

**NOVEMBER
2008**

RANDOM HILLS COMMUNITY NEWS



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

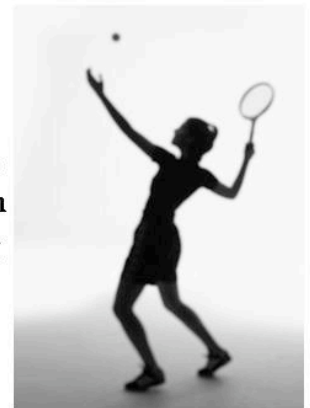
I've been thinking about the word "community" lately – as in Random Hills *Community Association* (RHCA). Webster has many definitions for "community". For example: "People with common interests living in a particular area" or "an interacting population of various kinds of individuals". Whatever the definition, there seems to me to be an inherent tension in the word: namely, different people trying to live together as a common body. As the President of the RHCA Board of Directors, I definitely feel that tension. Some people want a more relaxed parking policy; others want it to be tightened and enforced more rigorously. Some people don't give the Architectural guidelines a second thought; others scrupulously adhere to the guidelines. One person wanted to turn the tennis court into a pet playground; another was vehement about restricting it for tennis only. I consider one of the missions of the BOD to *create and protect a healthy balance between diversity and unity in all aspects of our community*. Sure, *protecting property values* is another BOD mission, but for this newsletter, I wanted to shine the light exclusively on *community*. You may be asking, "how can I contribute to this mission?" We're glad you asked! Here is a simple suggestion: *be involved*. You may want to volunteer on the Architectural Review Committee (ARC), help with the RHCA website, or just attend a monthly BOD meeting now and then. Whatever you do, when you become involved *perspectives expand*, and *relationship "seeds" are planted*. Community blossoms.

Ajay Gupta
RHCA President

Tennis Anyone ??

Want To Know More
About
Random Hills?
Check out our
website at
www.randomhills.org

Prior to this summer our community tennis court was routinely being used by people who don't live in Random Hills and it was in need of repair. So the board had the surface refinished and the fence fixed. But we didn't want our investment to go to waste and the court to be damaged again. So there is a new lock on the gate and the RHCA has instituted a key access system. For \$20.00 homeowners can get a key from board members Charlie Viars or Michael Crum and play to your heart's content. For more details go to www.randomhills.org.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE:

Since the July members meeting, the vote resulted in the re-election of Ajay Gupta, Al Santiago, and Charlie Viars to the Board of Directors. In the September board meeting, the five board members have voted on the following officers:

Ajay Gupta - President

Michael Crum - Vice President

Al Santiago - Secretary

Bob Beasley - Treasurer

Charlie Viars - Member-at-large



This is good news to have the same board re-elected because, under their leadership, the work of the association is being done with good forward momentum. Most recently, the board contracted with Shenandoah Landscaping to repair the community sprinkler system and perform structural pruning of many of the community trees.

ARE YOU TIRED OF REPLACING ROTTED WOOD?



When I decided to take on the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) chairperson role, one of my personal goals was to make it easier for everyone to know the right thing to do and hopefully easier to maintain our homes. Therefore, one of the major activities of the ARC this winter will be to research newer building products then draft an update to our design guidelines and present it to the RHCA Board of Directors for approval. I know my answer to the above question is a resounding "YES".....I'm tired of replacing rotted wood and with newer building products on the market today, we shouldn't have to. I am confident that we can offer decay resistant alternatives to Random Hills homeowners while still maintaining the original appearance of our townhome community. One step that the ARC has taken is to obtain board approval for "composite trim material" as an alternative to wood for exterior trim. So what is composite trim material? It is a wood look-a-like product that is made from PVC or PVC and Urethane that looks like wood, cuts like wood, paints like wood, but thankfully doesn't rot like wood. Some common brand names include AZEK® (www.azek.com) and FYPON® (www.fypon.com). These products are not likely to be sold at Home Depot® or Lowe's®, but are available from local millwork suppliers. They also require specific installation so you may want to hire a contractor who is experienced with installing composite trim materials. Another rot resistant material that was previously approved for a deck top rail or deck board is TREX® (www.trex.com), but the only approved color is **Saddle**. Now with this improvement, comes responsibility. You **MUST** make sure that the trim style of any of these composite materials exactly matches the same profile of the trim you are removing. If you have any doubts, the best thing to do is get ARC approval before proceeding. For those of you who are thinking "what about my garage door?" The ARC will do our best to research a steel alternative that exactly matches our current wood doors. Any questions or ideas, please email the ARC at arc@randomhills.org.

Laurie - ARC Chairperson



Our community is fast becoming one with very mature trees. The board has already spent money having some of the community trees pruned and will no doubt have to budget for additional tree pruning next year. As homeowners, you may want to make plans to have your trees pruned as well by a reputable arborist. One issue that the ARC wanted to get resolved is to get a board decision on a tree replacement option when a homeowner's front yard tree is dying

or is damaged and in need of replacement. Several homeowners on Kentmere Square have locust trees planted in their front yards and they are dying on the top of the trees. I had my arborist of Save-A-Tree, Brian McLaughlin, look at these locust trees and he explained why they are dying. These trees are planted in a very small square of grass and are surrounded on all four side with driveways, the street, and porches or sidewalks. When these trees were young they were able to thrive in these small grassy areas, but now the roots are not able to get enough water and nutrients from the soil. The lower branches are getting the nutrients, but there isn't enough to feed the top of the tree. So in essence, the top of the tree is being starved. In urban areas with trees planted along the streets, you may not have noticed (I know I didn't), but there are certain types of trees that thrive better in urban street-side planting situations.

Brian suggested the Cleveland Select Pear, the Aristocrat Pear, and the Red Maple as some better choices for street side plantings because they are



more drought resistant, disease resistant, and less likely to split from storms than the more common Bradford Pear. They are also not as likely to cause sidewalks and driveway upheaval as the root systems spread out. Therefore, in the September board meeting, the board approved the **Cleveland Select Pear**, the **Aristocrat Pear** and the **Red Maple** as a tree replacement option as long as the trunk diameter is 2-1/2 inches or greater in width and the overall planted tree height is 10 feet or greater. These trees have pretty flowers that bloom in the spring and have leaves that turn a bright red or bronze color in autumn. Please remember that landscaping redesigns (removal/replacement of shrubs and/or trees) require ARC approval before proceeding so I don't want to give the impression that homeowners can replace their entire landscaping without ARC approval, but for those of you on Kentmere Square who want to replace your dying locust tree with one of the above approved trees you would not need to submit an application to the ARC prior to proceeding. We intend to add these three approved trees to the design guidelines this winter, but I wanted to tell you about it now in case you need to replace your dying tree. If you have questions, please email the ARC at arc@randomhills.org.



Laurie - ARC Chairperson

Please help us save a tree and association expenses (a.k.a. your dues) by submitting your email address to us and receiving this newsletter electronically in the future. Email addresses should be sent to: webmaster@randomhills.org