


SADDLE RIDGE



The  
*Ridge Rambler*  
Volume 18 • Issue 2  
Fall 2010



## Musings from the Editor

by Melba Harmon



### Upcoming dates to remember:

Nov 25  
Thanksgiving

July 16, 2011  
Annual Meeting

Fall has finally come to the mountains and none too soon in my book. This Summer, was miserable and long. I also had my fill of copperheads and wild boar. Our German Shepherd has a nasty scar on her side from a run-in with a boar. I guess the unwelcome critters are the price we pay for living here.

The Rambler has a new Assistant Editor. Roxanne Clapp has graciously volunteered to help with the newsletter. Roxanne is a graphic artist so you will notice a new look to the Rambler. Roxanne and her husband Larry live in Florida but are anxious to build in Saddle Ridge and spend as much time up here as their careers allow. They plan to start construction in the Spring.

Martha Frink organized a clean-up of East Miller's Cove recently. We made quite a haul.

We plan on sending the Rambler to property owners who do not live in Saddle Ridge to your email addresses. This will save money and time. If you have email and would like to receive the Rambler electronically please email me at [melba.harmon@gmail.com](mailto:melba.harmon@gmail.com). The email addresses will be confidential and it and will not be part of a mass mailing. 🍁

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- 🍁 Remarks from our new President
- 🍁 History of Saddle Ridge, part IV
- 🍁 Sidebar on Elk
- 🍁 Message from outgoing President

# A message from our outgoing President

## Looking Back – Jim Harmon

As President Obama said, “.....elections have consequences.” For me that means after three years, I have passed the torch to Nancy Cain. For those of you that do not know Nancy, she is a long time resident who is exceptionally well qualified to lead the SRPOA and will be an excellent President!

Looking back, our biggest accomplishment was the purchase of Saddle Ridge property by the SRPOA. By becoming a property owner, we (SRPOA) can finally fully represent all property owners in any dispute involving our CC&R’s and/or in delinquent fee collection.

The active involvement of the Architectural Committee in the homebuilding that has surged somewhat over the past couple of years is another major step forward. The committee is able to guide and assist the new homebuilder through the complicated process of building in Saddle Ridge and simultaneously assure that our CC&R’s are followed and property values are protected.

And I cannot finish without mentioning the Road Committee. They are tireless and conscientious and rarely get any thanks. They do a great job.

In fact all of our committees as well as all of the Board members do a great job. They certainly made my job easier – thanks to everyone.....Jim



## Critter Corner

Stories and accounts of the various animals, birds, and insects in Saddle Ridge.

### Sidebar on Elk

*(Editor’s note: Most of this information was provided by Beth Dicus, a former resident of Saddle Ridge and one of the elks’ major caregivers.)*

The year is 1995. You drive up Saddle Ridge Road. On the right is a plethora of white mailboxes, you open the gate with your clicker (no stone pillar, no postal kiosk) and drive inside.

You glance over the lake and see – two elk standing in the middle of

the water. Two elk.


Those were our first elk residents; two females, one larger than the other (perhaps they were different species).

We acquired them when the hunting lodge closed which was located where the Three Sisters development is now slowing proceeding,

The elk had apparently (one of those perhaps-we-don’t-want-to-delve-further-into-the-facts situations) wandered into Saddle Ridge where residents fed them.

They stayed by themselves but roamed freely throughout the development. They probably slept up where the Suggs house now stands (since hikers found signs of their continued presence there). On particularly hot days - or when they were chased by a dog or other varmint - they could be spotted standing in the middle of the lake at the entrance.

*continues on page 5*



## President's Remarks

by Nancy Cain

Since my election as president of Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association by the board of directors in July, some residents have asked me if I wanted congratulations or condolences.

I always reply that I am honored and excited about this opportunity. For one thing, I follow one of the best presidents of SRPOA in its history, Jim Harmon – and I've known all of them.

I have lived here for 17 years this month, thanks to Perry Burchfield who not only built my house but then moved me in during my absence since I was out of the country when the house was ready.

I have lived Saddle Ridge history as well as writing about it in this publication.

In summary: I love it here and want to help this community continue to be the best place to live in the world.

How to do that? We're still struggling with the covenants and restrictions (hope all of you keep a copy of that 1970's document handy) but since the recent purchase of

property up here we now see our way legally to enforce its provisions.

We also have a "translation," if you will, in the works. Members of the board of directors have copies, and we'll be distributing copies to allow input from other residents. Many of the provisions without the translation are dated, unclear and just plain confusing. This translation or interpretation should make them clearer.

We're working with the architectural committee headed by Phil Spampinato (another of those great former presidents) to help prospective homeowners and their builders get it right the first time – and at the same time minimize impact on our roads.

You've seen the equipment putting in drainage tiles and widening our ditches, all thanks to members of the road maintenance committee spearheaded by Bob Hood. That's another priority – as it always has been and must

be.

Winter will soon be upon us, and Mother Nature has a way of imposing her will. We must be ready.

We're working to continue and even improve communications within the community (didn't we have fun cleaning East Miller's Cove on that gorgeous fall day and then reconnecting at the wiener roast?) and without. I've met with Blount County Highway Superintendent Bill Dunlap and will stay in periodic contact with him. Roads again.

None of this is new, of course. But we are open to new ideas, new suggestions about improving our lives together. I can be reached by email ([ncain69665@aol.com](mailto:ncain69665@aol.com)), by phone 984-7250 (home) and 216-1900 (cell). Of course since it's AT&T that cell doesn't work up here but I have voice mail at both numbers and will get back to you. 🍁

# The History of Saddle Ridge *Part IV*

by Nancy Cain



This is the fourth in a series of articles outlining the history of Saddle Ridge. The last installment detailed the events in Saddle Ridge the weekend of March 13, 1993 - the Blizzard of 1993. We take up the story with the April 3 board of directors meeting.

The SRPOA board voted on April 3 – less than a month after the blizzard - to hire four to six workers for 30 days at \$7 per man hour to clear roads, creeks and ditches in preparation for bringing the roads back into shape from the storm damage. Utility crews had cut more than 100 trees which blocked their access to electrical and telephone lines but all other roadways remained unpassable.

That work depleted the treasury by \$4,552.79, according to figures presented at the June 1993 annual meeting.

Worse was to come. Rain started falling on Friday from a major low pressure center. It continued to fall until at least Sunday. By this time the dam had been breached and water flowed down Saddle Ridge Road. It took out the roadway – leaving a major chasm about where the concrete culvert now is. East Miller's Cove was also underwater and impassable. Residents in Saddle Ridge were stranded and those who were out of town when the deluge began could not return to their homes.

At the height of the flood, Little River flowed just under the then-relatively-new bridge linking the residential part of Walland to U.S. 321 but the roadway at that intersection was underwater.

The water receded fairly rapidly. But damage was considerable – and costly. Residents of Saddle Ridge banded together, and a makeshift link was established to allow residents to get into and out of the development.

Then came another deluge, not as horrific as the first. But the road was washed away again. An emergency maintenance assessment was levied, plans were made, then carried out. The culvert was designed, poured and completed. Plans were made to raise the banks of the lake (several times during the next few years) and larger drains from the lake to the stream were eventually installed.

Weather seemed to have wearied from throwing its worst at Saddle Ridge. Although funds to keep up the roadways had been depleted, attention of the board turned to more mundane matters in the next few years: elk food (see accompanying article in this Ridge Rambler), an increasing need for mailboxes, the problem with the covenants and restrictions.

As the number of residents increased, so did the line of mailboxes located outside the gate. As early as the 1990's, efforts were under way to decide how to eliminate a first impression of yards of mailboxes as a visitor drove up the road toward the gate.

At the annual meeting in 2001, then-president Larry Dicus listed 38 homes in Saddle Ridge with 25 full-time residents.

Leading the drive for what was to become our kiosk was Richard Way. Richard spent time talking with persons concerned that the kiosk fit into Saddle Ridge's ambience (with different residents having different ideas about what that actually was). He talked with the postal service since the rural postal carrier was paid per mailbox and the combined equipment we now have might have decreased our carrier's pay.

Boxes to hold the newspapers were added with room to expand (40 to 50). On a suggestion by Jim Clinansmith, an inter-development mailbox (the black one in the kiosk) was also added. Juanita Davis painstakingly allotted specific boxes to each resident, allowing for expansion over the years.



*continues on page 7*

continued from page 2

## Critter Corner - Sidebar on Elk, cont.

You could see them beside the roadway just about anywhere in Saddle Ridge when you came around a corner or went down one of our hills. Kept the speeds down since residents of that time were very protective of our elk.

Years passed and the two animals became older and older. One morning, residents leaving the development saw one of them on her side in a culvert-like area across Water's End Road from where the dry fire hydrant is now. She had apparently fallen. There were furrows in the dirt where she had tried unsuccessfully to regain her footing. She was dead; her long-time companion stood beside the body.

About 18 months later, her companion had to be "put down." While working one day at the kiosk, Juanita Davis of DCA heard a huge commotion outside. The elk had fallen off a highly visible incline. She was blind.

The two were buried near the end of the lake beside the road (which now is near the backwater created by the beavers).

Because all residents missed our elk, about five men in Saddle Ridge, including Developer Jack Davis, banded together to purchase more. "Bo", a young (about three when he was purchased) male and two females came to Saddle Ridge.

But they could not be allowed to wander freely since they might just decide to return to their previous home (near Clinton). An 11-foot fence was constructed (elk can jump almost that high), first where the concrete table rests near the barn. Later the pen was expanded to include almost all the area up to the lake (the beavers had not yet arrived).

Bo could not jump the towering fence – but he could open the gate. That animal learned to push the little lever of the gate upward with his teeth, then slide the entire mechanism over.

He did it for years. Most of the time he simply wandered onto peoples' porches or

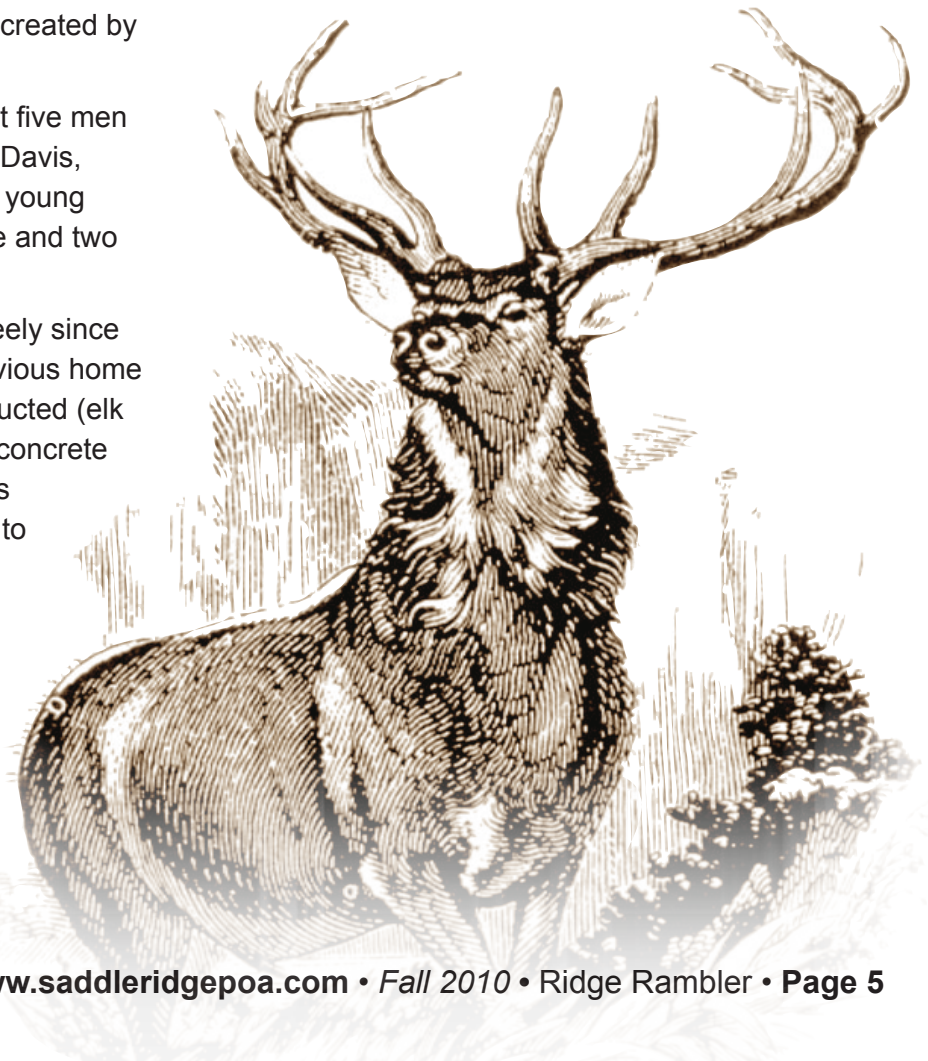
through their flower beds, munching as he went.

But Bo became a teenager and went into rut. He was then all but uncontrollable. He would literally rampage through an area, destroying deck furniture, deck railings, anything in his path. At a fire pit near his pen he destroyed by butting and stomping an assortment of wooden rocking chairs. Only splinters were left.

The five men who had purchased Bo were often called out to rescue residents from a Bo run amok. Once Jack Davis struck Bo with a two-by-four. Bo never forgot. When he was in rut, Bo seemed to make a beeline (elkline? Sorry) for the Davis house, stick his antlers (which by now were magnificent) through the deck rails and rip, rip, rip.


One time Jack's daughter, Becky Sledge, was at her father's home. Bo went after her. When she took refuge in her automobile, Bo attacked the car. By this time he weighed over a ton.

*continues on next page*



continued from previous page

## Critter Corner - Sidebar on Elk, cont.



When he wasn't in rut, Bo was almost a real pet. He loved for you to massage his emerging antlers in the spring (the tips were almost blazing hot).

(When he first began going into rut, he would press his developed antlers through the mesh of his pen and want you to grab them and wrestle with him, much like one does with a dog and a toy.)

He loved to be petted behind his ears, on his back, even on his stomach (he'd rear up on his hind legs, place his front legs on the fence and wait for you to catch on).

He mated when he was about five with one of the two females – the aggressive and fairly mean one. Their offspring was named Junior and seemed to inherit his mother's personality. As Beth Dicus says, Junior was "squirrely". He was sold.

Then the other female became pregnant. She had difficulty delivering her son. A vet was called. Beth and other SR residents were on hand to help with the delivery. The female had to be tranquilized in order for the half-born youngster to be brought fully into the world.

"When he came out, he was flat as a pancake," Beth remembers. But he was alive. His mother, on the other hand, did not remember the birth at all and looked upon this addition to their herd as some strange interloper, not her baby.

For about a month, residents took turns coming to the barn every two hours, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to feed this little elk, which they named Oliver. They had to rub him with a warm, wet towel so that he would think his mother's tongue was cleaning him and

telling him it was time to eat.

They continued feeding him with a bottle for the next six months. Oliver adopted the personality of his father, friendly and receptive to human touch.

But Bo continued to manipulate the lock on the gate and with a baby on board keeping that gate locked was imperative. Oliver would not have been able to survive outside the pen away from the human feeders.

Earlier, the females had joined Bo outside his enclosure and then continued to wander (Bo always seemed to stay close by and always return by feeding time). One was gone for six weeks and then returned. The other remained free for 10 weeks and then, Beth remembers, just appeared by the gate one morning. "She really rushed inside. It was as though she had really missed those other elk. They are herd animals, after all."

Reports from as far away as Townsend had been received during the females' absence. "There's an elk eating everything in my garden." "There's an elk on my porch."

Most experts say that elk kept in an enclosed area lose the ability to forage for themselves and will die if free. Both females were very thin when they reappeared but they obviously had learned to find food.

One Thanksgiving, Beth remembers, her husband was awakened before dawn by a call from Dr. Fletcher (who resided where the Kolariks now live). Bo was tearing up his deck. Larry dressed and drove up to the house. Bo had wandered off into the darkness. Larry promised to return after daylight.

As he was driving up Chilhowee Loop, he saw Dr. Fletcher walking down the road, followed by a docile Bo calmly munching on the broom which Dr. Fletcher had slung over his shoulder.

*To be continued in the next issue of the Ridge Rambler.*

continued from page 4

## **The History of Saddle Ridge - Part IV**

Eventually, Saddle Ridge residents also constructed the UPS/Fed Ex mailbox when Juanita became unable to staff the DCA office (the A-frame just outside the gate). Before, residents had always been able to claim their packages in the office.

The problem with covenants and restrictions – a problem since C.C. “Buddy” Pack had disappeared and defaulted (see earlier history installments) – continued to involve much thought, debate and legal fees.

Over the years, Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association members sought legal advice from at least five attorneys (three with the law firm of Kizer and Black) and consumed hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars in legal fees.

There was even a committee during the early part of the 2000’s specifically dedicated to this task.

Note: When Judge Kerry Blackwood moved into Saddle Ridge, he sought legal advice from friends/judges from throughout the country. At his suggestion, SRPOA purchased a lot in Saddle Ridge. SRPOA is therefore a property

owner and according to the Covenants and Restrictions can enforce the regulations set forth in that document.

In a related matter, SRPOA assumed maintenance of the roads and “other amenities” from DCA in a document signed on March 25, 2003.

Under this agreement, SRPOA also was designated as the responsible party in dues collection and billing while DCA continued as developer of Saddle Ridge.

The budget of SRPOA consequently increased substantially, and the board first agreed to waive the maintenance fees for one year for those who assumed the work on the roadways and other maintenance duties. Later at an annual meeting, it was agreed that those working on the roads would be paid wages per hour.

**Next and final installment: We grow, we continue to organize ourselves, we become more beautiful. 🌿**

### **People on the Move!**

Welcome new SR residents and future residents  
and their families:

Jim and Anne Tedford

Lynn and Eddie Hopps

Elizabeth Domingue and Lorraine Smith

Ken and Julie Morgan

Steve and Sue Foster

Larry and Roxanne Clapp

David and Mary Glarner

Ken and Cheryl LaValley

*Apologies to anyone we missed. If you are one of those people, drop us a line and let us know how you found Saddle Ridge and why you chose it.*

# CONTACTS

## Board Members

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Nancy Cain, President      | 984-7250             |
| Bob Spista, Vice President | 984-0502             |
| Bill Harriman, Treasurer   | 681-3437             |
| Judy Pearson, Secretary    | 982-5729             |
| Scott Schehr               | 983-1871             |
| Jim Tedford                | 670-1304             |
| Alex Wyss                  | 977-1533             |
| Debra James                | debra@debrajames.com |



*Happy Holidays!*

## Committee Chairs

|                                |          |                           |
|--------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Architectural Review Committee |          |                           |
| Phil Spampinato                | 675-7997 | rhd@tds.net               |
| Beautification Committee       |          |                           |
| Martha Frink                   | 984-4873 | marthfrink@peoplepc.com   |
| Newsletter Committee           |          |                           |
| Melba Harmon                   | 983-7459 | melba.harmon@gmail.com    |
| Communications Committee       |          |                           |
| Jim Tedford                    | 670-1304 | jtedford@alphadogmktg.com |
| Events Committee               |          |                           |
| Barb Clinansmith               | 981-3990 | bclinansmith@juno.com     |
| Firewise Committee             |          |                           |
| Tim & Sarah Williams           | 982-5290 | timsbabe1@msn.com         |
| Road Committee                 |          |                           |
| Bob Hood                       | 681-7623 | winterhawk6210@yahoo.com  |

## Resident Services

The Rambler lists those services that are offered by Saddle Ridge homeowners. Please submit a brief description of services that you have to offer such as electrical, handyman, etc. to Melba Harmon at melba.harmon@gmail.com. Notices are subject to space limitations. There is no charge to Saddle Ridge property/homeowners.

ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, HEATING & A/C WORK • Licensed and Insured      Darin Suggs, 804-6449

GENERAL ELECTRICAL WORK      Bob Hood, 681-7632

HANDYMAN & REMODELING WORK      Chris Sledge, 406-8502

### BARN EVENT CENTER OF THE SMOKIES

A full service event center for parties, business meetings, weddings, etc. off site catering is offered as well. Contact Richard or Debbie Way at 448-9378 or [www.barneventcenterofthesmokies.com](http://www.barneventcenterofthesmokies.com)