

# REFLECTIONS FROM THE HILL

JULY 2008 EDITION  
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## OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2008-09

Following the Annual Meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup>, the Board held a meeting to elect the following officers for 2008-09:

President, John DeLisa  
VP, Richard Bubb

The other Directors and their responsibilities for the same period are:

Recreation Chairman, Mike Aleksich  
Roads Chairman, Grover Cleveland  
WEB Master, Peter Ruggiero  
Insurance Contact, Richard Bubb  
Civic Liaison, Gloria Brady  
Co-Corresponding Secretary, Eileen O'Toole & Susan Gebase  
Recording Secretary, Frank A. Young

Non-Director appointments made at the meeting are:

Treasurer/Bookkeeper, Wendy Robinson  
Financial Secretary, Robert G. Boone

## ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Annual Meeting of the Spruce Hill Farms Property Owner's Association was held in the Barrett Township Ambulance Building on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 A.M. There was a sufficient number for a quorum and the meeting commenced.

Richard Bubb, the Vice President, chaired the meeting and we had a full board in attendance.

There were three positions on the Board open and a request for volunteers to fill these positions was made. There being no nominations from the floor, the current Board members agreed to continue in these positions for another term.

Minutes of the last Annual meeting were read and approved with minor changes.

The By-Law change as outlined in the notice you received with regard to our corporate address, was approved by the membership.

Our Treasurer, Wendy Robinson, gave her report which was approved by all present.

### **ASSESSMENTS**

Our Financial Secretary, Bob Boone, reported that there are only 4 homeowners who are delinquent on their assessments for the 2007/2008 season. This year, 75% of our homeowners have taken advantage of the \$50 discount offered when paying their dues early. If you have not paid your dues yet, please make sure you do not wait until you are in a penalty period.

### **UPDATE ON OUR ROADS**

Our Roads Chairman, Grover Cleveland, reported that we had gone over budget for road work last year due to the replacement of a collapsed drainage pipe, extra snow removal, etc., in addition to the usual maintenance required. This year we have already put 900 tons of stone on the roads and cleaned out several pipes under the roads. There may need to be a replacement of another pipe before the summer is out.

### **DRIVER AWARENESS IS REQUESTED**

It was reported that people are rounding the corners too tightly and may end up in a ditch. Please try to stay toward the center of the road as you round the corners, both for your safety and the maintenance of the roads. It was recommended that reflective sticks be placed at the corners to designate the limits of the road surfaces. Meanwhile, please use common sense when rounding the corners and do not cut them too closely.

## **HEAVY HANGS THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE CROWN**

Our Vice President, Richard Bubb, at the Annual Meeting used an analogy of being on the Board to his son's baseball game. When the umpire doesn't show up, everyone wants you to do the job but the first call you make everyone challenges it.

Likewise, our volunteer Board works very hard to prepare the budget every year to include the necessary items and possible unexpected items while still maintaining a reasonable amount of assessment based on past history of expenses. But they know there are those of you who will challenge their decisions.

No one likes to see increases but we see them everyday in everything we do. Our development is not exempt from these increases. Over the years, the Board has diligently reduced our expenses by having people volunteer their time to do the services needed such as doing bookkeeping and keeping our financial records, preparing newsletters twice a year, reducing legal fees by preparing notices of our annual meeting and writing minutes thereof "in house" instead of having our lawyer's office do them. We reduced our accountant's fee for preparing our income tax, started the website to inform homeowners of up-to-date information without having to do mail-outs. We have chased down delinquent homeowners ourselves by filing a Civil Complaint and attending court hearings and only going to the lawyer for assistance when absolutely necessary.

Meanwhile, other expenses for pool testing, chemicals, stone for roads, snow plowing, etc., continue to go up and the Board constantly faces these increases and many other challenges.

The Budget for 2009-2010 will be set this fall and your understanding of this process is appreciated and your input is welcomed.

The Board meets monthly during the summer usually at the pool pavilion. Please check our website for dates and time.

## **SPLASHES FROM THE POOL**

Our Recreation Chairman reported that the pool was unable to open as early as planned due to a lack of lifeguards. Continued efforts by our pool manager, Chelsea Aleksich, and Elaine Bubb, wife of our V.P., has resulted in our recently obtaining lifeguards. The pavilion area is being power washed and the pool cover should be removed in a few days. Barring any unforeseen repairs to the pool, it should be in operation by June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Pool Passes: Your current pool pass is good until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008. If you have paid your 2008-2009 assessment, your new pass is included with this newsletter.

Please bring this with you to the pool at all times and observe the pool rules.

### *POOL CLOSINGS CHALLENGED AT ANNUAL MEETING*

At the Annual Meeting, a concern was raised about the pool not being open on some beautiful summer days. Our Recreation Chairman explained that this was due either to inclement weather forecasts or thunderstorms popping up unexpectedly. Also, there were incidents when the lifeguard did not show up but had not called to let anyone know so a replacement could be made. Our insurance does not permit us to operate the pool without a lifeguard present so if any of the above conditions cause us to be without one, we must close the pool.

Our apologies to anyone who expected to “cool off” and was disappointed by the pool closing. If there is any member of the community who is a qualified lifeguard and can help out in providing lifeguard coverage on these questionable occasions, and is willing to be contacted for “last minute duty”, we would greatly appreciate your assistance. If you are interested, please contact either Mike Aleksich or the Office.

## **POOL PARTY**

**Tentatively set for August 16<sup>th</sup>**

If you missed it last year; please try to attend this year. A really good time was had by all and we hope to make this an annual affair. It is a great time to meet other homeowners while enjoying a fun day. We need volunteers to set up/clean up/bring food dishes to share, etc. Please contact Mike Aleksich by calling (570) 595-3544 or e-mail him at: [aleksich@ptdprolog.net](mailto:aleksich@ptdprolog.net) to volunteer where you can.

## HAVE YOU CHECKED OUR WEBSITE TODAY???



Peter Ruggiero, our webmaster, has been diligently working to keep our website up to date, but would like to see more people using it either to share information or gain information.

Did you know, accessing *SpruceHillFarms.org*, that you can ...

- get local weather
- get Spruce Hill Farms news
- get Community news
- download our Rules and Regulations and our By-Laws
- get a Resale Certificate
- list a property for sale
- list items for sale
- have your kids get games, jokes, etc., with a safe external link to other sites such as the Barrett Township kid's website, etc.

Only the "interactive chat-FORUM" on our website is password protected and will change each time the newsletter goes out. The new password for July to December is: ACORN (all capital letters).

### ***GET PAPERLESS INFO***

Our website provides you an opportunity to always have at your fingertips the most current issue of our Rules and Regulations and By-Laws.

Likewise, if you are *planning to sell your property*, you need to *download a copy of the procedures on when to apply for a Resale Certificate*.

USE THE WEBSITE OFTEN  
YOUR COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED  
**WHY NOT MAKE *SpruceHillFarms.org* YOUR BROWSER'S  
HOMEPAGE?**

# Potpourri Page

## SPRUCE HILL/SPRUCE UP

Once again we are requesting homeowners to clean up their own property and help keep our roads looking good by picking up any trash you may see as you are taking walks, etc. Volunteer your time by emailing Evelyn Tuths at [ejtuths@aol.com](mailto:ejtuths@aol.com) to be put on her list for designated community walks. Some of the most critical times of the year are just after the snow melts and again in the fall around Halloween. Keep our community looking rural not run down.

## HOMEOWNER REMINDER REGARDING "PETS"

There is both a township ordinance and a Spruce Hill Farms rule against having livestock on your property. It is a hazard to those around you and against the rules. Please abide by these rules.

Also, any domestic animals, particularly dogs, should be walked on a leash or confined behind a structured or electric fence. Do not allow your animals to run freely through the development and damage other people's property.

## SPEED LIMIT

Please observe the 20 MPH speed limit as children are now out of school and may be playing in or near the roads. Also, be on the lookout for baby deer or other animals that may be crossing our roads.

If you've noticed the absence of some speed limit signs, it is because they were either knocked down or were totally devoid of clear printing. These signs are in the process of being repaired and replaced and should be back on the streets soon. Likewise, the street name signs are being repaired a few at a time.

These signs are being repaired by volunteers and we solicit your patience until the project is completed. Anyone wishing to help with this project, email Bob Boone at [shfpoa@ptd.net](mailto:shfpoa@ptd.net).

## GYPSY MOTH INFESTATION

The Board has received many complaints about our gypsy moth infestation and must consider the possibility of our development being sprayed next year. This has not been budgeted for and will be discussed at future Board meetings. It was mentioned at the Annual Meeting that possibly the small cost of spraying is better than the larger cost of having to remove dead trees as a result of the infestation.

