the savings account in July 2004 and were not actually spent during the year except for \$1300.46 for a sickle.

** Higher than budgeted attributed to collection of past due fees.