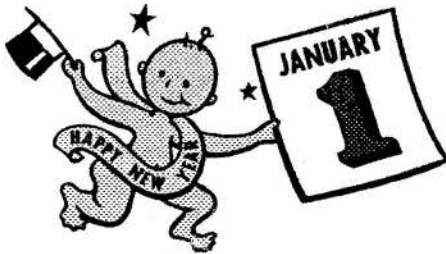


THE "RIDGE RAMBLER"

Volume 14, Issue 4

Winter, 2007



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

2007 has just flown by. I am a little bit late getting the fourth quarter newsletter out but I think everyone understands that this is a busy time of year. I have been thinking about the past year. It was my first Christmas in Saddle Ridge as a full-time resident. I have learned many things this past year. I learned that I can do without most of the amenities that I had in the Nashville suburbs although I must have a high-speed Internet connection in order to exist. The Hughes Net satellite is not a bad substitute for cable service since this is our only choice. I learned (the hard way) that you must take precautions to keep from getting trapped out in the ice and snow and you must keep a flashlight, candles, matches, boots and blankets in your trunk at all times. I learned that you will not die from isolation although some days I thought that I might. I am not sure when it happened but I learned that I no longer miss the big house in the "burbs" that sat on a quarter acre lot. It is hard to imagine living that way.

The most important thing I learned is that I am part of a community and Saddle Ridge is my home. I learned that while my neighbors are scattered around the hills and hollers that they are just a phone call or a hike away. This reformed city girl looks forward to learning more about Saddle Ridge by this time next year.

Editor—Melba Harmon

Help Wanted

The Rambler needs your help. Julia Blackwood will be working on human interest stories beginning with the next edition of the Rambler. Please contact Julia at 681-7104 or Melba at 983-7459 about items of interest for the Rambler. We really need volunteers to help out with keeping us informed on what is happening in Saddle Ridge. Please take the time to write something or send in articles that might be of interest to SR residents. Thank you.





President's Message

In my first "President's Message" I mentioned that we anticipate a lot of activity in working to maintain or improve our mountain environment. I believe that all of us choose to own property and to live here because of the primitive beauty of our surroundings. This of course applies to the entire surrounding area and not just Saddle Ridge. On Page 5 of this newsletter a article from the Daily Times has been reprinted. It describes the current consideration that the Blount County Planning Commission is giving to ridge top and hillside development restrictions. I urge everyone to read the article and to respond to their request for input. We have the opportunity to prevent the kind of development that has and is occurring in Sevier County and is threatened in Blount County. Just take a drive over to Homestead if you want to see an "up close" example of exactly what ridge top development looks like. Even though the Blount County side of the Homestead does not yet have any houses, the mountain tops have been scalped for building sites and the roads run along the tops of and traverse the ridges. Much of this can be clearly seen from many spots within Saddle Ridge. It's up to all the people of Blount County to demand responsible development—let's give ourselves and those that come after us a Christmas present that will last forever. Merry Christmas and have a great New Year.....Jim

Homestead and Three Sisters Update

As mentioned in the last Rambler, two lawsuits had been filed by the Homestead against Blount County. An agreement has been reached and both lawsuits have been dropped. Homestead will be approved to proceed with home building in Blount County, and East Millers Cove Road will receive some upgrades that will be paid for by the Homestead. To date, however, there has been no noticeable change in either the road or in homebuilding.

Some road building is taking place on the Three Sisters property. So far no other noticeable activity.

Financial Report

We are in sound financial condition. The majority of our cash balances are being held in CD's; only immediate operating funds are held in our checking account.



Annual dues have been paid current by most property owners. As of December 1 fifteen property owners are not current. Second notices have been sent.

In accordance with our bylaws, a full audit is being performed by a local CPA firm. Results will be published upon completion.



Committee Activities

Committee Chairs:

Architectural Review Committee	- Phil Spampinato (675-7997) rhdt@tds.net
Beautification Committee	- Martha Frink (984-4873) marthafrink@peoplepc.com
Communications Committee	- Jim Tedford (670-1304) jtedford@alphadogmarketing.com
Firewise Committee	- Tim & Sarah Williams (982-5290) jimkharmon@gmail.com
Nominating Committee	-
Property Purchase Committee	- Alex Wyss (977-1533) wagwater@peoplepc.com
Road Committee	- Bob Hood (681-7623) winterhawk6210@yahoo.com
Welcome Committee	- Barb Clinansmith (981-3990) bclinansmith@juno.com

Architectural Review Committee

The committee has developed a draft letter for new homebuilders welcoming them to our community and providing them with our building guidelines, the Saddle Ridge Covenants and Restrictions and some basic contact information along with our offer of assistance if needed. The Board is reviewing the letter and has already approved its use in draft form as needed.

Beautification Committee

East Miller's Cove cleanup was held on November 3rd. Seven families helped. We gathered about ten bags, which is less than we have ever collected. We went ahead & put them in the trash shed since it wasn't very full. Fifty daffodil bulbs were planted in 5 flower beds. These daffodils are somewhat different. It would be great if they would naturalize & spread all over. Flower beds have been picked up. Our main bed will be clipped this week to get rid of the old foliage.

Communications Committee

Our website, www.saddleridgepoa.org, has not yet been developed. We believe that a web site would have benefit, but to date have been unwilling to pay a developer to bring the site up and commit to the hosting fees. Comments from the property owners would help us assess the value of a web site verses the cost. Although the cost should not be more than a few hundred dollars a year, we want to be sure that the property owners would find a web site useful and desirable. Please contact any Board member with your comments.



COMMITTEE REPORTS — continued

Firewise Committee

The new co-chairs for the Firewise committee are Tim and Sarah Williams. Fortunately we survived the Fall fire season without a single incident. However, there are a great many leaves on the ground now and when the weather warms up again, they will present a significant hazard. Winter is the very best time to clear away as much ground fuel as possible from around our homes. We hope to have some organized activities to resume our efforts to become a Firewise Community in the early Spring. Stay tuned.

Nominating Committee

By resolution, the Board has created a nominating committee that will establish in accordance with the bylaws rules and procedures to be used in the nominating process for Board positions. The Nominating Committee will handle nominations for all elections, recommendations for mid-term replacements as needed and recommendations for all officers of each new/incoming Board in July. The intent here is to be proactive in seeking out any and all candidates for these openings and to assure that anyone with interest would be included in the elective process.

Property Purchase Committee

The Property Purchase committee is actively looking for a lot within Saddle Ridge that would be suitable to house our tractors and other miscellaneous SRPOA owned equipment. Any and all suggestions are welcome—contact any Board member.

Road Committee

With winter upon us we are once again confronted with weather patterns that can adversely affect road conditions. The freezing and thawing cycles of Tennessee winters can be very unkind to our roads and result in occasional soft and muddy conditions. In the past heavy construction vehicles have "torn up" our roads when they were soft and muddy. As a result, we are now charging a road impact fee similar to other sub-divisions, and we will not allow heavy construction vehicles to use the roads whenever we are experiencing soft conditions. The road crew relies on property owners to help keep up with road conditions. Email or call one of the road committee members with any problems and they will get to it as soon as possible.

Welcome Committee

If property owners do not have a Welcome Book contact Barbara Clinansmith. Please inform her if there are any corrections or additions needed. Volunteers are needed as some members are moving and Barbara needs help keeping the book up dated.



Perspectives Sought on Saving Area Scenic Views

Reprinted from The Daily Times, Maryville, TN
Published: December 21, 2007

The Blount County Planning Commission is taking the first step toward drafting regulations concerning ridge-top and hillside development to protect scenic sections of the county. You can help.

Before the Planning Commission can consider the specifics of these regulations, it needs to determine not only what scenic views in the county need protecting but from where those views can be seen. Here's the question county planners want answered: "What do you see and where are you when you see it?"

The Planning Commission is taking a cue from a hillside regulation study commissioned recently by Sevier County that has ideas that can be applied locally.

According to the report: "To begin protecting these important resources, one must first identify specific publicly accessible places from which the views of these hillside and ridges are enjoyed. Such places normally include scenic highways, walking trails, scenic lookouts, parks, historic sites and buildings, and canoe and kayak routes."

So, what views are important to you? Take a few moments and e-mail your thoughts to editor@thedailytimes.com or mail them to Scenic Views, The Daily Times, P.O. Box 9740, Maryville, TN 37803.

The suggestions will be provided to the Planning Commission for informational purposes.

A top 10 list of most suggested views will be also be published in The Daily Times.

Please note that submissions will be edited for content. If you have strong feelings about any individual developments in Blount County, feel free to write a letter to the editor.

A guiding principle of the Sevier County study, which can be found online at www.sevierlibrary.org/hillsides/, was that hillside development should not be completely prohibited.

One of the most important recommendations is the principle that all development should be secondary to the surroundings.

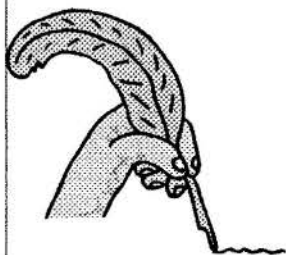




Miscellaneous

- A special thank you goes out to Martha Frink for her artistry in decorating the entry into Saddle Ridge for Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- A special thanks to Jim Harmon for his help with the Rambler during the year—Melba Harmon. (Yes, I know this is a shameless ploy but I am in charge of the Rambler and want him to help next year.)
- Tree Care: SR Property owner Curtis Casciano is a professional arborist in Knoxville and would be happy to advise SR property owners regarding native trees, landscaping, and the hemlock wooly adelgid problem. He may be reached at curtis_tree@yahoo.com.

Opinion Section



This section is being retired for lack of interest. There must not be any hot issues that are bothering people right now that motivate them to write an opinion. If this changes this section will be put back in the Rambler.





Basic Tips for Greening Your Home—Reprinted with permission

Editor's Note: *I know that not all of these suggestions apply to us but due to the recent drought we can use No's 5 and 6 below to save our wells.*

According to the Department of Energy, if just one in ten households incorporated green, energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, we could prevent more than 17 billion pounds of air pollution per year. Green building techniques provide many benefits, including savings on household energy costs, safer indoor environments and the protection of resources through the use of sustainable and renewable building materials.

Homeowners can save big and be a big part of the resource savings. One of many organizations promoting green building, Global Green USA, recommends these six basic additions and upgrades:

1. **Install whole house fans or ceiling fans.** Whole house and ceiling fans improve interior comfort by circulating cold and warm air, and they don't cost much to operate. Ceiling fans can be adjusted to either draw warm air upward during summer months or push it downward during the winter.
2. **Install high R-value insulation.** Insulation provides a continuous thermal barrier to minimize heat flow through walls, ceiling and floor. The higher the R-value, the greater the material's ability to insulate.
3. **Use recycled-content insulation & carpet.** Recycled-content insulation, drywall and carpet are made from recycled paper, recycled plastic and glass bottles, recycled wool or recycled cotton. They don't differ in appearance or performance, and the prices are comparable to conventional products.
4. **Select Energy Star appliances.** Refrigerators and freezers are among the largest users of electricity in most homes, accounting for up to 25% of household energy use. Energy Star appliances use 10-15% less energy and water than standard models.
5. **Install low-flow fixtures.** Low-flow toilets can save up to 22,000 gallons of water per year for a family of four. Flow reducers can cut water usage of faucets and showers by as much as 40% with little noticeable effect.
6. **Use low-water landscaping.** Low-water landscaping options (such as xeriscaping) reduce water use by emphasizing native and/or drought tolerant plants, eliminating turf areas and minimizing maintenance. Efficient irrigation systems, such as drip and micro irrigation, place the correct amount of water directly at the base of each plant, thus reducing water use and waste from over watering.





Requiem for a Duck — Melba Harmon

Sadly we lost Sam, our oldest and my favorite duck, recently. Sam was crippled and nearly blind but loved by those of us who feed them. Sam would like to sit in the middle of the road and most everyone watched out for him. That is not the case with a driver of a cement truck who shamelessly ran Sam over. I guess the driver was in a hurry but Sam paid for the impatience and lack of human compassion with his life. Sam's mallard friend Frank is lonely and has no one to hang out with.

Sam was given a proper service. Please look out for the remaining geese and Frank the Duck. Thank you.

Random Issues, Complaints and Requests

Speeding:

Probably everyone, sooner or later, has driven too fast on our roads, ignoring the safety of others and of the wildlife, and in the process torn up the roads. Some of us do it more often than others. Please, drive slowly and with care. We have blind curves and lots of our residents who walk with their children and/or dogs. The Road Crew would appreciate it too.

Security:

We are starting to experience more non-authorized vehicles driving around in Saddle Ridge. Let's redouble our efforts to limit access through the gate only to those that have a valid reason to be here. If someone wants to "come in and look around", please don't open the gate and let them in. There are realtors that are familiar with Saddle Ridge and the available properties. Also please don't give out your permanent gate code to anyone. The temporary gate codes are intended for those that may have a short term need for access. Contact Bob Frink if there are any questions.

Mail Kiosk:

Recently a package that was left for delivery to Hugh Pearson apparently was taken by someone other than Hugh. Also there have been several instances of missing newspapers. Please take note of anything or anyone suspicious and notify either one of the Board members or the Sheriff.

Garbage:

I know everyone is tired of hearing about garbage problems.

Good News: The proper bagging of garbage is much better.

Bad News: Some of us still need to work on breaking down boxes to make them flat and placing garbage bags as far to the back of the shed as possible. Please help out here.

Clean up after dogs in common areas:

No one wants to step in doggie doo, right? Lately there have been some unwanted deposits left around the lake. If your dog does leave a deposit around the lake where others might be walking, please either pick it up or move it into the woods.



Greetings From The Duck Inn

Thank you to all who contributed to the ducks and geese fund during the past year. I am overwhelmed by your support.

Financial support is voluntary. If you enjoy watching the ducks and geese, please consider contributing to the "Wildlife" fund. Make checks payable to Melba Harmon with a note designating your contribution for "Wildlife food"; 2047 Dogwood Trail, Walland, TN 37886 or drop in the Saddle Ridge black internal mailbox at the kiosk.



What's Up In in Saddle Ridge?



- Welcome to the following new homeowners/property owners: Martin Barrie and family; Earl and Rose Magri. (Earl and Rose are moving here after being displaced by Hurricane Katrina.); Marcus and Amber Gasser and Stacy Schrandt, and Robert G. Paul Jr.
- Goodbye to Janelee and Jim Mongin who moved to Seymour.
- Stacy and Darin Suggs and children are enjoying their first Christmas in their new home.

Volunteers Needed

You may have noticed that some of our residents' names appear more than once in the Rambler articles. We could use some help! I am not aware of a single committee that is over-staffed, and some are in desperate need of additional help. If you have just a little time, call the appropriate Board member or Committee chair and give us a hand. You'll have some fun and it is a great way to meet your neighbors.

Board Members

Jim Harmon, President	(983-7459)	Barb Clinansmith	(981-3990)
Nancy Cain, Vice President	(984-7250)	Bob Hood	(681-7623)
Kerry Blackwood, Treasurer	(681-7104)	Jim Tedford	(670-1304)
Judy Pearson, Secretary	(982-5729)	Shannon Tipton	(681-7024)
		Alex Wyss	(977-1533)

At The Last Minute

As we were finishing this Rambler and readying for publication, we learned that a "special" Christmas message was left on the bulletin board down at the gate. In a very "cute" letter to Santa, someone had requested that Santa leave some gravel for our roads. The letter was unsigned.

We all know that gravel verses paved roads has been a bone of contention for a long time. There is merit to both sides of this issue. However, "it is what it is" regardless of what some would wish for.

Our road crew – Bob Hood, Bob Frink and Jim Clinasmith – put in a lot of time and hard work on these roads. Bob Hood does this in addition to his full time job. The other Bob and Jim are both retired. To my way of thinking, a note of thanks would have been a more appropriate Christmas message. In addition, the Board tries very hard to perform our duties openly and responsibly – our names and phone numbers are easily available to all.

Too much gravel is as bad as too little gravel, unless you like loosing traction and slipping in the loose gravel. Too much gravel also gets pushed into the ditches, blocking the water flow during heavy rains. This results in washed out roads. We are trying to keep just the right amount on the roads at all times.

My name is Jim Harmon and I am signing this message.