


The
Ridge Rambler

SRPOA Annual Meeting

The Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, July 15, at the Walland Methodist Church. Twenty-eight households representing 53 assessed properties attended the potluck breakfast and meeting. Following the potluck, Betsy Smith, Chair of the Saddle Ridge Firewise Committee, talked to members about the Emergency Phone Tree and then introduced Captain Johnny Leatherwood and Firefighter Kenny of the Blount County Fire Department. Captain Leatherwood spoke to the members about fighting the fires in Walland and Saddle Ridge last fall and how the Fire Department is protecting our community.

Judy Pearson provided a summary of the needs of the Walland Elementary School and provided a wish-list of much-needed supplies for the school. Saddle Ridge residents have donated about \$30,000 worth of supplies and support to the school over the years. Judy noted that in her 11 years of volunteering at the school, she has seen a noticeable positive impact due to the generosity of Saddle Ridge.

SRPOA Board President, Steve Foster, called the Annual Meeting to order and board members introduced themselves. Steve thanked Lynn Hopps and Darin Suggs, the two members completing their terms on the board, for their service on the board. Filling these open board positions, newly elected members, Alane Wyss and Janet Kolarik, were introduced. Smitty was also re-elected for his second term.

Steve gave the President's Message reporting that AT&T is in the process of installing fiber optic cable in Saddle Ridge and broadband internet should be available by the end of the year. He updated the membership on the barn property project and thanked Jim Tedford and his team for their work on the survey and recommendations. Steve also reported that the Board sought legal advice from Melanie Davis, an expert on POA/HOA law, on how to strengthen the POA's ability to manage and improve the community. On Melanie's advice and with her assistance, the POA obtained developer rights from the Davis estate. This is a significant step forward in establishing the POA's legal standing to collect dues, maintain roads, and otherwise implement the community's covenants and restrictions.

Treasurer Smitty provided the FY 2017 Financial Report, which includes a Cash Flows statement, budget variance analysis, and the operating budget for the fiscal year 2018. Committee chairs reported on the year's activities. Lynn Hopps, Chair of the Communications Committee, reported that the Saddle Ridge

website continues to be updated, more property owners have joined the SR Facebook group, and The Ridge Rambler is coming out quarterly to keep everyone informed. Ann Tedford, Chair of the Events/Hospitality Committee, reported on events throughout the year: Fall Cookout, Lighting of the Barn, Women's Potluck, Annual Meeting Potluck, and possibly a new event to be scheduled next Spring. Sue DuBois, Chair of the Environment Committee, thanked Betsy Smith and Margaret Saunders for all their work on the Emergency Phone Tree and Firewise planning. She also thanked everyone for the great turnout and work during the Fall and Spring Cleanups and Judy and Hugh Pearson for seasonal decorations at the gate. Darin Suggs, Chair of the Road Committee, reported on extra work on Journey's End and Christa Trail in addition to the routine grading, rock additions and cleaning of ditches. As Chair of the Architectural Committee, Darin reported that the only current ongoing project is the work at Frank Akers and Margaret Saunders house.

A questions and comments period followed the committee reports before the meeting was adjourned. After the annual meeting, the new board met to elect 2017-2018 officers. The results are: President Steve Foster, Vice-President Hugh Pearson, Secretary Alane Wyss and Treasurer Smitty. Committee Chairs include Events/Hospitality - Ann Tedford, Architectural - Ken LaValley, Environment - Sue DuBois, Communications - Janet Kolarik, and Roads - Tom Braun.



Top left: Betsy Smith updates members on the Emergency Phone Tree and Firewise program; Top Right: SRPOA members enjoy a potluck breakfast; Bottom Left: Judy Pearson reports on supporting the Walland Elementary School; Bottom Right: BCFD Captain Johnny Leatherwood addresses the SRPOA.

Board Announcements

Treasurer's Report

Annual Assessment Reminder: Invoices for FY 2018 (July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018) assessments were mailed on June 30, 2017. A total of 154 invoices were mailed. The due date for payment was July 31, 2017. Payments not received by September 30, 2017, are delinquent.

To date, we have received full payments from 113 members, or 73.4% of our organization. We have received \$53,600 in current year assessments and \$1,550 in prior year assessments through August 28, 2017.

The Board provides financial updates four times a year, including the annual report at the Annual Meeting to keep members better informed about the financial status of our Association. If you have any questions, please contact the Board at this address: saddleridgepoa@gmail.com.

Building or Remodelling?

Please remember that the detailed plans for any additions or remodeling work must be submitted to the SRPOA Architecture 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](#).

Firewise Community

by Betsy Smith
Firewise Activities Update

Residents of Saddle Ridge have started the process of becoming a Firewise community. In the past four months, we have had representatives from the Tennessee Division of Forestry (TDF), the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP), and the Blount County Fire Protection District (BCFPD) tour Saddle Ridge to help us assess our fire and emergency needs.

The spring Ridge Rambler describes Chief McClanahan's (BCFPD) suggestions and outlines our steps in improving Saddle Ridge preparedness. [Aware and Prepared in Saddle Ridge](#)



Photo: Greg Salansky, Nathan Waters, Betsy Smith address residents at first firewise workshop.

The first Firewise workshop was held Friday, July 14, with 17 residents (10 households) attending. Nathan Waters, Assistant District Forester, TDF, and Greg Salansky, Fire Management Office, GSMNP, introduced the Firewise program and how it benefits homeowners and the community.

The second workshop, held Tuesday, August 15, started the assessment process. In the morning, residents Tom Braun and Sue DuBois drove Waters and Salansky around Saddle Ridge. They completed the Community-Wide Hazard Assessment Form. Two of the suggestions they had were to look at choke-points on a few roads where a pullover or widening would give emergency crews better access and replace wooden signs with metal signs and posts. Grant money is available to help implement changes. They also examined the options for staging areas and escape routes during the drive-through.

In the afternoon, we were trained using four houses with different construction and access issues on how to increase the defensible space. We completed the TDF Home Assessment Form for each home. Over the next couple of years, the goal is to help homeowners complete a home assessment.

The assessment provides suggestions for minimizing the risk of fire damage to your home and ensuring the safety of you, your family, and your pets.



For example, to reduce the fuel for embers:

- Use stones not mulch to separate house from surrounding vegetation
- Make sure eaves are clean and vents are covered with wire mesh
- Replace plastic dryer vent with metal vent
- Move outdoor furniture cushions inside

Home assessments are a key part of the Firewise program. The program is voluntary; you do not have to participate—but we hope you will.

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan will be submitted to the TDF in the next couple of weeks. It identifies problems and actions to take and a schedule to complete the actions. We have been doing community cleanups twice a year for several years—they count. Each year we need to show that we have Firewise-designated events and that we are making progress on home assessments and fire mitigation. Again, the program is voluntary; you do not have to participate—but we hope you will.

Saddle Ridge can only benefit from becoming a Firewise community.



Photo: SRPOA members learn about doing a Firewise home assessment.

Recommended viewing: ["Your Home Can Survive a Wildfire!"](#)

Saddle Ridge Fire Hydrant

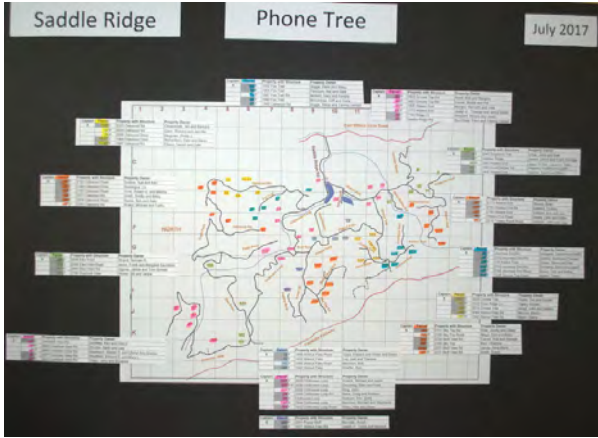


The Blount County Fire Department was in Saddle Ridge on August 25 doing their annual maintenance of our dry hydrant. They come out once a year to check the hydrant and clear debris out of the pipe. The pond will provide much needed water to fill water trucks in case of a fire in Saddle Ridge. The hydrant was installed by Saddle Ridge residents in 2007.



Emergency Phone Tree

The phone tree will be in place by October 1. The tree provides specific contact points in case we need to evacuate Saddle Ridge. You will receive information on your portion of the tree in the next few weeks.



The tree identifies a captain for your section of SR. Every resident who elects to participate will receive a phone call or be told face-to-face about the emergency and if evacuation is needed.

Facebook will remain a primary source of information for power outages and emergencies that do not warrant evacuation.

We hope we never have to activate the tree. Chief McClanahan and Captain Leatherwood of the Blount County Fire Department have assured us that they will notify us and help if evacuation is needed—so will your neighbors.

Staying Informed During an Emergency

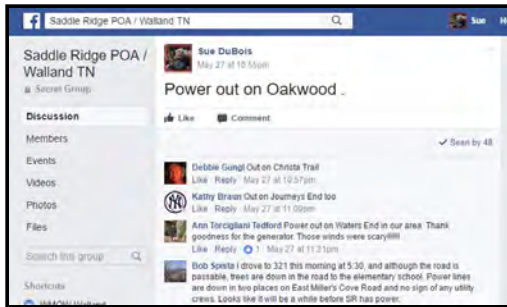


Photo: Saddle Ridge Facebook Group screenshot

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.

Contact Sue DuBois sodubois@gmail.com, to be added to the group. Please remember, this page is strictly for people who own property in Saddle Ridge.

Summer Recap

Solar Eclipse 2017



Monday, August 21, many Saddle Ridge residents were outside hosting Eclipse parties to watch the total eclipse of the sun! We were in the path of totality that swept across the country. Partial started at 1:05:22 pm. Total started at 2:34:34 and ended at 2:35:38. The last of the partial ended at 3:59:22 pm.



Top Left: Janet and Michael Kolarik view the eclipse (must have been the moment of totality because Michael isn't wearing his protective glasses!). Top Right; Rowen and Wren Wyss in their special eclipse-viewing glasses. Bottom Left: Martha and Bob Frink and Smitty Smith view the solar eclipse with friends. Bottom Right: Eclipse party at the Kolarik's.

On the Wild Side

Many thanks to our young naturalists of Saddle Ridge, Wren and Rowen Wyss, for submitting these two informative articles below highlighting the amazing diversity in our forests and streams. They inspire us to get out and enjoy the wildlife in our surroundings in places we might not always look!

Fireflies of Saddle Ridge

By Wren Wyss

It's a calm summer night and you are sitting down outside. Then you look up and see a neon yellow blink and sometimes a slow blue glow. That is the work of fireflies. What are fireflies? Fireflies are actually beetles, not bugs. And all fireflies have a different glow. Here in Saddle Ridge we probably have 15 species of fireflies. But I will present the four most common ones.

1. Blue Ghost

The Blue Ghost is a firefly that will glow a slow blue glow, like a ghost! You can find these real ghosts in the Smokies and in your backyard! They are very distinctive with their eerie blue glow, so it will be pretty easy for you to find one! They will show their glow from April, disappearing by mid to late May, and reappearing in mid-June.



2. Synchronized Fireflies

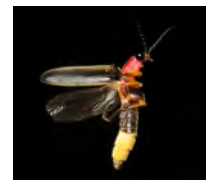
Synchronized fireflies blink at the same time as some of the other fireflies that surround them. My experience with watching this incredible species is that it is like watching a million little blinking lanterns. You can find these fireflies

down at the barn, if you look near the ground among the trees you will see them. These fireflies will display late May and early June.

3. The genus *Photuris* includes many species, one of which flashes high up in the trees down at the barn. These fireflies flash like a camera. They look like hundreds of cameras flashing.

4. Big Dipper

Another *Photuris* species is the big dipper firefly which is a very cool firefly. It is called the big dipper because it will flash its light and as it flies up to form a "J" shape. They are common in June and July.



Life History

A firefly when young is predatory, but when it is an adult, it eats plant pollen and nectar. When the mother lays the eggs, she lays them in the ground, so when they hatch, they eat stuff like grubs and worms. They do it by getting the grub or worm and injecting it with a numbing fluid that slowly kills it leaving it dead. The grub or worm is a meal for the the larvae. A firefly can live up to 2 months if it is healthy. Fireflies live in a variety of warm environments as well as temperate regions. Fireflies love moisture and often live in humid regions in Asia and the Americas. And in drier areas they are found in places that can retain moisture.

Nature's Light Show

Many people ask these questions, "How do they blink?" and "Why do they blink?". Fireflies combine oxygen in special cells that will produce their light. Fireflies will blink their light when they are mating, and they will show off to the females. But they will also use their light as a warning to predators that tells them that they do not have a very good taste.

Firefly populations are decreasing. There are many reasons why fireflies are dying, including poisonous pesticides, fertilizers, and loss of habitat. Light pollution could also be affecting fireflies by changing their behavior. So we don't need to leave outside lights on at night when we aren't using them.

Fireflies are very interesting creatures, I mean they are beetles that glow! What could be more interesting than that! But I encourage you, if you see them, to try and carefully catch one and observe it. You can go down to the barn and just sit and watch TV... firefly TV!

Fishes of Saddle Ridge and the Little River

by Rowen Wyss

The fish that inhabit the place that we call home are very diverse. Due to the temperate climate and geology, this area thrives with a richness of fish species. In fact, for a river its size, the Little River here in Blount County is considered to have one of the most diverse fish populations in the United States. The Little River is fed by a number of tributaries that begin in and around Saddle Ridge including Smith Branch and Reed Creek.

Smith Branch is a small stream that starts up by the Foothills Parkway and flows right past the barn forming the wetland and lake. Because of its size, Smith Branch does not host a large number of species. The fish that can be found in the creek include blacknose dace, bluegill, creek chub, and Tennessee dace.

The Tennessee dace is a very rare and beautiful fish that can only be found in East Tennessee in a small



number of streams. When breeding in the spring, males turn a vibrant green and red along with black speckles and yellow fins. These fish had not been documented in Smith Branch until I observed them there. This is a very cool discovery for Saddle Ridge. Some other fish you will find lower down in the lake and swamp are bluegill, crappie, yellow perch, and largemouth bass.

These fish prefer deeper, slower moving water.

Smith Branch feeds into Reed Creek which flows along East Millers Cove Road and then joins the Little River. This creek has not had much fish research work done on it, but I have obtained some fish data from Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency that was collected in 2015. This data shows a total of six species collected on that particular survey. These species include Tennessee dace, blacknose dace, creek chub, fantail darter, green sunfish, and saffron shiner. The species that I caught while in Reed Creek include: river chubs, fantail darters, blacknose dace, and green sunfish.



The species of fantail darter that inhabits the lower Blue Ridge (our area) is actually an undescribed subspecies. This means that it is different than the usual fantail darter. Reed Creek ranges from narrow, shallow channels to deeper and wider channels. Around where the creek meets the river, some larger species like rainbow trout and smallmouth bass can be expected.

When you think of fish diversity in East Tennessee, the Little River is a shining example. It thrives with multiple rare and amazing species, along with having one of the most diverse fish habitats in North America. An example of this river's uniqueness is the marbled darter, which is found nowhere else in the world other than the Little River. The marbled darter is an extremely rare species. The Little River starts in Clingmans Dome and is approximately sixty miles long. The beginning of the river, to the Townsend Wye, is known as the middle prong. Throughout its journey, the river travels through Elkmont, Townsend, Walland, Alcoa, and Fort Loudon. The Little River holds about eighty species of fish. The concentration of species varies from different locations in the river.



Some species are found almost everywhere in the river while others are only found in isolated sections, like the brook trout.

You may have noticed that when I was describing fish that occur in all these streams that the smaller streams have fewer species than the larger streams. This is a general rule that all rivers and streams follow around the world. Smith Branch Creek is a relatively small stream, so there are only four species. When you move into Reed Creek, you can find six species. Once into the Little River, you can find eighty species. The Little River flows into the Tennessee River which contains 230 species. The Tennessee River flows into the Mississippi River which holds 260 species of fish, twenty-five percent of all fish species in the United States. The great Mississippi River flows into the Gulf of Mexico which has over 1,000 species of fish. That's a long, long way and many, many fish more than the four fish species that inhabit Smith Branch in Saddle Ridge.

Do not feed the bears!



Photo: Bear walking up the Kolarik's driveway.

For those new to the neighborhood, this time of year more bears are passing through and actively looking for food. Here are some tips for living with bears: <http://www.saddleridgepoa.com/living-with-bears.html>

It's a good reminder that we all need to check porches and around the house and remove anything that might attract a bear or raccoon or other wildlife like grills, pet food, bird food, garbage, or recyclables.

Upcoming Events

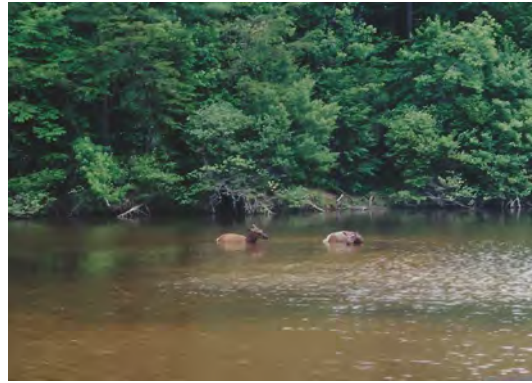
Saddle Ridge Fall Picnic
Sunday, October 1, 4 PM

Blount County Firewise Community Meeting
Tuesday, September 26, 6 PM
Walland Elementary School

Saddle Ridge Firewise Day and Fall Cleanup
Saturday, October 21

[Household Hazardous Waste Day](#)
10/21/2017 Blount County
(Blount County Courthouse Parking lot on Court Circle)

SR History - Photos from the Past



Top left: Flood at gate - date unknown, maybe Spring 2002; Top Right: Elk in pond, circa 2000; Bottom Left: Jim Clinansmith and Jack Davis working on Duck Inn, Spring 2000; Bottom Right: Elk at Barn (date unknown but prior to Spring 2002 when elk were removed from Saddle Ridge). Images provided by Barbara Clinansmith.

We're looking for more old photos to document Saddle Ridge's history. Do you have any old photos of Saddle Ridge that you would like to share with The Ridge Rambler? If so, please contact Sue DuBois, sodubois@gmail.com.

Contact your SRPOA Board:

Email: saddleridgepoa@gmail.com

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

President:
Steve Foster
859-494-7299

Vice President:

Get Involved

Join one of our Saddle Ridge POA committees and contribute to the community. There are 5 standing committees: Architecture, Communications, Environment, Events/Hospitality, and Road.

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

Hugh Pearson
865-982-5729

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

Secretary:
Alane Wyss
865-977-1533

Recorder:
Ann Tedford
865-980-1757

Board Members:
Janet Kolarik
865-905-0348

Sue DuBois
407-758-8275

Tom Braun
225-281-3889

Ken LaValley
865-970-6410

Architecture - Ken LaValley
Road - Tom Braun
Communications - Janet Kolarik
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 community. If you are not already a member, contact Sue DuBois, sodubois@gmail.com, to join the private Facebook group.



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