


The
Ridge Rambler

President's Message



Living in the Mountains *Steve Foster, President SRPOA*

Isn't it great living in the mountains? We have all made the choice to live in this wonderland of nature for various reasons. In choosing Saddle Ridge as our home, we have elected to live in an environment that is unmatched by those found in urban and suburban settings. Along with all the beauty of this place come challenges that are also not commonly found in urban settings: gravel roads, no curbside trash pickup or mail delivery, more frequent power outages due to downed trees. Life in a dense forest of trees means the odds of one falling across a road are greater than in most places. Winter snow and ice in our mountain terrain, makes clearing the roads difficult and extremely dangerous. And, since our roads are private, there is no municipality with snow removal equipment responsible for guaranteeing clear roadways.

To deal with these challenges, we all need to recognize that our level of preparedness must exceed that of urban dwellers. For example, owning a generator is more of a necessity here than in town. All-wheel drive or 4-wheel drive vehicles make a real difference over typical 2-wheel drives. Stocking up on provisions and emergency gear, such as flashlights, radios, and batteries, is more important here than in less remote areas.

One way that we are similar to subdivisions in town is the responsibility we each have for the trees on our properties. In a typical subdivision, if a tree falls onto a neighbor's property or the street, the tree's owner is legally responsible for the removal of that tree. That's the case here in Saddle Ridge as well. The good news is that in Saddle Ridge we have a community of helpful neighbors who are more than willing to pitch in when adversity strikes. Typically, as soon as a fallen tree is discovered and the word gets out, our residents swing into action and remove that obstacle.

As far as snow and ice on our roads are concerned, being prepared may mean being prepared to stay home until the thaw occurs. If you must travel outside Saddle Ridge, parking near the gate or barn to avoid slick and steep roads is an option. Tire chains have proven to be effective in all but extreme blizzard conditions. In a typical winter here, the number of days our roads are impassable due to snow and ice is fewer than ten. That fact, combined with the extreme hazards associated with trying to clear our mountain roads, makes it impractical for us to plow snow and ice from our roads. Again, this community has an amazing spirit and if travel is an absolute necessity, our residents will somehow make it happen.

I encourage every Saddle Ridge resident to recognize that living in this great place comes with challenges beyond those found in "typical" communities but those challenges are not insurmountable when faced with the appropriate level of preparation. Luckily we have had a mild winter this year. As winter winds down and Spring arrives, I hope that all will come out and mingle with neighbors at community events like the Ladies Annual Cabin Fever Potluck on March 7 and the Spring Cleanup on March 25.

Board Announcements

High-Speed Internet coming to SR

AT&T will begin work on 3 projects to bring high-speed Internet fiber optic cable service to Saddle Ridge sometime in the latter part of 2017. A big thank you goes out to Alex Wyss, who initiated contact with AT&T representatives who were working on the Three Sisters Project. While we do not know the details of the services that will be made available, we can assume we will have somewhere around 75Mb/s data rates, unlimited data offerings, improved telephone service, and cable TV.

Trash Barn Etiquette

New to Saddle Ridge? Our guidelines for [Trash and Recycling Handling](#) can be found on the Saddle Ridge website at saddleridgepoa.com along with lots of other helpful information. **To all property owners**, please remember to break down your cardboard boxes when you put them in the trash barn so there's room for everyone. The trash barn is closed every Monday until 10:30 AM for trash removal and cleaning.

Treasurer's Report

We are happy to report that our Association continues in sound financial condition. Since the 2nd Quarter statements were distributed by e-mail, we have exceeded our operating cash inflow goal for the year. We should be able to add to our contingency fund at year end. The picture for operating cash outflows is not as rosy. Overall, we should meet our budgetary limitation for the year. We are on track to come in under budget in several areas, but in road maintenance and bush-hogging the roadsides, we are over budget for the year. This condition will likely affect the amount of roadwork we will do for the remainder of the fiscal year, which ends on June 30, 2017.

Annual assessment invoices for FY 2017/18 will arrive in June with a due date of July 31, 2017

Committee Reports

Environment Committee

After the close call we had with fire last November, it seems like a good time to revisit our community level of preparedness. Some of the questions being asked include:

- Do we need an emergency phone tree system to alert residents in case there is a need to evacuate?
- What aspects of the Firewise guidelines should we follow/are we following?
- Should we have more than the one emergency exit and what needs to be done to make them more accessible?
- Should we add new recommendations to our architectural guidelines?

If anyone has any thoughts on these questions, please email Sue DuBois, Committee Chair at sodubois@gmail.com.

You may see a USDA Wildlife Services truck driving through Saddle Ridge. They approached us about monitoring and managing the feral swine population in Saddle Ridge. Feral swine can do a lot of damage to local vegetation and wildlife as we have seen in some areas of Saddle Ridge. ([Feral Swine Factsheet](#))

Road Committee

Most of the roads have fared pretty well over the mild winter. Shaping the roads last summer with more prominent crowns seems to have helped with drainage. The road committee will be prioritizing areas for future work.

Architectural Committee

The only application submitted during the winter quarter was for some garage remodelling at the Akers-Saunders residence. Please remember that the detailed plans for any additions or remodelling work must be submitted to the SRPOA Architectural Committee for approval and can be emailed to saddleridgepoa@gmail.com. The architectural review and approval guidelines can be found on the Saddle Ridge web site, under Welcome Residents; then click on [Before You Build](#).

Events / Hospitality Committee

Shed the winter blues and join us for an evening of fun with friends and neighbors. The **Ladies Annual Cabin Fever Potluck** will be held on Tuesday, March 7, 6:30 PM at Lynn Hopps' home. RSVP to saddleridgepoa@gmail.com or Ann Tedford at 980-1757.

Communications Committee

The Saddle Ridge members [Facebook group page](#) continues to be a great source for information within our community. We regularly post messages, alerts, concerns and needs to this page. Living in this rural community, we don't often see each other, especially during the winter months, so the Facebook page is a way to communicate timely news such as power outages, fire alerts, wildlife sightings, events coming up, lost pets or even suspicious traffic. For everyone who is a member, these posts at times have been priceless.

Saddle Ridge is a rural and unique community and staying in touch in some way keeps us connected to each other. To stay informed about what is going on in Saddle Ridge on a regular basis, contact Communications Chair, Lynn Hopps, lhoppes@gmail.com, to be added to the group. Please remember, this page is strictly for people who own property in Saddle Ridge.

Winter Recap



Photo: Smoke rises from the forest floor the morning after a wildfire broke out in Saddle Ridge off Waters End Road.

Wildfires Too Close to Home

Following an extremely dry summer and fall, much of the Southeast was plagued by wildfires. A wildfire which started behind Walland Elementary School on November 17, spread up the mountain range adjacent to Saddle Ridge keeping residents on edge and filling the air with smoke. Then on November 28, storms rolled through with high winds and rain. The rain helped dampen the fires and combined with the incredible effort by firefighters and several days of retardant dropped by planes, the Walland fire was contained.

Gatlinburg was also struck by a devastating fire which started in the National Park at Chimney Tops on November 23, and by November 28, following storms and high winds, spread to over 17,000 acres, killing 14 people and destroying over 2,460 structures.

At the same time, with the Walland fire still not fully contained, on the stormy night of November 28, lightning sparked a fire on the Glarner's property off Water's End. It quickly spread up the hill towards Debra James' and Frank Aldridge's home on Gobbler Ridge.

Debra James posted this update on Facebook on November 29: *"Good neighbors, the rain and Frank keeping the leaves off the driveway and our trails. His diligence created a fire break which allowed the men to get the fire at our driveway under control quickly. Thank you to the person who called in the first alarm! Our phone line was burned so we could not alert anyone. Frank ran up the hill to get cell coverage and I drove over to alert the Glarner's. I'm sorry to say they got the worst of it. The fire burned a few acres on their vacant lot across from our driveway. The firemen said we were so fortunate that the rain came when it did. Let's pray this next round of showers will help with the Gatlinburg fires. We could see the glow of the fires last night over the ridge. We are all fortunate indeed!"*

It made all of us think about having an evacuation plan.



Holiday Spirit

After weathering the fires, storms, and power outage, a large group of residents welcomed the chance to get out and visit with neighbors while decorating the barn for the holidays.

No white Christmas this winter. The thermometer hit 70 degrees on December 25. Our only significant snowfall for the season was on January 7 - about 4 inches. A very mild winter, overall.

SRPOA Owned Property



Over the past three years or so, thanks to a great deal of effort and sweat equity provided by volunteer property owners as well as some investment on the part of the SRPOA to bring in outside contractors, the barn area has slowly converted from an eyesore and dumping ground to an asset for property owners to enjoy. Significant improvements have been made, including replacement of the center section of the barn roof and new fencing near the barn.

The Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association has assembled an action team made up of community residents to help develop recommendations for the Board to consider for long-term maintenance, development, and use of SRPOA owned property, specifically the barn and surrounding land. Headed up by Jim Tedford, the action team consists of Tim Evans, Eddie Hopps, Margaret Saunders, Betsy Smith, and Alane Wyss.

The first objective of the action team involves each of you! We would like to hear from you with your thoughts around priorities to consider in developing a long-range plan for properties owned by the SRPOA. Look for an email with details coming soon.

On the Wild Side



I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

by William Wordsworth

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze. [\(see full poem here\)](#)*

Daffodils blooming in late January!

What a short winter. Could it be that Spring is just around the corner? Daffodils, or what's also commonly known around here as jonquils, is the common term for plants in the genus

Narcissus. *Narcissus* are native to southern Europe and North Africa. Even though they aren't native to East Tennessee, they are a delightful harbinger of the arrival of warmer days and more wildflowers to come.

Otters spotted in the Saddle Ridge wetlands!

Several residents have reported sighting an otter swimming around in the pond. On February 1, resident Margaret Saunders reported on Facebook, "Today was a good wildlife day in Saddle Ridge. There was a bald eagle fishing in the pond this afternoon and the otter was ottering around this evening." Nice!

On the Move

New property owners in Saddle Ridge include:

John & Joan Jackson, 2210 Turkey Roost Road
 Brian Mussio, 2173 Waters End Road
 Mark & Cathy Russell, Waters End Road (property without house)
 Jacob & Athena Shepard, 1730 Ridge Court

Upcoming Events

Saddle Ridge Annual Ladies Potluck
 Tuesday, March 7, 2017, 6:30 PM

Saddle Ridge Spring Cleanup
 Saturday, March 25, 2017

Saddle Ridge POA Annual Meeting
 Saturday, July 15, 2017

Walland Elementary School Family Fun Nights
 5-6 PM - March 7 - Parents as Partners
 April 4 - Tennessee History

Racheff Native Plant Sale
 April 1, 2017, at Racheff House
 1943 Tennessee Avenue, Knoxville

Contact your SRPOA Board:

Email: saddleridgepoa@gmail.com

Board members and committee chairs are listed below and also on the [Saddle Ridge website](#) - www.saddleridgepoa.com

President:
 Steve Foster
 859-494-7299

Vice President:
 Hugh Pearson
 865-982-5729

Treasurer:
 Smitty

Get Involved

Join one of our Saddle Ridge POA committees and contribute to the community. There are 5 standing committees: Architectural, Communications, Environment, Events, and Roads.

Check out the [Charter](#) for each of the 5 SRPOA standing committees or contact the Committee Chair:

Architecture - Darin Suggs
 Road - Darin Suggs
 Communications - Lynn Hopps
 Environment - Sue DuBois
 Events/Hospitality - Ann Tedford

[Saddle Ridge's Facebook](#) page is a great place to read and share up-to-the-minute news of the

(G. Robert Smith, Jr.)
615-631-5836

Secretary:

Lynn Hopps
865-984-7729

Recorder:

Ann Tedford
865-980-1757

Board Members:

Darin Suggs
865-804-6449

Sue DuBois
407-758-8275

Tom Braun
225-281-3889

Ken LaValley
865-970-6410

community. If you are not already a member, contact Lynn Hopps, lhopp@gmail.com, to join the private Facebook group.



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