



# HOA ADVISOR

*The Official Quarterly Publication of the Preserve at Somers HOA*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Seasons Greetings!

I hope that this newsletter finds you all happy and healthy and enjoying the holiday season!

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce two new members of the Preserve at Somers Homeowners' Association Board. Susan McCormack has joined the Board. Susan moved here just over a year ago with her husband Tim and their two children. Many of you recall that Sue chaired the Halloween Parade Committee.

Richard Zaccaria has also joined the Board as our new secretary. Rick moved to The Preserve almost two years ago with his wife Lauren and their two children. Rick will be taking over the position of secretary from Jay Taylor who has become our Treasurer.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Matt Murphy, our former Treasurer, and Nick Ward-Willis, our former President, for all of their hard work and dedication to our community. We, as a board, hope to continue their legacy of being proactive to the needs of our community.

I wanted also to give you an update on some of the items we are currently working on. We are still working with AKRF Engineers, the Town and the builder in an effort to get all of the bio-basins in good working order without

any defects. We also recently put the landscaping contract out to bid to ensure we are receiving competitively-priced landscaping service. We are in the process of scheduling a meeting with Somers Police Chief Driscoll to discuss some concerns that have been raised about Halloween 2006 and how we can make Halloween 2007 even better. We also have recently revised the rules of the website forum ([www.preserveatsomers.org](http://www.preserveatsomers.org)) in an effort to make the conversations in the forum more productive and respectful.

In addition, we continue to address homeowner issues and complaints as they arise and attempt to reach a resolution in accordance with our By-laws and our Rules and Regulations.

So, we have a busy few months ahead of us! Again, I hope that you and your families enjoy this holiday season and I hope that you have a great New Year, surrounded by those most important to you.

Becky



[www.preserveatsomers.org](http://www.preserveatsomers.org)

If you have any ideas on site improvement, please email:

[webadmin@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:webadmin@preserveatsomers.org)

## ROLE OF YOUR HOA BOARD

In the last few months there have been a number of questions regarding the duties of our Homeowners' Association Board. Every homeowner received a detailed outline of the rules and regulations, along with the by-laws of this association, at the time of their closing. I thought a quick summary might help everyone understand not only the day to day duties but also the decision-making process. We make decisions as a board by discussing the issues and possible solutions. Once the ideas have been discussed, a motion is made, seconded, then voted upon. These decisions are made with the best interest of the community as a whole, regardless of personal opinion. The HOA board is in place to keep our community strong, to increase home values, and maintain it at the quality it is today. Some of our duties include the following:

**Financial:** Our dues add up to quite a bit of money, approximately \$101,520 per year. Your HOA board sets a budget each year (available and reviewed at the annual homeowners meeting) to determine if we are collecting enough money based on this budget. We also decide on where this money is kept. We currently have our reserve monies in safe CD's earning almost 5%. Along with our financial responsibility comes setting policy for the collection of dues, monitoring payments, and deciding if late fees will be charged.

**Hiring Third Parties:** This is a large part of our HOA board responsibilities. We need to hire people to take care of the tasks that make our development run smoothly. These would include; the management agent, insurance agent, landscapers, electrical repair, sprinkler maintenance, bio basin inspections, bio basin repair, bankers and some of the community events we have provided, such as the picnic and Halloween events. The HOA solicits bids for the work, then reviews the proposals and then votes to award the business considering not only the price but the quality of the work. Of course all references are checked as part of the process.

**Enforcing and adopting rules and regulations:** This is the toughest job that the HOA board has. We need to follow up on complaints made by homeowners to the board or management agent. These complaints can be about the board, the management agent, the common area or even another homeowner. Our management agent does a periodic drive through and brings potential problems to our attention then we act on them. These potential problems include exterior construction, pool installation, fence installation, misuse of common areas and any other violation of the rules and regulations that could be noticed during a drive-through inspection. We are a relatively new community and we have modified our rules and regulations as we gain experience. There are provisions in the by-laws to allow for this.

**Communication:** It is our responsibility to communicate changes or updates both good and bad with all the homeowners. This is done through mailings, home visits, e-mails, web site postings and newsletters. We even get an occasionally phone call.

If anyone wants more details please read your rules and regulations and your by-laws. If anyone has any questions on what the function of the HOA board is please contact us via the e-mail addresses posted on the web or in the newsletter.

## SPOOKTACULAR DAY!

The 1st annual PAS Halloween Parade was held on Sunday, October 29, 2006 with much success!

We had over 196 registered marchers and even with a few minor changes due to a day of strong October winds, we had a tremendous turnout. The kids were dressed in their finest costumes and biggest smiles! The activity hour of the parade was fun for the kids and allowed both children and parents to mingle and come together as a community. Many thanks to the Parade Committee, the HOA, the bakers and those who helped clean up the site. Everyone's efforts really made it a good time for all.

Thanks to our many sponsors:

- Preserve at Somers HOA
- Heritage Management Group
- Evergreen Nurseries
- Nationwide Equities
- Westfair Water/Kinetico
- DV North Photography
- Budget Blinds
- Yorktown Landscaping *See you in 2007!*
- Capri Album Company
- Somers Sanitation/Bria Carting
- R.F.P Plumbing & Heating, Inc.
- Perillo Tours
- Ace Computer Services Corporation
- Vanguard Title Agency, Inc.



To View/Purchase Pictures, visit  
[www.pictage.com](http://www.pictage.com) & enter  
 "PAS HALLOWEEN PARADE" as event.

## ROAD PAVING

At long last we have finished paved roads throughout our community.

Gone are the days of blowouts, bent rims and leaking oil pans. No longer will we endure the obstacle course of Loomis. Indeed the travel throughout our community is safer and far more enjoyable.

A kind reminder ..... our community is comprised of many families with children who utilize our streets in the course of play. While both Travis and Loomis appear to be lengthy thoroughfares approaching that of an urban highway, the posted speed limit throughout our community is 30 mph, and we would all benefit by exercising self-control and caution as we move throughout our neighborhood.



## TREASURER'S REPORT

Homeowners' Association dues will remain at \$540 per year for 2007. Whereas in the past, dues were assessed monthly. In 2007, as announced at the Annual Meeting, dues will be billed yearly and due in January. Your board of directors approved this change as a way to minimize the amount of time that the board would spend each month reviewing the cases of homeowners who were late in their payment. Historically, the volume of dues in arrears has averaged about \$3,000 and we believe that by switching to an annual payment, the few cases of delinquent payments can be handled more efficiently. In addition, the postage and accounting expense related to billing and recording dues payments should be greatly reduced, resulting in a savings of management fees over time. Residents for whom a single \$540 payment represents a significant hardship can contact the managing agent to discuss an alternate payment schedule.

## CLUBHOUSE FOR RENT

The Shenorock clubhouse (where most of us vote) is available for rent.

What a great place for a children's party... It has 3 rooms, a full kitchen, 2 restrooms, a pool table and a few video games!

If you have any interest, contact Dennis DiSanto, president of their UOA, via email at [coachdisanto@optonline.net](mailto:coachdisanto@optonline.net)

The Preserve at Somers Homeowners' Association is made up of board members and residents concerned about maintaining the quality of life we've come to expect... the reason we all moved to the Preserve.

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

ATTN: Chris Ryba

PO Box 873

Southbury, CT 06488

(800)724-0322

[chris.ryba@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:chris.ryba@preserveatsomers.org)

The dues your association collects are used in many ways, notably:

- To maintain the common areas, including mowing the entryways and common areas and landscaping and lighting the entryways
- To purchase liability insurance for the association
- To provide mailings such as the newsletter, and to support community-building events
- To engage the services of a managing agent to collect and account for HOA funds and to assist the Board of Directors in enforcing the Rules and Regulations
- To provide a reserve fund for the long-term maintenance of the more than 20 biofiltration basins scattered throughout the Preserve with the goal of avoiding special and possibly significant extraordinary assessments of the membership

We appreciate your timely payment of your 2007 HOA dues.

*Happy Holidays!*



All other questions should be directed to the HOA board at [board@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:board@preserveatsomers.org)

### Board of Directors:

**Becky Williams—President**

([becky.williams@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:becky.williams@preserveatsomers.org))

**Ken Bicknese—Vice President**

([ken.bicknese@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:ken.bicknese@preserveatsomers.org))

**Jay Taylor—Treasurer**

([jay.taylor@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:jay.taylor@preserveatsomers.org))

**Richard Zaccaria—Secretary**

([rick.zaccaria@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:rick.zaccaria@preserveatsomers.org))

**Susan McCormack**

([sue.mccormack@preserveatsomers.org](mailto:sue.mccormack@preserveatsomers.org))