

[View this email in your browser](#)



The Ridge Rambler



President's Message

As we prepared for this year's Annual Meeting, your board spent a good deal of time talking about how to meet. Meeting at Walland United Methodist Church was not an option, due to both the safety guidelines of the CDC, and also because the church isn't open and therefore was not available for our use. We considered a zoom meeting, but with the number of people who would be "attending", there would likely be some logistical problems with that. We ultimately decided to meet in the field next to the barn and to start at 9:00 so that we could finish the meeting before it got too hot. We rented a sound system so that everyone would be able to hear while being socially distant. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for following the distancing guidelines, and for wearing masks at the meeting. That's just one more of the many ways that Saddle Ridge residents care about their neighbors. Even though we've all enjoyed the brunch and indoor meetings in the past, each board member had a few people mention to them that they really enjoyed meeting outside here in the neighborhood, so we'll have to consider both options when July rolls around next year!

Minutes of the annual meeting are being read and approved now, and will be posted on the Saddle Ridge webpage when that process is complete. My recap here is the short and less detailed one. We started the meeting with a welcome, and with new neighbors introducing themselves. Last year's minutes, which were in the packet everyone received, were approved. In my remarks, I was glad to be able to thank our two retiring board members. Alane Wyss is leaving the board to start nursing school, and we all feel that the board's loss will soon be the health care field's gain. Smitty has completed his six year's of board membership and being our treasurer, and he has been a true jewel. Our balance sheets are impeccable and our bank balance is strong due to Smitty's diligence is pursuing unpaid assessments. Smitty has volunteered to take on the role of Assistant Treasurer for next year, a non-board member position that is allowed via our bylaws. We have accepted this offer.

Each committee chair gave their committee reports in turn. Those reports were the Architectural Committee by chair Beth Koella, Events Committee by chair Connie Evans, Environmental Committee by chair Alane Wyss, Equipment Committee by chair Keith Kennedy, and Road Committee by chair Sue DuBois. Chair Mary Glarner's Communications Committee report was read by Secretary Judy Pearson, because Mary and Dave were out of town celebrating Dave's 70th birthday with their children and grandchildren, a very good reason to miss a meeting!



Betsy Smith filled everyone in on her work chairing the Firewise committee. Many thanks from all of us to Betsy, who has thus far secured \$28,000 in grant money that has been a Godsend to our neighborhood. The Firewise grants have purchased most of our new equipment that benefits all of us. Betsy also let us know that she verified with the county that if we have an emergency, the county will contact FEMA. FEMA will in turn call every cell phone in SR that is turned on to inform residents what to do. Reverse calling will take place for land lines. This is critically important to us as a rural community with one way in and out, and I know we all feel better knowing these guidelines are in place. Steve Foster gave a special report on the history of Saddle Ridge, especially from a legal perspective. A letter was also included in the packets residents received, giving everyone an update on our lawsuit.

Elections were held by acclamation. Two members were leaving the board, and we had two nominations to replace them. Joan Jackson and Sally Whelan are the two new members elected, and I was elected to my second three-year term.

A brief question and answer session was held to close the meeting. Details on that session will be in the annual meeting minutes.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

As is our practice, the new board met briefly after the annual meeting to choose new officers and committee chairs. The new slate of officers and chairs are noted below in this issue of the Rambler.

As both your old and new president, I want to take this opportunity to thank each member of the board for the amazing amount of work they do to make Saddle Ridge the community that it is. Every board member takes their responsibility to heart and spends a great deal of time on their duties. They are competent, dependable, and faithful. We are all so lucky to have each one of them, and I am perhaps the luckiest of all to be able to serve with them.

And finally, thanks to all my neighbors. Everyone was such a good sport about our outdoor meeting, to the point of even liking it better in some cases, and everyone was so conscientious in holding the meeting safely. We as a board work very hard to listen to your concerns and try our best to alleviate them. We love Saddle Ridge, and our goal in everything we do is to make it the very best neighborhood it can be, for all of us. Thanks to all of you for joining with us in this goal.

Janet Kolarik





Treasurer's Report

In early August you should have received an email containing the complete Annual Report for our fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. These reports can be a little long and have a lot of accounts and amounts in them. Our goal today is to highlight the most important things we all need to know – what we plan to spend this fiscal year and from where we get the money to support that spending.

As you already know, Saddle Ridge has one primary source of funding for the year: our annual assessments. On July 1, 2020, we sent out 148 invoices for FY 2021. Those invoices range from \$250 to \$2,000 and total \$73,750. We would like to collect all the assessments, but that has never happened in our recent history. There are always a few owners that just don't think they should have to pay. We allow for that in our budget. That is why we budgeted for \$68,000 in operating inflows for the year.

Now, if we want to live within our means, we should budget to spend no more than the amount of the inflows.

However, over the past several years we have done a good job collecting a lot of past due assessments. We have managed to build up our reserves to the point where we started this fiscal year with over \$83,400 in the bank.

We know what you are thinking: that is a LOT of money. Yes it is, but we think it is prudent that we should have enough money in the bank to cover a year's worth of expenditures, just in case of a major catastrophe – like that fire that hit Gatlinburg a few years ago. So, we have that covered with some to spare.

So, what are we planning to spend this year? The budget calls for \$74,000, which is \$6,000 more than our budgeted receipts. Therefore, we are planning to spend some of that surplus we have built up over the years.

What are we spending it on? Well, you can get the details from the budget we sent you, but here is a quick summary:

- Road Work and General Maintenance, \$39,900
- Garbage service, mowing the common areas, and other activities, \$13,700
- Purchasing new equipment and maintaining the equipment we have, \$3,500
- Communal activities, \$400
- Other ongoing expenditures, \$16,500

If you have questions about any of these items, we encourage you to first look at the detailed information we emailed to you. If you still have concerns, please email those to us at saddleridgepoa@gmail.com, and we will respond directly to you as quickly as we can.

On a personal note, this is the last Treasurer's Report by Smitty. He has served 6 years on the Board, which is the limit allowed by our By-Laws. He plans to continue supporting the Board in its accounting activities, depending on the needs of the new Treasurer.



Spring 2020 Virtual Cleanup:

- Trash pick up on EMC (around 20 bags picked up and taken to the landfill)
- Weeded and pruned SR flower beds
- Brush removal and mulching
- Treatment and removal of invasives around the lake and front gate
- Our community logged over 22 hours of voluntary labor!!

Thank you to everyone who has donated their time (past and present included) to make our community what it is!

Firewise

Fire season in East Tennessee is October 15 – May 15. Get a head start preparing your home and property for the season. Keep in mind the Forestry Service recommends 30' of defensible space around your home.

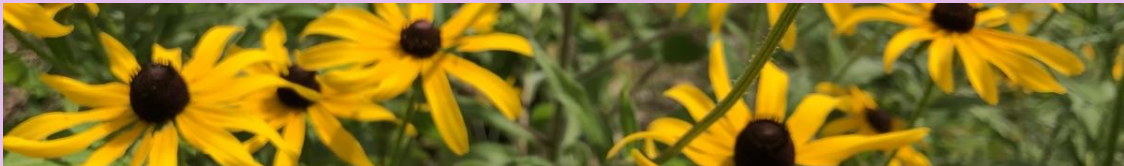
You may borrow equipment purchased with Firewise funds—pruners, backpack blower, pole saw, and more. Contact Keith Kennedy (kkcajun@gmail.com) to schedule a time to meet at the barn to check out the tools and equipment. Watch for information on the Fall community cleanup.

In Case of Emergency (fire, floods, and other emergencies)

Blount County Emergency Management will

- Send text messages to any cell phone in BC that is on (no matter the area code)
- Use reverse calling for land lines in BC
- Post information on the [BC Mayor Facebook](#) page

The [Saddle Ridge Facebook](#) page and [Google.org/publicalerts](https://www.google.org/publicalerts) are also helpful resources.



Bush Hogging, Mowing, or Flowers?

by Judy Pearson

In the Fall 2019 issue of my Nature Conservancy magazine – I have been a member for 30 + years- was an article titled “Last Chance”. The author interviewed Heather Tallis, TNC’s lead scientist for strategy innovation. Ms. Tallis was part of a group reassessing TNC’s vision and goals with a resulting statement calling for a world whose nature and people both thrive. The main question asked was “Can we have a future where people get the food, energy, and economic growth they need without sacrificing more “nature”?”

By now many of you are asking what in the blue blazes does any of the above have to do with mowing or bush hogging? Today our world is losing our pollinators: many current populations are estimated to be less than 1% of the 1980 levels. They are threatened by insecticides, climate change, and invasive species – that’s us folks. Saddle Ridge has 23 miles of roads which means we have 46 miles to bush hog or mow. Along those 46 miles throughout each year those banks have tons of plants and flowers for us to enjoy. If we just routinely cut

everything we lose one of the main reasons we moved here.

The other reason we need to not lose our pollinators is “food”. Come over and see the Pearson’s garden! Watch the bees, butterflies, and beetles move from flower to flower in our squash, tomatoes, cucumbers and beans. Pollinators give us our food. Yes I know many of us don’t have gardens but we still eat from a garden, to a can or grocery produce section, Remember that less than 1% of 1980 levels ----, the good news is that even small actions by individuals can help. A key to making pollinators more abundant is increasing native plant abundance. By choosing when and where to bush hog or mow helps. Deborah Landau, a conservation scientist for the Nature Conservancy in Maryland states that even the smallest action by individuals can help. Pots full of flowers on a deck, flower gardens, woods full of wildflowers and yes even 46 miles of road banks covered in wildflowers and plants will help. Back in the late 1990’s , at an annual meeting, the Road Committee Chairman asked about mowing versus flowers. The hands raised for flowers were overwhelming. I, myself, raised both hands. But this does not mean that resident safety takes second place over flowers. As one of our residents noted, “the amount of rain we have seen this year has led to an extraordinary growing season and we are being overgrown”. As your new Environmental Committee Chairman I feel both issues need to be addressed. While I firmly believe our native habitat needs to be protected, the safety of all Saddle Ridge residents needs to be a priority. Our Road Committee Chairman has stated “we are spot mowing for safety concerns”. I am also willing to check roads for safety issues due to overgrowth. An email or phone call to me will help if anyone has an area of concern. The Environment and Road Committee Chairs can work together. As Deborah Landau says “every living thing has an important place in our planet’s web of life and every little bit that we do really helps”.



Fall Cookout

This year for our annual Fall Cookout we have tried to come up with a safe alternative plan during this pandemic. We are calling it "Cook- Not!". The CDC recommendations for having a community gathering are:

- 1) best to hold outdoors,
- 2) use boxed disposable dinners or bring your own food,
- 3) social distance,
- 4) recommend wearing a face mask when conversing with your neighbors after eating.



Everyone would bring their own chairs and beverages.

Lee's Chicken offers a two-piece chicken meal with mashed potatoes, green beans, and a biscuit for \$5.49 a person. In addition, the events committee will bring individually wrapped cookies or brownies. The date is Sunday, October 4th, 2020 @ 5pm. The board will place the order for the chicken dinners and pay for it upfront and ask that everyone bring the exact amount (either cash or check) at the picnic. Please choose from the following options: 1) Yes, we would like to attend. 2) the # of dinners you will need. 3) will bring own food items. 4) No, we will not be able to attend.

Please RSVP to Connie Evans (865) 304-2267 evansconnie846@gmail.com or Judy Pearson (865) 982-5729 jrpearson1942@att.net no later than September 27th, 2020. In the event of adverse weather, we will reschedule.

Saddle Ridge History

Nancy Cain, a former long-time resident of our community wrote a history of Saddle Ridge. The 4-part history was published in a series of *Ridge Rambler* (RR) articles. (Part V was announced but was not written.)

The history has been gathered into one document found at the bottom of the list of RR on our community's website: History of Saddle Ridge.

Reading past RR will give you a sense of our community, our activities, and the spirit of volunteerism so vital to this community.

Saddle Ridge Road Report



Routine road maintenance on the roughly 23 miles of roads in Saddle Ridge is ongoing year-round and includes clearing debris off the roads, mowing roadsides, grading, shaping, adding rock and cleaning out ditches and culverts. In addition to grading all the major hills and primary roads as needed (Grouse Top, Oakwood, Waters End, Sky Top, Walnut Flats, Chilhowee), we've done some extra ditch clearing and added gravel along Overlook, Oakwood, Poplar Bluff, Eagle Pass, Elks Point, Walnut Flats, and Chilhowee. Waters End down by the gate was closed for a few days while Lamar replaced the collapsed culvert in June.

Plenty of rain again this summer has led to healthy vegetation growth. We are clearing it back for safety around blind curves and around the road signs plus mowing where vegetation is encroaching on the roads. We will be clearing and mowing all the roadsides more thoroughly in the Fall after the pollinators and other wildlife and plants have safely settled down.

We appreciate everyone sticking to the speed limit of 20mph or below and minimizing driving. It really helps us keep the cost of road maintenance down and is a lot safer for all. How can you help around your property? Check to make sure the culverts running under your driveway are clear. Volunteer to clear the many culverts along the roads. Remove logs, branches, and other debris from the roads. Please contact me to report any road issues or questions and if you are interested in volunteering on the Road Committee: Sue DuBois, by email - sodubois@gmail.com or call/text - 865-307-2532.

New Group

Barbara Clinansmith would like the ladies of Saddle Ridge to know that instead of a prayer group she is going to be doing a Bible book study. She wrote, "We will bring chairs and meet at the barn while there is good weather then we can distance in our basement." If you would like more information please contact Barbara at 865-981-3990 or bclinansmith@gmail.com

Two Ways to Help Walland Elementary School

1. Register with Kroger's school program: <https://www.kroger.com/topic/school-programs>
 2. Register directly with the Box Top for Education <https://www.boxtops4education.com/>. The program is now digital. The Box Top for Education container has been removed from the kiosk.
-

Welcome to Saddle Ridge

New property owners:

Joel & Wendy Southern
Lester & Neta Henley
Scott Esenberg

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, 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 Mary Glarner at Mglarner@gmail.com, to be added to the group. Please remember, this page is strictly for people who own property in Saddle Ridge.

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: Janet Kolarik | 865-805-0348

Vice President: Sue DuBois | 865-307-2532 Roads Committee

Treasurer: Sally Whelan | 508-847-9140

Secretary: Joan Jackson | 803-257-2649

Board Members:

Judy Pearson | 865-982-5729 Environmental Committee
Connie Evans | 865-304-2267 Events/Hospitality Committee
Mary Glarner | 865-982-3432 Communications Committee
Beth Koella | 865-705-0455 Architectural Committee
Keith Kennedy | 512-716-5059 Equipment Committee



Copyright © 2020 Saddle Ridge POA, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

