



The Mountaineer

Walnut Mountain Property Owners' Association

Volume 157

January 1, 2019

WMPOA

Quarterly Meeting

11:00 a.m.

Saturday,

January 19, 2019

at the Clubhouse

HAPPY NEW YEAR

President's Report

It seems there is no place better than Walnut Mountain in the fall. This year was no exception. The leaves were beautiful and the weather warm (even though wet). Employees were productive, and the Garden Club kept the Mountain beautiful.

We also accomplished a couple projects that are notable and worth mentioning. We completed about 95% of Phase 1 of our paving project before the asphalt plants shut down due to cold weather. The remainder of Phase 1 will be finished, and Phase 2 started, next spring when the plants reopen. I especially want to thank Rich Soukup and Greg Gamble for their leadership with this project.

We met with the Engineer of Record on our dams and devised a compliance plan for 2019. While our Property Manager, Connie McVey, completes our quarterly Dams Reports, and submits them to the State of Georgia, a bi-annual report, due by March 2019, must be completed by the Engineer of Record. Golder Engineering is Walnut Mountain's Engineer of Record and we met with them to review all the dams and engaged them to complete the project during the first quarter of 2019.

Bob and Bunny DeMeo moved from the Mountain (our loss) at the end of October and the Board, at the November Board Meeting, appointed Tim McLaughlin to fill the vacancy on the Board. Tim has been on the Board in the past and brings strong leadership skills to our team. Tim will chair the Nominations Committee, so you may be hearing from Tim and his committee regarding your potential participation on the board.

Our Finance Committee, led by Treasurer Frank Randall, completed the 2019 Operating and Capital Expense Budgets. They held an informational meeting for property owners to get a preview of the proposed budget and ask any questions they might have. The budget was then put before the Board, and approved, at the November Board meeting. I am happy to report there is no increase in association dues for 2019.

Calendar of Events*

- 1/2 Men's Coffee 8:30 am
- 1/9 Men's Coffee 8:30 am
- 1/10 Garden Club Meeting, and Potluck, 6:00 pm
- 1/15 Book Club 7pm
- 1/16 Men's Coffee 8:30 am
- 1/19 Board Meeting, 9:30am
- 1/19 POA Meeting 11:00 am
- 1/23 Men's Coffee 8:30 am
- 1/30 Men's Coffee 8:30 am
- 2/6 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 2/12 Book Club 7 pm
- 2/13 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 2/14 Garden Club Mtg and Potluck 6:00 pm
- 2/16 Board Meeting, 9:30 am
- 2/20 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 2/27 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 3/6 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 3/13 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 3/14 Garden Club Meeting and Potluck, 6 pm
- 3/16 Board Meeting 9:30
- 3/20 Men's Coffee 8:30
- 3/27 Men's Coffee 8:30

*All events are at the clubhouse unless otherwise noted. Check the Calendar at the office or our website for changes. Our website address is: <http://www.walnutmtnga.com/>

As we get “dumped” into winter I will remind you to be prepared for some bad weather on Walnut Mountain. While we don’t get much snow in North Georgia, we are not immune from being “snowed in” for a few days each year. Walnut Mountain POA does not maintain snow removal equipment for the roads so those of us at the higher elevations must prepare a “Plan B” for any transportation needs in inclement weather. This may include parking your car at a lower elevation. While we do attempt to spread some ice melt, this does not clear the roads totally, especially on the steeper slopes. In addition, for those who leave their cabins and homes for periods during the winter, don’t forget to winterize your house. This includes turning your water off at the street when you will be away for more than a couple of days. If you are leaving for a few days, you might want to leave your heat on and thermostat set to a temperature that will not allow pipes and other plumbing to freeze. I usually leave mine on 55 degrees.

I also want to commend our staff, led by Connie McVey, for the tremendous job they do in maintaining the Mountain. They work hard and are available to be on the Mountain most anytime Mother Nature decides to show herself with wind, rain or snow.

Finally, I want to thank our Board of Directors for their tireless efforts in donating their time and talents to their various responsibilities. The Board makes it both enjoyable and easy for me to perform my duties as President.

Max Holstein, President

FROM THE PROPERTY MANAGER

As the season has gone from Summer to Fall, since the last edition of the newsletter, there have also been many changes around Walnut Mountain. One noticeable change is the addition of our new Administrative Assistant, Brandy Davenport. Brandy has acclimated well to the team with her pleasant personality and positive attitude. The Walnut Mountain Maintenance Staff is comprised of the following employees: Rick Beavers, Alex Powell, Micah McElroy and Robbie Evans. I do not have the words to express how grateful I am for this wonderful group of people that I am blessed to call co-workers and friends. This same maintenance crew, despite the precipitation of this very rainy Summer and Fall, has worked hard to

repaint the outside of the Clubhouse, install the remaining 200 water meters as to give all 407 homes of Walnut Mountain a new meter, rebuilt the swing at the Picnic Area after a tree fell on the swing and broke it in half, along with a ton of various other projects and work orders that come in daily and weekly.

Right before Christmas, we assisted the Beautification Committee with planting a new cherry tree at the Mail Kiosk flower bed, which residents will be able to enjoy for years to come. We also have some pending projects that are in the planning stages; among projects pending is the new sign that will be placed at the entrance of 52 East. I have worked closely with Shyla Brenan to implement her vision for the new sign. Can’t wait to see the finished product and we are confident that it will be a source of pride for the entire community. We also have some paving and patch work on the roads that is scheduled to be completed in the early Spring. I sincerely appreciate all the input from Rich Soukup and Greg Gamble as these gentlemen have dedicated countless hours in determining the roads/areas that are most at need.

The staff of Walnut Mountain takes pride in the work that we perform daily. We always strive to put our best effort forward when it comes to assisting the community with any needs that may arise.

My staff and I hope everyone in this wonderful community had a very happy Holiday Season and that you have peace, joy and prosperity in the New Year. We can’t wait to see what 2019 has in store!!!!

Connie McVey, Property Manager

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Happy New Year! I wish each of you a healthy and prosperous 2019! I have a few things to share from my travels around the mountain:

The maintenance staff recently replaced the reflectors on Skyview Drive with more permanent ones in the hope that they will last longer.

Gate 3 continues to be problematic. As this goes to press, we are working on it. The control box for the gate was hit by a vehicle yet again. To prevent this from happening in the future, we have made the decision to move the gate and the control box further up the road away from the hairpin turn that appears to be the

problem. If Gate 3 is not fixed as you are reading this, it will be fixed and reinstalled very soon. Thanks so much for your patience as we have worked on a more permanent solution to the problem of vehicles hitting that control box.

Please remember that if a water line breaks between the water meter and a home, the property owner is responsible for the cost of the water that is lost. This is another good reason to be sure your home's water pipes are winterized.

Due to USPS regulations, we cannot add additional mailboxes to our current mail kiosk nor are we able to enlarge the existing structure to accommodate more boxes. Moving the mailboxes to another location would be very costly if we were even able to find another location that is suitable. I see this topic come up occasionally on Nextdoor, so I wanted to address it.

Speaking of Nextdoor, it is a great place to share neighborhood happenings and neighbor to neighbor information. However, if you have a question concerning operation of the mountain, you will get more accurate information in a timelier manner if you call the administrative office or a board member. There is a lot of misinformation shared when property owners look to Nextdoor for answers concerning road conditions, mailboxes, amenity operation, and other things that the maintenance staff and Board of Directors take care of. Another way to obtain accurate information in a timely manner is to attend Board meetings. Board meetings are held on the third Saturday of every month, except December, at the clubhouse at 9:30 AM.

The mountain continues to run well thanks to the hard work of our staff and the many property owners who volunteer their time. Thanks to all of you!

Carol Callicutt, Vice President

TREASURER'S REPORT Frank Randall MBA, LPC

Much was accomplished by the finance committee during the last six months of 2018. Through the months of July and August, we worked diligently to get a good understanding of Walnut Mountain's finances and financial statements. As soon as this was accomplished, we began to work on the budget. This was a six-week process. The finance committee analyzed the previous

three budgets and three years of financial statements. At the October POA meeting, we presented a rough draft to the Board and asked for their feedback. In November, at a called budget meeting, the finance committee presented the final budget to property owners in attendance and the board. At the November POA meeting, the 2019 budget was approved. This process led to a budget that all Board members felt positive about.

At the November POA meeting, the board discussed two ways to increase revenues. The first was to invest a portion of our reserves into FDIC insured certificates of deposit. Second, we formed a committee to plan and implement advertising on our web. I will report on the progress of these two endeavors in the April newsletter. In November, the board completed paying for phase one of road repairs. Rich Soukup reports that the majority of phase two road work will be completed in the second quarter of 2019.

As this newsletter is arriving in your mailboxes, our bank accounts are near their yearly peak. We have increased our reserves in anticipation of making vast improvements to our roads and other infrastructure. The finance committee will continue making updates and improvements to the financial system. We remain committed to fiscal responsibility and harmony on the mountain.

BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The beautification committee currently has 11 members. We held our fall meetings in September, October, and November. Workdays were scheduled to weed, rake, plant, and mulch the common areas of the mountain. Bushes in front of the clubhouse were trimmed. We make sure trash is picked up in front of the Walnut Mountain sign at State Road 52.

A Turniptown Road cleanup was held November 5. Eight members and residents picked up 20 bags of trash along the roadside.

The hanging baskets at the welcome station and the administration office have their winter plants. Seven hundred and twenty bulbs were planted in several areas of the mountain. It should be a beautiful spring.

The committee will meet again in February. We continue to work closely with our maintenance staff in addressing certain projects. We encourage all residents to help keep our community clean and an attractive place to live.

Sherri McGuff, Beautification Committee

EVENT'S REPORT

The clubhouse has been busy this past year with everything from weddings, high school reunions, WM Book Club, Women's Circle, Men's Coffee, Bingo, cards, cocktail parties, and our annual Walnut Mountain Christmas Party, making our Clubhouse the place to be.

The WM Book Club chooses a new book to discuss each month over wine and cheese, with a new reader choosing the topic. Women's Circle has a woman from the mountain choose a surprise for the ladies to experience, like a new restaurant, learn a new craft or exchange stories of our first turkeys we tried to cook, or laughing at ourselves singing Karaoke. Men's Coffee is every Wednesday morning with no women allowed so I've no clue what they do...hmm? Bingo has a twist to it, with trivia questions asked and rewarded with prizes for correct answers...oh, there's something about flying marshmallows. Come check this one out!!! Cards are whatever you want to play. We'll teach you or you can teach us new games. Sometimes they change it to Dominoes. We had a wonderful Cocktail Party that was a big success when we closed the pool for winter, and after many requests, we've plans to try this more often.

On December 8th, our annual Walnut Mountain Christmas Party was held. "*Winter Wonderland in the Mountains*" was the theme. With soft Christmas carols playing, we enjoyed the wonderful delights from **Sharp Top Catering**. Sitting by the hearth with twinkle lights and warm conversation buzzing, made the room magical, while outside the rain poured. During after dinner drinks we all enjoyed games with hidden surprises tucked around the room.

It seems the shorter days and longer nights make it difficult for most of us to see the mountain roads. Add freezing temperatures, rain, sleet, and snow and we start to rethink going outside. So, for the next few months we will hold off on these activities until the

warmer weather and longer days return. If at anytime you want to get together and meet for any activities, just notify me and I can rearrange the schedules .

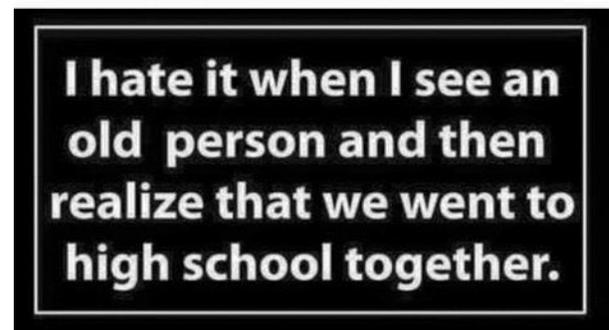
I'm excited to say we have several new events planned for the clubhouse coming soon and hope to see each one of you there.

Linda Tison, Events Chairman

NOMINATING REPORT

Thank you to the Walnut Mountain Board of Directors for unanimously appointing me back on the board as the Nominating Committee Chairman. I am once again looking forward to serving the community as well as making decisions with your best interests in mind."

Tim McLaughlin, Chairman



WELCOME TO OUR NEW HOMEOWNER'S	
Charles & Lori Durham	1432 Walnut Ridge
Dan Ballon	170 Walnut Ridge
Donald & Ashley McGowan	317 Laurel Ridge
Eric & Karen White	215 Valley View Rd
Cherie Foster	346 Walnut Ridge
Tommy & Retta Phillips	3879 Turniptown
Bob Maramba/Mary Huckstadt	1789 Walnut Ridge
Whitney Decaminada	131 Hickory Trace
Marc & Maria LaKovits	862 Mountain Oak
Michelle Reeves	775 Mountain Oak
Carl Schmidt	799 Walnut Mtn
Patricia Robertson	427 N. Lake Drive
Ronny Rowell	1074 Walnut Ridge

Walnut Mountain in the Festival of Trees

Walnut Mountain Garden Club put an adorable entry into the Gilmer County Library's Festival of Trees celebration this past December. Since our neighborhood has such avid supporters of Homeward Bound and Paws & Claws, we chose the book **Biscuit's Christmas**. The tree was decorated with doggy biscuits, chew toys and a garland of leashes, with Biscuit atop instead of an angel.



We will donate all the tree's decorations to Homeward Bound after the holidays and the book to the library.

Sherry McGuff, Suzanne McGee and Joy Ward created the tree with able assistance from Don and Barbara Nickle. The trees were on display all during the holiday at the library.

SAFETY TIP

Consider this scenario. You are home alone, and you slip and fall, are unable to get up and you are about to pass out. So, you dial 911 and then pass out as the operator answers your call.

Help will be on the way to your location for the assistance you need, right? Well, maybe not, because if you do not have a land line from ETC, they will not know what location to send the First Responders.

In addition to the benefit of having Emergency Services able to find you in your time of need, I have never lost the land line service, despite power being out on multiple occasions (for over 4 days during that big storm). How that is possible since it appears that all the power lines and phone run along the same poles baffles me. However, I was able to keep in contact with family and friends when we did lose cell service but was unable to leave the mountain due to trees and power lines blocking my exit at gate 1.

Recently, after 6 years of badgering, I finally convinced a friend with a heart condition, to have a land line installed at his cabin. He told me the cost was less than \$25 a month when added to his wi-fi and the phone only cost \$5.98 at Walmart. This is the direct access plug-in phone, not a portable that you walk around with, remember those? Please consider this option for your own safety and convenience.

John Dean, Chairman Safety

THE WELCOME COMMITTEE

We have planned for Jan 26, 2019, a meet and greet for old and new homeowners at the Clubhouse at 6pm. We had a nice meeting with our group, and we have got it on the move; stuffing welcome packages etc. Nothing else currently.

Lynne Pitters, Chairman

SPECIAL PROJECTS

By the time you receive this newsletter, the 2018 holiday season will be past us. All of us on the board hope all members of our community have a healthy and satisfying 2019!

It has been about three months since we implemented the cardboard box recycling unit across from the dumpsters. It seems to have heavy and regular use and I thank everyone for cooperating in this endeavor. Also, I especially thank Joy and Jerry Ward for presenting the recycling idea to the mountain and for their hard work.

Three special projects remain that I hope to complete by the end of my term; which is July! First, and close to my heart, is the history project. In January, I will begin, along with other volunteers, putting together all the wonderful pictures and documents people have shared with me this past year. We hope to frame six photos, so that three will flank either side of the framed original Walnut Mountain Brochure, which is currently mounted over the serving cabinet in the clubhouse. It will be hard to pick from all the photos I have received, which six best depict the last forty-five years of Walnut Mountain's existence. Then we will put together the documents and some photos in a digitalized or hard copy scrap book. I thank all of you who have generously offered your time, pictures, and knowledge as we go forward and complete this project.

Second, Max has asked me to put together and have printed a pamphlet we can make available to visitors and renters on the mountain, as well as perhaps new owners and realtors. It seems this group often causes residents some concern and anxiety when they violate our rules and covenants. In fairness to these folks, often the word is not getting from the cabin owner, to the rental company, and then on to the renter. Somewhere in between, this important information is not being communicated. I have a couple of people volunteering with this project and could use more if anyone is interested.

Last, is the return of the Walnut Mountain Yard Sale. Several of the original ladies who worked hard for years having the annual sale will be returning. This year the event is scheduled for Friday, April 5th and Saturday, April 6th and the goal which was initiated by Lynn Robey and myself has been approved by the board of directors at the October meeting. The proposed purpose is to raise funds for the replacement of our clubhouse ceiling, which needs to be updated and replaced.

We are hoping for your assistance in the success of this project. Here is how everyone can help:

1. Donate yard sale items – furniture, decorations, kitchen equipment, household, yard items, etc. - that are clean and in working order. No shoes and no clothing please.
2. Beginning in January, bring your donations to the clubhouse basement, where volunteers will be receiving them a couple of times each month. In January the collection dates are **Tuesday, January 8th and Tuesday, January 22nd**. The dates will be announced in advance each month via email blast, as well as posted announcements being placed at the office and mail kiosk. If you are unable to make the designated times, please contact either Connie or Brandy who will contact one of us and we will plan for drop offs at other times, if necessary.
3. Come to the sale April 4th and 5th
4. Bring friends!
5. Buy great stuff!

We know that this will be a fun and successful yard sale for the improvement of the clubhouse. This amenity is available for use by all property owners and increases our property values as well. Shortly, we will have on display a sample of the proposed ceiling and accompanying photos for your viewing.

You'll be hearing lots more from us in the next few months. We haven't done this in several years and are hoping for a big success! And you know you need to clean out your attic, garage, storage space, etc.! So please, help us improve our clubhouse even more. (We especially appeal to those moving in or out of the neighborhood.) Thank you all in advance for your assistance in making the new and improved ceiling happen!

Marjory Walsh – Special Projects

In Memoriam
John Summey 25 Walnut Ridge

WINTER SURVIVAL AT WALNUT MOUNTAIN

In order to survive what Mother Nature delivers, certain precautions should be taken:

1. Do you have ample heating fuel on hand?
2. Do you have an alternate heat source in case of an electrical failure?
3. Do you have an adequate supply of prescription drugs, canned food, staples, etc., to last 10 days?
4. If it's necessary for you to be at work every day, do you have a 4-wheel drive vehicle plus chains and the know-how of driving mountainous roads under adverse conditions?
5. Are you capable of walking to the Welcome Station from your home if necessary?

If you answered no to any of the above questions, you are not fully prepared for a safe passage through the winter months at Walnut Mountain. The weather service, be it radio, TV, or newspaper, usually gives us ample notice of snow and/or ice. If you cannot handle the adverse weather conditions, then perhaps you should plan to leave the Mountain until conditions improve. We, who elect to live here 12 months of the year, should not expect our Maintenance Department to provide services that local, county, or state governments cannot provide.

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