

## Fall Cleanup Day

**Sat. 16 October 2021**  
(rain-date: 23 October 2020)

Meet at the Pavilion at 9:00am to:

- Clean the common areas
- Repair & spruce things up as needed

Please join us for socializing and a little work.

Pizza and drinks will be provided.

## **Board of Directors**

Sam Mikitarian, President  
president@refugeatwhitehall.org

Romero 'Ro' Reid, Vice President  
vp@refugeatwhitehall.org

Diane Busch, Treasurer  
treasurer@refugeatwhitehall.org

TBD, Secretary  
secretary@refugeatwhitehall.org

Missy Cordero, ARB Chairwoman  
arb@refugeatwhitehall.org

## **President's Corner** – Sam Mikitarian

Hello neighbors! Since our last newsletter, much has happened in the Refuge.

New neighbors Rob and Michelle Johnson, Bonnie Carr-Mager, Tommy and Lisa Tran, Lee and Amy Worley, Adrian and Tiffany Williams, Josh and Kimberly Menken have moved in. Welcome, all!

Lot 49 has been sold, and the new owner is in the process of planning and building a house on it. Look for construction to begin in the near future.

Social events such as the Progressive Dinner, Music at the Pavilion and a 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic have brought the community together. Thank you to everyone who made these things happen.

Neighbors came together to lift logs off of our dock, re-floor our play fort, repair park benches, and more.

For a small subdivision, we have a lot going on. And there is more to come by the end of the year – so stay tuned.

## **Treasury Update** – Diane Busch

Overall spending is in line with our budget. Aside from an unexpected need to replace the lock on our dock we have fortunately been free from unplanned expenses. Let's hope it stays that way for the rest of the year.

In response to requests and comments from our neighbors, the board has made some budget reallocations for the year. Specifically 1) replacement of the fountain at the rear of the pond has been rescheduled for this year rather than next year as originally planned, 2) landscape improvements in the pavilion and entrance areas of the neighborhood have replaced the installation of a swing set beside the playground. Prior to implementing these spending changes, the board reviewed neighborhood safety issues, general maintenance requirements, and HOA financial responsibilities. After this review we found we could make the changes to our spending plan without impact to any of those topics.

**Board Meetings the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm.**

**Location available in prior month's meeting minutes at <https://refugeatwhitehall.org>**

For more information, contact the board at: board@refugeatwhitehall.org

## **Observations from the Architecture Review Board (ARB) – Missy Cordero**

The Refuge is a uniquely designed and aesthetically appealing community, which we all want to maintain in the same wonderful manner as the day we all moved in. Our covenants are written with the intent to help each of us preserve this community and our individual property values. As property owners or residents of The Refuge you are asked to follow the guidelines in the covenants.

We are all extremely busy, and life balance can be hectic at times, however we are all responsible for the upkeep of our property and our neighborhood. Your board members recently toured our community and were very pleased with the majority of homes' maintenance and aesthetics. We did, however, take a few notes we would like to pass on to you:

- Mailboxes: Several mailboxes require maintenance/paint. (The mailbox Paint color is flat black; the Pole is Glossy Black and Flag is Flat Red).
- Some homes need to be power washed, as well as the driveway and sidewalks cleaned. (This should be done annually).
- There are a few homes that have over grown landscape hedges, and some trees over hanging the side walk. (These items require some pruning)
- Several lawns need to be mowed. (Should be done weekly, not more than two weeks)
- Several Flower beds require immediate attention (trimming, mulch/pine straw), and some beds have an excessive over growth of weeds.
- All garbage cans need to be properly stored (not visible from the street), additionally, place all trash cans and lawn debris out Wednesday evening and promptly return your trash can after trash pickup on Thursday. (NLT Thursday evening for those busy schedules)
- Machinery, lawn equipment, power washers, etc. Cannot be stored or left in view from the street for any length of time while not in use.
- Vehicle Parking: RV's, Motor homes, Bus, ATV, Motor Cycles are not to be parked in driveway or street overnight. (If temporarily required for visiting guests, notify the HOA Board for approval)

Your HOA Board is focused on resolving Covenant Violations with as much understanding and as little intrusion as possible. In some cases, however, the board has no choice but to issue violation letters and/or fees in order to remedy longstanding situations. With that in mind, please be aware that beginning August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Covenant Violation Letters will be issued for non-compliance.

## **An ounce of prevention: Safety Note – Sam Mikitarian**

Though our neighborhood is small and secluded, we are not immune from the problems which seem to go along with living in a larger metropolitan area.

During late spring / early summer, teenagers from outside of our neighborhood began gathering at our pavilion. Several neighbors and board members monitored these gatherings as they occurred. Once the behavior of the group shifted from benign horseplay to louder and more questionable actions, the teens were confronted and told to disperse. Additionally, word was posted via social media so that neighboring communities would be aware of the problems we were seeing. Finally, the North Charleston Police Department was also advised of the situation, and they agreed to increase patrols of the area, which they did for a time.

The end result is that The Refuge has remained safe and sound, awareness has been raised in our neighboring communities, and potential problems seem to have been stopped before they became serious.

Thank you to all who kept watch, kept each other informed, and took action to maintain order in our neighborhood. Please continue being vigilant.

### **Vice President's Quick Thoughts – Ro Reid**

Happy birthday to the Refuge! The oldest homes in our neighborhood are 16 years old. While not learning to drive, our home's roofs, paint, siding, foundations, trees and shrubs have aged. Some of our more "handy" neighbors may take on a DIY project. For the rest of us, as you look to improve, repair, replace or remodel your homes please use contractors who are licensed and bonded with the state of South Carolina.

As our neighborhood matures, our demographics have trended younger with more children than ever in the Refuge. The board is developing plans to expand the playground with kid-friendly equipment such as swings. Please share your thoughts on how we can improve the playground and pavilion area.

Our book exchange is very popular and our inventory needs a boost so please donate your books so others may enjoy a great read too.

We're about to enter peak Hurricane season and Hurricane preparedness is a must. Use the Dorchester County website, <https://www.dorchestercountysc.gov/government/emergency-services/emergency-management/emergency-preparedness> to guide building your disaster supply kits and learn much more about emergency preparedness

Thanks to everyone that participated in our 4th of July – festivities! We had a blast socializing and watching the fireworks provided by Mark Palmer. We've developed lessons learned and plan to make next year's event even better.

Fall cleanup day is scheduled for October 16th. Clean up days offers us a chance to socialize, meet new neighbors and build camaraderie in the hood. We all benefit from the work of volunteers who make these events a success. Even if you can't provide labor, we'll accept your cool drinks and tasty treats. Look forward to seeing you.

Ro Reid

### **Final Thoughts – The HOA Board, Secretary Vacancy**

The position of Secretary is currently vacant. If you are interested in working on the HOA Board of Directors, please contact any board member directly, or email the board at [board@refugeatwhitehall.org](mailto:board@refugeatwhitehall.org)