

Fall 2017 Ridge Rambler • Saddle Ridge Property Owner's Association Newsletter • Volume 24, Issue 3

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# The Ridge Rambler

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## Firewise Recognition

Saddle Ridge has earned Firewise Communities/USA® recognition from the National Firewise Communities Program. We join 14 other communities in Tennessee to earn this designation.

The recognition ceremony was held on November 14 at the gate with 18 homeowners and 15 representatives from Blount County Fire Protection District, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and Division of Forestry attending. Ed Mitchell, Mayor of Blount County, spoke briefly. Jeff Piatt, Fire Chief, Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry presented the community with the commemorative plaque and Firewise Community signs.

The Firewise Committee work now shifts from acceptance of the CWPP to applying for a grant to implementing changes to improve fire preparedness for SR.

“The Firewise program’s emphasis on community participation builds on a history of volunteering within the community to keep Saddle Ridge a safe place to live” said Betsy Smith, the community’s Firewise Coordinator. “The Firewise Program has provided the framework to develop a more prepared community with wildfire awareness and mitigation activities.” We are in the process of applying for Firewise Community grant from the Division of Forestry to implement projects specified in our Community Wildfire Protection Plan. We will focus on four areas: vegetation removal, choke points, metal road signs, and home assessments. The grant will provide funding to help us remove vegetation in areas susceptible to fires and to widen areas where emergency vehicles need to turn around. In addition, we plan to change to metal road signs.



Tennessee Division of Forestry’s Assistant District Forester Nathan Waters, and Greg Salansky, Fire

Management Office with the GSMNP, are working with the SR Firewise Committee and Tom Braun, SR Roads Committee, and others to improve our community.



## President's Message

by Steve Foster, President, SRPOA

First, I would like to thank and congratulate everyone who worked so hard to enable Saddle Ridge to become a Firewise Community. I think this is a major step which will provide us all lasting benefit. The group who worked on this was made up of the following individuals: Betsy Smith, Margaret Saunders, Debra James, Sue DuBois, Tom Braun, and Smitty.

This year the Board has dealt with a number of issues all in an effort to continuously improve life in our beautiful mountain community. One of those issues that has come up this year is that of paving our roads. This has come up in the past on more than one occasion. In an effort to deal responsibly with the question of "to pave or not to pave," we have asked for input from all of our property owners. So far, we have heard from almost 40 property owners. We plan to compile the responses we receive into one document that we will send to all property owners. No names will be included in this document, so if you are planning to throw in your 2 cents worth, rest assured that your input will not be associated with your name. If you have not done so already, please take a few minutes and tell us how you feel about this issue. We will leave this call for input open until December 31, then start compiling and distributing the information we have collected.

The SRPOA Board held a quarterly meeting on November 6. See Board Announcements below.

## Board Announcements

### Treasurer's Report

The financial statements for the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of FY 2018 (July 1 to September 30) were sent November 10 to all owners for whom we have an email address. If you did not receive a copy, please contact us at [saddleridgepoa@gmail.com](mailto:saddleridgepoa@gmail.com) and one will be sent to you.

Collections of annual assessments are a little slower this year. The invoices were mailed on June 30 with a due date of July 31. Your account is delinquent if you don't pay within 60 days of the due date, or by September 30. If you haven't paid yet, please do so as soon as possible. Reminder letters will be sent in early January to the members that have not yet paid.

Expenditures are approximately on budget, with a few areas running a bit over budget. However, there are still 7 months in the fiscal year, and we are reasonably certain that we will meet our revenue and expenditure goals.

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](mailto:saddleridgepoa@gmail.com).

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## Committee Reports

**Events:** Ann Tedford reported on a successful Fall Picnic.

**Communication:** Janet Kolarik reported The Ridge Rambler is on schedule to be published in December.

**Roads:** Tom Braun will be surveying the roads with the Firewise folks to identify areas that need work.

**Environment :** Hugh Pearson reported that he had a bear on his porch that was not easily deterred or afraid of humans. Sue DuBois said she would send out another announcement to all property owners that feeding bears causes them to lose their natural fear of humans and endangers residents. Sue also reported that she, Alex Wyss, Ken LaValley met with Dan Stipes at the pond to survey the pond vegetation. No action was recommended on controlling the vegetation at this time but the Environment Committee will continue to monitor it.

**Architectural:** Ken LaValley reported that he has updated the "Before You Build" Architectural letter that goes out including updated recommendations and Firewise information.

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**Building or Remodeling?** 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](mailto: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](#).

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## Firewise Day



Saddle Ridge residents turned out for the first Annual Firewise Day on October 21. It was held as part of the regular Saddle Ridge Fall Cleanup Day.

While some teams went out on East Millers Cove Road to pick up litter, inside Saddle Ridge teams focused on Firewise-specific activities. One team drove around with Nathan Waters, Assistant District Forester, and identified telephone poles and other areas that need more clearing away of brush (fuel for fires). A team of 4 residents met with homeowners and conducted 5 Home Assessments. The teams

merged later in the morning to help one homeowner clear leaves and other fire hazards from around her home. The teams, the homeowner, and Nathan Waters "got good and dirty" but enjoyed seeing the results of their hard work.

ALL the teams—the road teams AND the teams inside Saddle Ridge—worked hard, accomplished a lot,



got dirty, and contributed not only to Saddle Ridge but to the East Miller Cove community. To the 24 hard workers – THANKS!

Keep in mind: Fall and Spring are our fire seasons. There are many ways individual homeowners can mitigate the risk of losing their homes to fire. For example, create a 30' defensible space to reduce the fuel for embers:

- Use stones not mulch to separate the house from surrounding vegetation
- Make sure leaves are cleared
- Cover vents with wire mesh
- Stack firewood at least 30 feet from the house

**Photo:** SRPOA members, Martha Frink, Ellen Deussing, Janet Kolarik, and Betsy Smith do a Firewise home assessment for new homeowner, Nancy Majetic on Oakwood Road.



Recommended viewing:

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

## House Number Signs

As the Firewise Committee drove the roads inventorying road signs, they also noted house number signs just to see how property owners were marking the entrance to their property. Surprisingly, 35 of the 72 homes either had **no sign** or had a wooden, non-reflective sign. Many of us move to SR to be by ourselves; we don't want to call attention to ourselves—but we do want emergency vehicles to find us.



We encourage you to invest \$15 in a reflective metal sign. You can order the sign online through the [Blount County Fire Protection District website](#).

If you are not paying for fire protection, consider investing the \$125/year. If you do not, you will be charged \$2,000/hour if the fire department comes to your home.

## Emergency Phone Tree

The phone tree is in place. The tree provides full and parttime residents with specific contact points in case we need to evacuate Saddle Ridge. The tree identifies a captain for each 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.

An excellent suggestion from Barbara Clinansmith if you are phone tree captain: Put *Alert SR* before the names of each person on your branch in the contact list on your phone. Your call list will be ready to use!

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.

## SR Facebook Group

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](mailto:sodubois@gmail.com), to be added to the group. Please remember, this page is strictly for people who own property in Saddle Ridge.



## Fall Cleanup



Debra James, Frank Aldridge, John and Sue Urban, and Tom Braun unload their haul from East Millers Cove Road cleanup during the Saddle Ridge Fall Cleanup Day on Saturday, October 21. 24 residents showed up to help remove 18 bags of litter from East Millers Cove Road as part of [Keep Blount Beautiful](#). Thank you to all who make our community a better, litter-free place.

## New Internet Service in Saddle Ridge



AT&T has installed fiber optic cable throughout much of Saddle Ridge. Some residents on Waters End, Christa Trail and Gobbler Ridge have already connected to the high speed Internet services. Fiber optic cable has also been installed up Oakwood Road and Fox Trail and residents are waiting for the service to be activated. Hopefully, AT&T will install the service to the rest of SR in future phases.

## Fall Picnic



Neighbors gathered around the campfire for conversation and potluck at the Annual Fall Picnic on Sunday, October 1. Judy Pearson reported that she received \$500 in donations for Walland Elementary School.



## Saddle Ridge Helps Walland Elementary

by Judy Pearson

It is the time of the year when my heart is so much bigger than my wallet. With my family I want to give each and every one of them their hearts desire for Christmas (within reason of course). At Walland Elementary School this feeling becomes so strong that I want to fill all the many needs I see and hear about. Just last week one of my teachers watched a child bypass the cafeteria line and go sit down. He told her his family didn't have any money for his lunch and no food to make a lunch. Needless to say she bought him his lunch and made sure he was added to the backpack with food list for each weekend. Our teacher also made sure he had supplies to start school this fall. Supplies that Saddle Ridge provided for just this kind of need.



This fall my friends and neighbors of Saddle Ridge expanded that wallet tremendously. We are meeting a lot of the school's needs for this year but we can always use more help ([Walland Elementary School Wish List](#)).

As of today Saddle Ridge has donated \$600 to help. **Wow!!!** How do I say "thank you"? As I've said before our language seems to fall so short for the right words.

If any of you would like to hear and/or see the school and some of the many needs call me. If you'd like, we will meet with the Principal of Walland Elementary, Kim Sullivan, take a tour and meet teachers and learn of their many challenges. If anyone needs a receipt for tax purposes this year please call me.

Santa has filled my Christmas wish list with enough money to continue helping the school this fall, but don't look for a jolly fat man in a red suit and a fluffy white beard to thank. Look at your neighbors and friends who have played Santa. May each and every Santa in Saddle Ridge have a wonderful holiday and a good New Year.

Thank you to all,  
Judy Pearson



## Happy Holidays!

Decorating the barn is an annual tradition in Saddle Ridge. Thank you to all the volunteers who came out on Saturday, December 2, to spread a little cheer and light up the barn: Dave Glarner, Mug Saunders, Frank Akers, Liz Domingue, Tom Braun, Betsy Smith, Smitty, Karl DuBois, and Sue DuBois.

## On the Wild Side

### DO NOT FEED THE BEARS!

We've had an increase in reports of bears getting too close to humans in Saddle Ridge. This time of year they are very actively seeking food. ***Humans feeding bears is bad for bears and bad for humans.*** There is no good reason to feed a bear. Bears that lose their fear of humans will not survive and pose a threat to humans and pets.



# Beyond Saddle Ridge

**Foothills Parkway Update** from *Knox News* November 9, 2017 article: [Foothills Parkway's Missing Link 'is no more'](#) - The last of the 9 bridges has been completed and all that is left is the final paving of the Parkway. The new span from Walland to Wears Valley is expected to open at the end of 2018.

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](mailto:sodubois@gmail.com).

## Contact your SRPOA Board:

Email: [saddleridgepoa@gmail.com](mailto:saddleridgepoa@gmail.com)

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

**President:**

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859-494-7299

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**Treasurer:**

Smitty  
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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

## Get Involved

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

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

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](mailto:sodubois@gmail.com), to join the private Facebook group.



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