

HOA ADVISOR

The Official Publication of the Preserve at Somers



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Board of Directors:

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Sue McCormack

sue.mccormack@preserveatsomers.org

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Ken Bicknese

ken.bicknese@preserveatsomers.org

Treasurer

Jay Taylor

jay.taylor@preserveatsomers.org

Secretary

Alison Pepe

alison.pepe@preserveatsomers.org

Paula Murphy

paula.murphy@preserveatsomers.org

Contact us!

board@preserveatsomers.org

The Preserve at Somers Homeowners' Association is made up of board members and residents concerned about our quality of life.

If you have questions related to billing, or would like to correspond with the HOA board via USPS mail, please contact Chris Ryba, our property manager at Heritage Management Group.

Heritage Management Group

1 Heritage Hills Drive

Somers, New York 10589

914-276-2619

Wow... What started out in the interest of bringing the children of the community together through a Halloween Parade, turned out to be a year of service on last year's board to yet another year!

As my first official order of business, I would like to thank Becky Williams for the wonderful job she did this past year as President of our HOA Board. As fellow board members, we were all witness to the tremendous amount of time and effort Becky put into the many projects that came before us. Thank you also to our past Secretary, Rick Zaccharia, for his valued and much-appreciated contributions throughout the year.

Now I would like to extend a heartfelt welcome to Alison Pepe and Paula Murphy as our newest members, as well as welcome back Ken Bicknese and Jay Taylor to another year of service. It is with a great sense of pride that I join these neighbors in becoming your new HOA President! While I truly believe that serving on our board is an honor, the decision to become a board member is not an easy one to make. Board members choose to spend their own time working on behalf of the community! We are interested not only in protecting our own investments, but also in protecting and enhancing the investments and living environments for all the residents.

Being President is obviously a new position for me and I will never claim to know everything, however, I will always try my best to be diligent in asking questions and researching whatever comes before the board in a manner that is fair to everyone. As we are put in the position to make decisions that do not always appeal to the masses, keep in mind that we must do what is best for the community as a whole....so forgive me in advance if we should hit any bumps along the way!

With that being said, I am happy to report that this year's board passed its first test with flying colors in respect to Halloween. In keeping the momentum of what Becky proposed to respond to the safety issue of last year, a week after our elections we held an emergency meeting. At this meeting of the new board, we brainstormed ideas and delegated duties in an effort to devise a plan. It should be mentioned that we received tremendous support from our Managing agent, the police department, Mary Beth Murphy and Tom Chiavarini, who have all always been very helpful in Preserve issues.

In addition to researching and resolving issues as they arise, we will keep you up to date with broader issues that affect all of us, including our continuing communications with AKRF in regard to the-basins and with town officials in regard to road dedications.

Lastly, while we may serve on the board, don't lose sight of the fact that we are your neighbors as well. We all share the same concerns and are here to help and work alongside you in keeping our community beautiful, our kids safe and our property values up. This is a big job! As there are only 5 homes represented on the board and 188 homes to consider, your input, questions and concerns are invaluable as we ALL work together to make a difference.

Hope to see you around the neighborhood,

Sue

ANOTHER SPOOKTACULAR DAY!

BY SUE MCCORMACK

The 2nd Annual Preserve Halloween Parade was another great success this year!

While we can't seem to escape the high winds of October, it never seems to stop the kids from enjoying our event. This year, over 250 children registered for the Halloween Parade. Yet again, we were able to come together and show them what it means to be part of a caring community.

It looked as though everyone had a good time making bracelets, playing games and creating their sand projects, as well as visiting our new stations of face-painting and the donut-eating challenge! Everyone was smiling as they were running around with frosting on their faces!

Thank you to everyone who baked all those wonderful goodies for us and of course to all those who volunteered to help that day! I want to especially thank all of the great kids who came early, set-up the tables and games and lovingly coached the little ones ... just shows me what wonderful young people we grow here in the Preserve!

Admittedly, there are a few "glitches" that I can't seem to smooth out! The start of the parade is always a bit harried. As our parade falls on the same day as the town, we have been unsuccessful in getting more fanfare, such as a school band or the fire department, either of which would definitely keep the kids entertained while waiting in line to begin. Understanding that both parents and kids are anxious to start – we like to wait for our police escort and any visible stragglers to join us! The other bottle-neck is the treat-bag distribution – hours are spent putting them together and then organizing by family and ages within the family – and no matter how organized the process starts out to be – there are just so many of us! If anyone has any ideas for next year in EITHER one of these areas – please let me know!
Thanks again for a great party!

Sue

TREASURER'S REPORT BY JAY TAYLOR

At the annual meeting held in October, Treasurer Jay Taylor reported that the Preserve is in excellent financial health.

A few highlights:

- The time saved in eliminating monthly billing, mailing and follow-up has resulted in a 20% reduction in the fee we pay our managing agent, Heritage Management Group), reducing that expense by over \$4,500 annually.
- As we learn about the maintenance that will be required for our biobasins, we continue to accrue a maintenance reserve, and have invested that reserve in staggered CDs, on which we earn interest which adds to the reserve.

Grounds expense (mowing common areas and maintaining the entrances), our management fee, and liability insurance on the common areas have been our greatest expenses in 2007. In addition, we pay for maintenance and operation of the sprinkler system, entrance lights, and numerous smaller expenses.

The budget adopted at the annual meeting assumes no major changes in our revenue and spending patterns for 2008. We expect expenses to inflate somewhat, and the board may look into redesigning our web site to be more friendly. We expect to continue to retain our engineering consulting firm, AKRF, to advise us on biobasin maintenance as we begin to implement the biobasin maintenance plan. Although we didn't have a picnic this year, we've included provision for a modest picnic and our third annual Halloween Parade in next year's budget.

Netting out the changes, we expect expenses from year to year to be about flat, and that we can continue to make a contribution to our Replacement Fund (biobasin maintenance) as we did this year.

Copies of the detailed presentation given at the annual meeting are available from the Managing Agent or by contacting the treasurer, jay.taylor@preserveatsomers.org.

Halloween Safety Plan

By Alison Pepe



There were many concerns relayed to the Board regarding previous years' Halloween night festivities. Most of the complaints were relating to the vast number of visitors to The Preserve. One of the greatest concerns was the automobile traffic and the resulting hazards to our children trick or treating on foot. These concerns lead the HOA Board to formulate a safety plan to minimize the risk to pedestrians and insure a positive experience for both residents and visitors. The plan included hiring private security personnel who were stationed throughout the community, one way automobile traffic on Putney, letters to the homeowners describing the plan for the evening, and information passed through the local media of our heightened level of awareness for Halloween night. The Safety Plan was implemented nearly flawlessly. The following statistics and plan details reveal the success of the night: 7 cars were turned away between both entrances (unsupervised teens trying to enter with shaving cream, eggs etc.)

70 cars entered on Travis

89 cars entered on Loomis between 5:30 pm and 10:30 pm

Letter to homeowners was received well as evidenced by positive feedback received by the Board

Posting on town website and cable channel 20 had a tremendous impact.

With few typical incidents of vandalism aside, the success of Halloween Night 2007 was noted by all. The Board appreciates all the community support we received and looks forward to next year!

PLANTING IN THE RIGHT OF WAY BY PAULA MURPHY

At a recent Board meeting, the topic of street side trees was discussed at length. A review of the Restrictions and Covenants in addition to Rules and Regulations clarifies responsibilities. Ownership of plantings and their maintenance in common areas such as the bio basins and the entrance ways are the responsibility of the Homeowners Association. Ownership and maintenance of plantings within a homeowner's property lines, including the ten foot right of way (ROW), is the responsibility of each homeowner. During the review, it was noted that while street side trees are part of the community build plan, approved by the Town of Somers, the HOA is not currently aware of a requirement to replace these plantings in the event they succumb to disease. However, we would encourage you to replace the trees in the interest of your own curb appeal and the overall appearance of the community. Aware that there were specific species of trees approved for the development to minimize impact to the storm water management system, we contacted the Town to identify what trees would be environmentally friendly. The Town has identified the following trees to be among those suitable for placement in the ROW.

Deciduous Trees: Sugar Maple, Pin

GARDENING TIP:

Salt, sand and other debris left over from snow removal can affect the soil in your garden beds in the ROW. To prevent this, remove any mulch and cover the area with plastic sheeting and then replace your mulch to hold down the plastic. In the spring,

simply remove the mulch, along with the accumulated debris, remove the plastic sheet and you are ready to plant..



Local Zip Codes

Amawalk:	10501
Lincolndale:	10540
Baldwin Place	10505
Mahopac	10541
Croton:	10520
Purdys	10578
Granite Springs:	10527
Shenorock	10587
Katonah:	10536
Somers:	10589
Yorktown Hts:	10598

Oak, Hawthorne, Kousa Dogwood, Shadblow, River Birch, and Aristocrat Pear

Evergreen Trees: Norway Spruce, Colorado Spruce

Residents should understand that any plantings in the ROW are subject to being disturbed if work needs to be done by the Town or any of the utility companies that service the Preserve. Notice is normally provided for scheduled work, which would allow a resident to carefully move any plantings. However, in an emergency, such as a gas or water leak, there are no guarantees. Therefore, homeowners should carefully consider what they plant in the ROW. Most importantly, as many utilities are buried in the ROW as well as up to your home, it is very important to call before you dig. A new, federally-mandated national "Call Before You Dig" number, 811 was created to help protect you from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects.

People digging often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked due to concerns about project delays, costs and previous calls about other projects.

Go to www.call811.com for more information.

Local Municipalities Contact Information

Somers Town Website

Somersny.com

Baldwin Place Post Office

167 Route 6, Mahopac, NY (A&P Shopping Center)

Somers Library

Somerslibrary.org

Somers Sanitation

Briacarting.com

School & Refuse Delays & Cancellations

Whud.com (storm center)

Somers School District

Somers.k12.ny.us
Primrose: 248-8888
SIS: 277-4344
SMS: 277-3399
SHS: 248-8585

Somers PTA

Somersptacouncil.org

Somers Highway Dept.

232-4848

ConEd

925-6900

NYSEG

800-572-1111

Amawalk Water District

248-5181

State Police (Somers)

277-3651

Hello again from Dr. Rob Haims and the staff at BPAHI!

We hope everyone had a wonderful summer with their families and of course their "fur-kids"! As much as we don't want to admit it, winter is slowly creeping up on us, so we wanted to dedicate this newsletter to "Helpful Winter Tips for Your pets".

Overindulgence:

As the holiday season approaches, and all those delicious foods and "goodies" start coming around, many animals will become tempted to join in the festivities with a bit of a snack (unbeknownst to us). Dogs can come down with an upset stomach from too many rich/fatty foods (turkey skin and gravy) or from chocolate which is toxic. Cats tend to nibble on strings, plants, and tinsel which can cause gastric irritations, vomiting, and even an intestinal blockage. Certain flowering plants (Mistletoe, Holly, and Poinsettias) are toxic if ingested, so keep them away from our four-legged friends.

Cold Feet:

When letting your pets outdoors during the winter months, be sure to wash their pads routinely in order to clean off the rock salt and sand. This will prevent irritation to their paws. Another thing to look for is cracking or raw paw pads, which can be protected by rubbing on a thin layer of an antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin or Neosporin) for moisturizing.

Poisons:

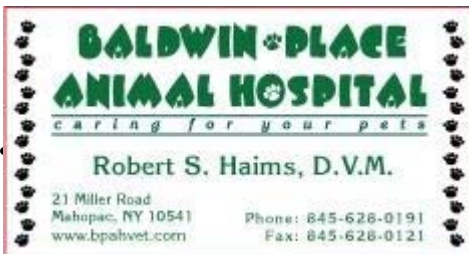
As pet owners we all know that dogs and cats are always finding something interesting to smell and lick on the ground. In this case with the winter approaching, our culprit is Anti-freeze. It has a very sweet smell and taste which is attractive to the animals, but can be fatal if left untreated. Look for symptoms such as lack of coordination (being drunk), vomiting, and increased water consumption and urination. If you think your pet has ingested anti-freeze, contact your veterinarian **immediately**.

Housing:

Always be sure to provide proper shelter for your pets. If your pet is kept outdoors, a warm insulated pet house or shelter that is elevated would work fine. Always remember to have fresh, clean water that has not frozen.

Fleas & Ticks:

Fleas and ticks thrive in the cool weather months, so continue to apply your monthly preventative to avoid any unwanted "house guests" over the winter.



As always, if anyone has any questions or would like to stop by for a tour of our hospital, please give us a call at (845) 628-0191.

Have a safe and healthy year!

SNOW SHOVELING TIPS BY ALISON PEPE

Consider the following before grabbing your shovel after a major snowfall:

1. Protect your back from injury by lifting from the knee not at the waist.
2. Begin shoveling slowly to avoid placing a sudden demand on your heart.
3. Pace yourself and take breaks as needed.
4. Dress in several layers so you can remove a layer as needed.
5. Drink plenty of water.
6. Most importantly: Listen to your body. Stop if you feel pain!



ROAD DEDICATION—By Nick Ward Willis

As many residents may know, approximately half of the roads within the Preserve are dedicated to and maintained by the Town. The other half (Loomis, Turk, Hynard, Putney north of Loomis, Vista , Stephens and Travis east of Putney) is still owned and maintained by the Builder. The builder has requested that the Town accept dedication of the remaining roads and it is expected the Town Board will accept the roads this Winter. The Town Engineer provided the Builder with a final punch list which included some concerns expressed by the Preserve HOA. The Board has been involved in the dedication process and has relied on its consulting engineers, AKRF, to communicate the communities concerns regarding dedication to the Town.



Many of AKRF's concerns regard the bio-filter basins. AKRF wants confirmation that the basins were constructed as approved by the Town and are functioning properly. Additionally, AKRF is working with the Town to ensure the Builder properly maintained the basins. Finally, the HOA is also working with the Town and Builder to confirm the date each basin is deemed to have been substantially constructed as the Builder is required to maintain the basins for the first 5 years after that date. Thereafter, it becomes the HOA's responsibility.

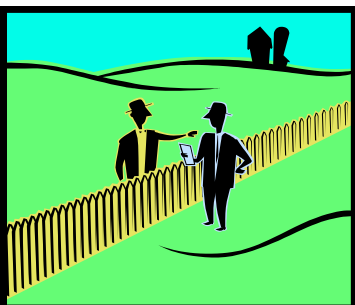
The HOA has kept the community informed about the dedication process and the status of the basins via the HOA website where additional information can be obtained. Any resident who has a question on the road dedication process or basins, can contact our HOA representative on this issue, Nick Ward-Willis, at nward-willis@kblaw.com.

GENERAL REMINDERS

- * Please collect your garbage cans and recycling bins as soon as possible after they are collected as, especially on windy days, they often wander into the roads or end up on your neighbor's property or the basins.
- * Ensure that your recyclables are properly secured, especially on windy days, as quite a bit of recycling ends up in the basins.
- * Koegel Park is a passive recreation (walking, hiking, etc.) park located on Route 118 just south of the Preserve. A map of the Park can be viewed at <http://www.somersny.com/Calendar/parksnrecreation/koegelparkmap.pdf>

Neighbor Notes

Have news to report? How about a great recipe or gardening tip? Great gift idea or local merchant review? We would love to include your news and information in the next edition of the HOA Advisor! Please contact Alison.pepe@preserveatsomers.org to be included in our next issue.



PAS Odd -Job Squad

If your Preserve Resident teen is interested in making extra cash by helping out his/her neighbors, we will gladly add their names to the Odd-Job Squad list. We strongly encourage parents to meet or speak to the requester of services initially. Contact Alison.pepe@preserveatsomers.org for more information.

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Contact Alison Pepe for more information on Isagenix



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