



Salt Pond Homeowners Association Newsletter

September 2006

President's Column



Can it be Fall already? Where did the summer go? We hope that you, your family, guests and renters had a good summer at the Salt Pond.

We keep having more ideas on ways to improve the Salt Pond newsletter. There is lots going on here in Salt Pond and this newsletter reflects that fact. We think you will find it interesting, informative, and useful.

If you have ideas for future articles, please send them to a Board member or Donna Hemphill at L&N. We look forward to hearing from you.



Comments and Suggestions



There are several ways to make comments, suggestions or ask questions of the SPHA Board. Contact a Board member, our property manager (Donna Hemphill, Legum & Norman, 302-537-9499) or send an email to SPComments@aol.com.

There is also a suggestion box in the mail room of the Community Center.

As Salt Pond owners, you are also welcome to attend Board meetings, which usually take place on the 3rd Friday of the month in the Community Center. Specific dates are noted in this newsletter and posted in the mail room. If you wish to speak at a Board meeting, please notify Donna Hemphill in advance and provide the topic and any pertinent information to help the Board address your comment or request efficiently. We ask that owners

limit their oral remarks to no more than 3 minutes.

Board members monitor the email address and suggestion box comments and will respond to your comments and suggestions. We will try to respond quickly, but sometimes have to defer responses due to our workload, schedules, busy lives, and time constraints. Please bear with us -we are managing a small town!

Salt Pond Christmas Dinner Dance



This year's annual Christmas dinner dance will be held Friday, December 8th from 6:00 till 10:00 p.m. The festivities will be at the Bay Center at Ruddertown in Dewey Beach. All Salt Pond owners are welcome. Come and enjoy a night of fun and fellowship.

No Real Estate Signs, Please!



The Board recently reviewed the Salt Pond Covenants requirement that prohibits real estate, open house or "take one" boxes on individual Salt Pond owners' property. The Board continues to believe that such a requirement is important to have. Such signs degrade the appearance of the community. Please keep in mind that these signs are not allowed. Sellers have many options to advertise; putting up real estate signs does very little to help sell a house in the Salt Pond or elsewhere.

CPR Training



Recreational facility attendants will receive updated training in CPR in late September. This training is important because procedures have changed, based on the latest medical practices. The SPHA Board wants our

attendants to be fully prepared in the event they are called on to perform CPR at the Community Center. Thanks to the attendants for helping keep our facilities safe and operating smoothly. Having attendants at the outdoor pool this summer helped us keep an eye on pool management and ensure a good summer swimming season.

911 Salt Pond Village Signs



As a result of the new Sussex County 911 addressing system, townhouse villages in the Salt Pond are required to have unique 5-digit numbers displayed on all buildings (one unique 5-digit number per building **not** one per unit), that are readable from the street. This addressing system is being implemented to help rescue personnel (fire, police, and emergency services) reach you in an emergency.

Salt Pond villages have been notified of the requirements by Sussex County. The building numbers will be a part of the individual townhouses' new 911 addresses.

For example, an address might read: 31885 Jeremy's Branch, Unit 28, Bethany Beach, DE 19930.

Please note that townhouse owners will have to contact any persons, businesses or establishments needing the new address to send you mail at your Salt Pond home. Villages will soon be installing the building signs; owners will want to start using the new addresses soon thereafter. Detached houses in the Salt Pond are **NOT** affected. In addition, Skipjack Village already has individual 5-digit numbers, so building numbers are **NOT** required.

Indoor Pool Gets A Facelift



The indoor pool reopened after Labor Day and has a brand new look! The renovation included repair of cracks in the pool bottom and on the steps, new coping stones surrounding the pool, a new surface and sealant on the pool deck and refurbishing of the spa. Thanks to the Recreation Committee for its recommendations, Kercher Engineering for its assessment, and First Choice for a job well done.

Couples Golf



Meets Every Thursday
 September/October:
 2:30 PM
 November/December:
 1:30 PM

9 Hole Scramble followed by an eating event – either a potluck dinner at the Community Center during the season or going out to a local restaurant during the winter months

- Call Pro shop to sign up (539-7525)
- Contact: Bob Poetsch (541-5636)

Plan Your Holiday Party Early!



Now is the time to line up the clubhouse for your holiday party or family gathering. The rates are very reasonable for Salt Pond owners - \$35 per hour plus \$2 per person. The clubhouse also is available for rent to non-

residents for \$60 per hour plus \$3 per person with a \$100 refundable deposit. A cleaning fee of \$100 is required for parties of 50 or more and also is available for anyone who would like the easier, softer way. There is no fee for any function that is open to all Salt Pond residents. To check on clubhouse availability call Mary Davis at 537-6665.

A Nest in the Willows



Some of you may have noticed a dead willow tree on an island in the Community Center parking lot. Just when we had arranged for its removal, we found a bird's nest in it. After the baby birds flew away, the tree was cut down. Thanks to Dr. Bonnie and Rob for making this happen. Salt Pond volunteers help us cut costs and keep the Salt Pond looking good!

Corrections to the Salt Pond Directory

Dave and Mary Ann Flickinger 302-537-9763; Jim and Lynda Johnson-610-331-4783; Virginia Kelland-302-537-7876; Phillip Gaske-302-529-0610; add Kay to Ed Kness listing, and the entry for Pellozi should read Pat and Al Preziosi, 477 Bethany Loop.

Salt Pond Championship Golf

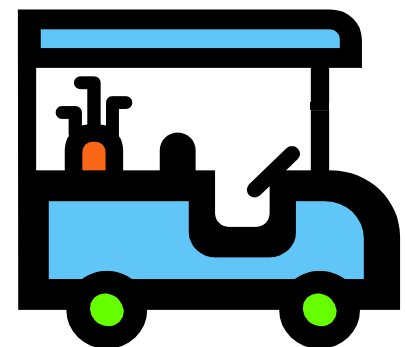
The weekend of September 9 & 10, the golf course hosted the club championship. In the women's division, top gross was Lally Thomas, Sue West and Camille Tighe.

Women's net was Nita Pendergraph, Doris Reese, Barb Freedman and Carolyn Watkins. Closest to the pin went to Bobbi Brown and longest putt to Nita Pendergraph.

In the men's division, the top men's gross scores went to Buck Dunn, Jack Tighe, Dave Moore, Dick Scully, John Shaughnessy, Bob Buckley and Dick Crawford.

The men's net scores went to Dave Watkins, Ken Kolman, Jerry Layton, Neil Macfarlan, Rick Sandifer and Jim Reese.

Closest to the pin was awarded to Dick Scully and Dave Watkins and the longest putt went to Len Kolman and Dick Crawford. Congratulations to all the winners.



Recycling Comes to the Salt Pond



At the August Board meeting, Rich Von Stetten of the Delaware Solid Waste Authority spoke to the Board about availability of curbside recycling pick-up here in the Salt Pond. At the present time, some Salt Pond owners are already participating in the program at the cost of six dollars per month, billed semi-annually. A specially-marked bin, and material-specific, clearly marked bags are provided to each participating household.

All items are picked up weekly on a fixed schedule. This is a voluntary program but if significant numbers of Ponders participate we would be eligible for a reduced recycling rate. For more information please call 1-800-404-7080 or visit the web site at www.dswa.com. Let's all be Delaware residents who care about the environment!

Need a new globe for your outside light fixture? Joe Thomas (539-1114) has one for the taking.

Women's Club News



On Sept 11, the first meeting of the Salt Pond Women's Club for the 2006-07 year was held in the clubhouse.

At this meeting, Gerry Buckley, co-chair, welcomed new members and discussed the programs planned for the coming year. They include a talk concerning issues specific to Sussex County by Rep. Gerald Hocker, a fashion show sponsored by Coldwater Creek, and an opportunity to meet and speak with the new director of the library.

In May, we will sponsor an all day Health Fair for Women including a catered lunch. The traditional Christmas and spring luncheons and the Christmas dance are also on the agenda.

One new project that the club hopes to sponsor is a Welcome Wagon that will give new residents basic information on living at The Salt Pond and in Bethany Beach.

All women residents of the Pond are eligible to join. We meet on the first Monday of each month at 9:30AM in the clubhouse.

Future meeting dates and proposed programs of the Women's Club:

Oct 2nd - Gerald Hocker
 Nov 6th - Fashion Show
 Dec 8th - Christmas Dance
 Dec 11th - Lighthouse Sound
 Jan 8th - Doll Show
 Feb 5th - Bonsai Art
 Mar 5th - Library Director
 Apr 2nd - No Meeting
 May 7th - Health Fair
 Jun 4th - Luncheon/Dunes

Mark your calendars now and be a part of all of the activities of the SPWC.

Board of Directors Meeting Dates

The following list reflects the dates, as currently scheduled, for the monthly meetings of the Salt Pond Homeowners Association Board of Directors for the balance of 2006.

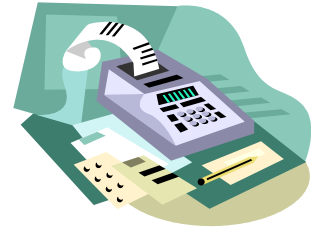
Homeowners are cordially invited to attend the meetings. All of the meetings convene at 2:00 p.m. in the Salt Pond Clubhouse.

October 20th
November 17th
December 15th:



Understanding the SPHA's budget

Recently, the Board had an inquiry about the SPHA budget and the association's legal expenses. In response, we wanted to share some information that puts these legal expenses into perspective. Homeowners associations have two types of legal expenses – 1) those that can be considered routine and 2) those that result from special circumstances.



Routine legal expenses cover those situations where a lawyer's advice is needed for the Board to have the necessary knowledge to handle questions that arise from the day-to-day management of a large (over 500 homes and lots) community, like the Salt Pond, with an annual budget now approaching \$450,000. Issues include those related to review of, compliance with, and interpretation of contracts; annual meeting processes and voting procedures; interpretation of SPHA's Covenants, ByLaws, and Architectural Standards; implementation of rules and regulations; dealing with delinquencies and liens; the rights and responsibilities of the homeowners association, Board members, and individual homeowners; insurance; liability, and other issues related to operating a homeowners association.

These topics come up every year on a regular basis and often more than once a year. Our association lawyer helps your elected SPHA Board handle these issues in a way that emphasizes the Association's and Board's responsibility to the Salt Pond community, minimizes problems, and protects owners' rights and property.

Since 2004, the SPHA Board has needed more legal advice because of increasing activities related to the 1994 Consent Decree (CD), the Conservation Easement (CE), and the Board's desire to reach a final settlement with the developer on the transfer of common areas to the homeowners association.

These activities included:

- Keeping track of the status of the CD to ensure that the Board understood the timing and implications of the pending dismissal of the CD and could ensure that no liability would result from actions taken by the developer during the period the CD was in effect.
- Communicating with the Corps of Engineers and DNREC (the State environmental agency) to ensure that both parties understand SPHA's views on the management of the ponds and wetlands, in preparation for the transfer of these lands to SPHA. In this regard, we have had meetings, walkthroughs, and provided extensive comments to both parties, including a draft of a CE and a draft ponds management plan. We are also working closely with DNREC on the specifics of SPHA's eventual management of the CE property, so that SPHA understands the rights and responsibilities of the association and individual property owners.

- Working diligently on the numerous details related to the transition, which include drafting and review of many legal documents that would cover all aspects of the global settlement through many rounds of negotiations.

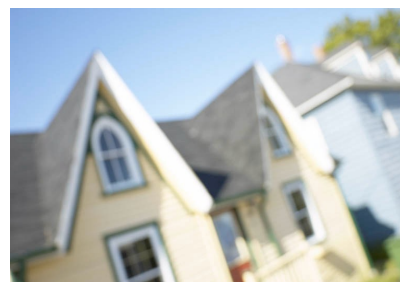
As a result, legal expenses were substantial in 2004 (six percent of actual budget) and in 2005 (eleven percent of actual budget). Expenses in 2006 will also be substantial, as we move to finalize the last details of the global settlement. After 2006, these expenses should decline dramatically. At that time, other expenses, like those to manage the ponds and wetlands, care for the roads, and operate our common area facilities will increase, as we assume all the responsibility for SPHA's common areas.

Recent annual meetings have provided owners with detailed annual reports on SPHA, including financial statements for the last completed fiscal year and the budget for the current year. This information is also provided in the newsletter following the annual meeting. In addition, SPHA budgets for the upcoming fiscal year are mailed to owners in December each year. These statements always include a line item for legal expenses, as well as other budget line items, so that SPHA owners can review these statements and ask questions about the financial statements.

We hope that this article has helped to provide a context for the expenses incurred by the association.

Neighborhood Watch

This summer we had only minor incidents in our neighborhood. However, we should continue to keep a watch for suspicious activity throughout the fall and winter. As you know, daylight saving time ends on October 29th and it will be dark very early. Listed below are some tips on how to make our neighborhood safer.



1. If you leave your home for an extended period of time, please alert your Block Captain or a neighbor. Stop your newspaper or have a neighbor pick it up for you. Make arrangements with a neighbor to put your garbage can away.
2. Please observe your neighbor's property while they are away. If you see something hanging on their door or sitting on the porch, take it to your home until the neighbor returns.
3. If you see that a streetlight is out, please report it to L&N. All street lights have a number on them.
4. All homes should have a visible house number so that emergency personnel can locate your home quickly. This is necessary for the State Police, as well as ambulance service.
5. Please keep your lamppost light on during the night.

Included with this newsletter is a revised list of Block Captains. Please keep this list readily available to report problems. Report all acts of vandalism to the **Delaware State Police, Troop 7, 644-5020**. If you see someone committing a crime, do not confront them but call the State Police immediately. The Neighborhood Watch wishes to emphasize that you should continue to call **911** for criminal emergencies (not Block Captains). A report or call to the Block Captain should take place after the emergency has been resolved.

Fred Hudson Road –Bike/Pedestrian Lane Update

On September 7, DelDOT held its annual workshop and meeting at DelTech, seeking public input on projects for its five year Capital Transportation Program.

The SPHA Board presented a paper that summarized Salt Pond community efforts over the last two years. It explained the dangerous conditions that continue to exist on Fred Hudson due to its use by high-speed traffic wishing to bypass Route 26 to reach US 1 and by cyclists and pedestrians taking the road as the shortest route to the beach. Our efforts have the support of Sen. Bunting, Rep. Hocker and the Sussex County Council.



While there is no commitment from DelDOT, the Director of Planning volunteered to come to the area sometime in the Fall to look at the road. We suggested that creative solutions need to be found, that members of the community are contacting developers and are willing to work with DelDOT and others to find a way forward.

The meeting was covered by a Wave reporter whose report included the Salt Pond comments in the September 13 issue. Letters to the editor from interested individuals can keep attention on the issue. Email address: wave@dmg.gannet.com phone: 302-537-1881 fax: 302-537-9705. Coastal Point darin.mccann@coastalpoint.com phone: 302-539-1788 fax: 302-539-3777.

Beach Area



Attention Please: Please remove your kayaks and small watercraft from the Beach area by December 1st. **After that date, we will assume all remaining watercraft are not owned by Salt Pond owners and consequently they will be trashed.** Next year we hope to build a rack for watercraft storage and set in place a system assuring that only Salt Pond owners and guests are using the area.

Real Estate Trends –The Salt Pond

Submitted by Laurie Shelton and Linda Regan, Long and Foster Real Estate Sales, Bethany Beach

Myth: *The real estate bubble has burst and the next depression is upon us!*

Fact: *The real estate market has been gradually softening during the past 12 months all over the nation and is in the process of correcting itself.*

During the past 7 years, property values were routinely appreciating as much as 50-80% a year. Just as we saw with the boom in tech stocks during the 1990 s,' real estate prices have peaked and it is inevitable that the market must correct itself before the average buyer completely loses their ability to purchase due to soaring prices.



The Salt Pond currently has 34 homes or lots for sale which is over 6% of the total properties in our community. The average asking prices range from \$439,000 to \$870,000 for property with no water or golf course views. For those homes with prime views, the range is \$600,000 to \$1.1 Million.

There have been nine homes sold in 2006 as follows:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Sold For</u>	<u>Days on the Market</u>
34 Jeremys Branch	\$470,000	8 months
12 Topsail Village	\$449,900	1 year
15 Topsail Village	\$479,900	4 months
257 Oyster Shell Cove	\$485,000	10 months
21 Mainsail Village	\$444,000	5 months
664 Bethany Loop	\$550,000	8 months
12 Skipjack Village	\$510,000	5 months
13 Skipjack Village	\$510,000	6 months
1 Mainsail Village	\$419,000	4 months

The National Association of Realtors is now forecasting a national median price appreciation of about 5.3% a year –down from 12.4% in 2005.

Unfortunately, Sellers need to reduce their expectations of what price their home will command. Here in Southern Delaware, the glut of new construction is one prime factor that has caused the price of property re-sales to go down, and has also caused homes to stay on the market for a much longer period of time. However, if your home is affordably priced---it will sell!

Ponds and Wetland



The Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control (DNREC) has agreed to accept the responsibility for assuring that the Conservation Easement Area (most of the pond and wetlands common areas within the Salt Pond Development) will be retained and maintained forever in its natural, scenic, open water and wetland condition. The Salt Pond Associates are currently obligated to maintain the conditions set forth in the Conservation Easement and that

obligation will be passed on with any transfer of ownership of the lands, such as the transfer of the common lands to Salt Pond Homeowners Association.

Your SPHA Board, Ponds and Wetlands Committee, our attorneys and our environmental consultant have been actively involved in protecting against any pass through of liabilities and unreasonable requirement to the homeowners in the future. Since we will have to work closely with DNREC on these issues after the transition is complete, we have been establishing lines of communications and understanding with DNREC for mutually managing the ponds and wetlands.

We hope the above activities can be completed by early 2007. One of the challenges of the conservation easement will be educating the homeowners on the implications for them regarding what they can do and not do on the easements. In preparation for this transition the Board and Ponds and Wetland Committee plan to setup meetings and mailings for communicating to the homeowners the details of the above transactions. One such communication will be explaining the surveyor monuments and signs you may have seen being installed by SPA to delineate the boundaries of the conservation easement area.

Since we are entering a new phase of the ponds and wetlands work, we will need to structure the duties of the Committee to address these needs. We would like to have volunteers to do the following;

- A person to be on the SPHA Board and be the Chairperson for the Ponds and Wetlands Committee,
- At least one person to handle the communications with the homeowners.
- At least one person to work with Legum and Norman, the property manager, to enforce the conditions set forth in the easement,
- At least one person to work with the environmental services company (currently Envirotech)
- One person to interface with the attorneys and DNREC.

Please contact Dick Register (302-537-0240) if you are interested in any of these positions or if you know of anyone that maybe interested.

Salt Pond Roads Assessment

In June 2006, Kercher Engineering, Inc. completed an evaluation of the roads within the Salt Pond Development and provided a report of their findings. The report describes two evaluations and a preliminary cost estimate for improvements needed, including resurfacing.



A visual condition survey found that some crack sealing is needed and several areas require patching to remove cracked pavement. An estimate of the quantity of materials to correct the problems is also provided in the report.

An analytical evaluation of the pavement's load-carrying capabilities was performed to determine if the pavement has adequate structural capacity to provide a reasonable level of service for the next 15 years. Findings indicate that the pavement is not structurally adequate and requires a pavement overlay to provide additional structural capacity. An estimate of the quantity of material to provide a 1½" thick overlay is provided.

Estimated cost of improvements is \$490,000, based upon doing all the streets at one time. If project is broken up into phases, the costs will increase. Kercher emphasizes that these are preliminary estimates.

In Kercher's opinion, Bethany Loop and McCoy's Way are in the worst condition and have 2-4 years of remaining life before reconstruction is required. The remaining streets have about 4-6 years of remaining life. Kercher recommends that Bethany Loop and McCoy's Way should be rehabilitated as soon as possible. The remaining streets should be repaired within the next 2-3 years.

The SPHA Board will be presenting a plan to address the timetable, financing, bid process, and start date for resurfacing of the roads.

Attention Exercise Enthusiasts: We are investigating starting a gentle 'Yoga class that would meet at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesdays. We will need at least six (6) people expressing interest in order to form the class. We need that many to be able to offset the cost of an instructor. The cost will be \$5.00 per session. If you are interested, please contact Shirley Hudson on 539-0732 or Rosie Marks on 539-2901.



HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION'S MEET

A meeting of representatives from fifteen area homeowners associations was held on September 13th at the Southampton Clubhouse. The purpose of this organization is to share information of mutual interest to association members. This meeting featured a spokesman from Beebe Medical Center to talk about the South Coastal Health Center to be built on Route 26 within the next two years. The initial building will contain 20,000 square feet on one level with plans to expand, as demand requires. \$3.7 million is being sought from contributions in order to get matching funds from the State and Beebe. A capital campaign will start this fall. We were told that the emergency "summer only" facility near the Food Lion will be redesigned to add imaging and lab departments and next year will be open on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays during the off-season for walk-in care. Salt Pond will host a meeting of this group in January.

Farewell to Summer Party

On Sunday, September 10th, the Salt Pond Homeowners Association sponsored "A Farewell to Summer Party", a 5 to 7 p.m. get-together for the community at the Clubhouse. Beer, Wine and cokes were furnished by SPHA, while partygoers contributed a delicious array of appetizers and desserts. About seventy-five people attended and enjoyed reuniting with their neighbors. Thanks to Gerry Buckley, Dave Flickinger, John Gilsean, Nancy Gunn and Carolyn Watkins for setting up. Thanks also to Lawrence Anfinson and Chris Brown for helping with the clean up. The Butterfly Committee, headed by Karen Zarycki, Cynthia Headman, and Carolyn Watkins, will be scheduling similar events in the near future.

Continuing Activities	
Water Aerobics * (fee required see below) • 8:00 a.m., Monday through Friday • Contact: Jan Shaeffer (537-4678)	Low Impact Aerobics • 9:00 a.m., Fridays
Yoga Classes • 9:15 a.m., Mondays • 9:00 a.m., Wednesdays	Book Club • 7 p.m., 2 nd Tuesday of each month Contact: Nancy Gunn (537-4355)
Party Bridge • All levels of play, just for fun! • 2:00 – 5:00 pm, 2 nd & 4 th Mondays • Contact: Nancy Gunn (537-4355)	Duplicate Bridge • Get Masterpoints ACBI Sanctioned • 10:00 a.m. – 4 p.m., Tuesdays Contact: Beth Mallon (539-5225)
Couples Golf • 2:30 p.m., Thursdays • 9 Hole Scramble followed by Potluck at Community Center • Must call Pro Shop to register • Contact: Mark Hopkins (537-6764)	Ladies Golf • 8:00 a.m., Wednesdays • 9 Holes • Must call Pro Shop to register • Contact: Carol Calhoun (537-9933)
* \$5 per day, \$20 weekly, or \$40 monthly	

Salt Pond Homeowners Association
 C/O Legum & Norman
 C4 Edgewater - Sea Colony East
 Bethany Beach, DE 19930

Salt Pond Homeowners Association Board of Directors	
<i>President</i>	
Bev Thierwechter	537-4757
<i>Vice President</i>	
Don Praisner	539-6816
<i>Secretary</i>	
Gerry Buckley	539-2342
<i>Treasurer</i>	
Bill Shepard	541-9252
<i>Member</i>	
Katherine Coulson	539-3935
<i>Member</i>	
Dick Crawford	539-2450
<i>Member</i>	
Ken Dunn	539-0593
<i>Member</i>	
John Gilsenan	539-5873
<i>Member</i>	
Bill Kester	539-3939

Salt Pond Homeowners Association Committees		
Architectural Review	Donna Villani	539-5100
Ponds & Wetlands	Dick Regester Acting Chair	537-0240
Engineering	Ray Miller	537-6685
Finance	Bill Shepard	541-9252
Insurance	Dick Crawford	539-2450
Landscaping	Louis Herndon	539-9452
Recreation	No Chair Assigned	
Community Center	Mary Davis	537-6665
Rentals	Anne Allen	541-0954
Transportation	John Gilsenan	539-5873
Legum & Norman	Donna Hemphill	537-9499