



Langley Oaks Newsletter

Fall 2010

Langley Oaks Homeowners Association

P.O. Box 681, McLean, VA 22101

www.langleyoaksmclean.com

FAIRFAX COUNTY BURGLARIES UPDATE: Fairfax County is experiencing a rash of burglaries and the police department believes it has a serial burglar on its hands. As of last week more than 100 incidents, either burglaries or larcenies, have been attributed to this person.

The suspect mainly enters occupied homes through unlocked or open doors and windows, and targets money, purses and small items. Purses are usually discarded outside in close proximity to the victims' homes, with only the cash missing. He enters vehicles that are unlocked or smashes a window and takes property from inside that is in plain view.

Residents are urged to make sure doors and windows are closed and locked at home, including garage doors. When returning home, try not to leave purses, wallets or keys near an entryway. In addition, ensure that cars are locked while unattended and that no personal items of value are left inside or in plain view.

Two LOHA Board members attended the McLean Police District meeting in late September and learned how the police are suggesting we increase security in our homes and neighborhood:

- Turn on exterior home lights in the evening and leave them on all night;
- Before going to bed at night re-check that all windows and doors are closed and locked;
- Make sure garage doors are down;

- Take time one evening to walk around the perimeter of your home and look inside to see what may be visible to a burglar, and
- Make sure purses, wallets, keys, jewelry and other valuable items are not laying on your countertops in plain view.

If you hear a helicopter flying overhead during the night turn off your home's interior lights and turn on exterior lights. Keep an eye out for any suspicious activity and call and report the activity **immediately** (not hours later) to the police department, with an account of the person's behavior. If you notice a suspicious person or activity call the **non-emergency police number, 703-691-2131**, and report it. If you suspect a crime is in progress or about to happen, call 911.

Undercover police officers will be patrolling the county, but ultimately, the best deterrent against crime is a neighborhood watch program where neighbors watch out for one another.

LIGHT UP YOUR NIGHT: Many residents have commented, to Board members and neighbors alike, that our neighborhood can be very dark at night. The LOHA Board would like to illuminate residents about a program offered by Dominion Virginia Power to install outdoor yard lighting in single-family home yards of Dominion Virginia Power electric customers.

Dominion provides outdoor lighting services for residential customers within the company's electrical distribution area. All its fixtures are efficient, with high-pressure sodium vapor lamping and automatic dusk-to-dawn operation. Dominion bills for one monthly charge per feature, including energy and maintenance. A variety of features and brightness intensities are available so you can direct light where you want it.

Additional information about the program and fixtures available can be found at www.dom.com/products/product-catalog/outdoor-lighting. Initial installation charges apply and vary based on size, style and location of requested lighting. If you would like to see examples of such fixtures in Langley Oaks, our neighbors at 920, 838 and 750 Ridge Dr. have installed them.

Quality outdoor lighting installation and maintenance is also available

through private electrical contractors. For an example of this type of fixture, our neighbor at 805 Ridge Dr. has one installed.

STORM DRAINS TO BE LABELED AS PART OF EAGLE PROJECT: Braeden Sebastian, a junior at Langley High School, will soon affix markers on our storm drains as a part of his Boy Scout Eagle project. The markers will be placed in an effort to increase awareness in our community that storm drains connect to local water bodies, and we need to be careful about what may run off into them.

To ensure that the entire neighborhood is aware of his project and its significance, Braedan will be going door-to-door handing out fliers that include a brief summary of his project. He will be wearing his Boy Scout uniform during this process so that he is easily identified. He anticipates beginning this project sometime between now and January, and the exact dates will be posted on the Langley Oaks web when known.

THE ROAD NOT PAVED: The LOHA Board has beseeched the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to repave part of Ridge Dr., from Georgetown Pike to the intersection of Ridge and Ridge, which is in especially poor condition after last year's heavy snow falls.

While VDOT recognizes the need for road repairs and has our main thoroughfare on its list of roads in need, it contends that there is no money in the budget for repaving at this time.

In an effort to find an alternate solution the LOHA board got estimates from private contractors to benchmark the cost to repair this portion of road on our own. Sadly, the bids were upwards of \$65,000, so we will not be undertaking this work privately.

John Faust, our district Supervisor, has suggested that we may have more influence with VDOT if it hears from neighborhood residents. As such, the LOHA Board encourages all residents to send information about potholes and poor road conditions to VDOT's online reporting system at: <http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/citizen>. Please let Board member Vinay Bhargava know when you send a message to so he can track contacts and follow up with VDOT.

BELTWAY RAMP CLOSURE ON RTE. 123 N: The right lane ramp from Route 123 North to I-495-North is closed and will remain so for up to two years as part of the Capital Beltway Hot Lanes construction project. Motorists will need to merge to the left lanes on northbound Route 123 and turn left at a new traffic signal just before the Capital One complex. The new turn lanes will allow for a dual left turn to enter onto I-495 North.

CAST OF COSTUMED CHARACTERS MARCH IN HALLOWEEN PARADE: It was a great turnout on a beautiful afternoon as the annual Halloween parade took place on Sunday the 31st. As tradition



calls for, the McLean Volunteer Fire Department led a procession of warriors, ghouls, princesses, superheroes, hippies, animals, and an array of other Halloween attired trick-or-treaters through the neighborhood. The festivities culminated on Briar Hill Court

where hot dogs and drinks were enjoyed by the paraders. A collection was taken, and proceeds of more than \$225 were contributed to the McLean VFD.

STORM POND MAINTENANCE: The Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services is slowly completing its summer-long maintenance work on the storm drainage collection pond located in the common-area located west of the 900 block of Ridge Drive. The dam embankment was repaired and sediment buildup removed. The temporary chain link fence will be removed and the access area will be refurbished to include replacing the two wooden fences on either side of the path.

HIGH SCHOOL PARKING A PROBLEM?: Every year the LOHA Board gets questions from residents about how to get “No Parking” signs posted along their part of the street so high school students can’t park during the school day. If the overflow of student cars is crowding your street and you want to take action, here’s how to get started.

You’ll have to contact the Fairfax County Department of Transportation at 703-877-5600. They’ll work with you on how far down your street the “No Parking” zone can be extended, and provide you with a petition that must be signed by a majority of the residents living in that zone. Once the petition is submitted, the County will send someone out to count cars and assess the situation.

Though the problem seems to reach critical mass in the spring, it’s best to submit the petition well into the school year, but not so close to the end of the year that school is out by the time the county responds. If the cars are not there when the count is made the petition will be denied. However, the county will keep the petition on file and reassess if asked.

STOOP & SCOOP!: To those of you who have joined our beautiful neighborhood this the summer, welcome. The ‘Ridge loop’ is an awesome one mile walk for you and your dog, but, please, remember to be a responsible pet owner.

If you take your pet off your personal property, it is your responsibility to remove his or her feces from **all areas** including: lawns, flowerbeds, between houses, ditches, sidewalks, roads and wooded areas. The removal of pet waste, by law, applies to all sizes of pets from the smallest to the largest – they all leave a mess. Unless it is your own property, no ground is an authorized ‘neutral zone,’ where you don’t have to scoop up the waste.

Even when it is dark outside, raining or snowing you still must pick up after your pet.

Carry several bags when walking your pet (who must be leashed), stoop and scoop and then take the bag home with you for disposal in your own trash container. If you use a dog walker or have guests with a dog please instruct them to always pick up.

For safety, in the evening and early morning don't forget reflectors for your pet and your coat; plus, carry a flashlight to help you locate the pet waste and for added safety.

In addition to cleaning up after your pet:

- Keep your dog(s) on a leash when walking.
- Don't let your cat wander loose, leaving deposits in your neighbors' flower beds.
- Do not leave your dog loose in your unfenced yard to run out at walkers or other dogs passing by with their owners. It is intimidating to the dog on a leash and the walker to have any dog charge out at them.
- Make sure your dog's vaccinations are current.
- Newcomers, be aware that Heartworm exists in Virginia and is transmitted by mosquitoes. Plus there are many varieties of ticks that range from the size of a pin head to the size of a pencil eraser. Ticks can carry Lyme's disease or other diseases that can infect you and your pets. Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of Lyme's and other insect borne diseases.

ANNUAL DUES: The Community Association Institute to which LOHA belongs recommends that every association annually publish its collection procedures for the benefit of its members. Langley Oaks' collection procedure is as follows:

When purchasing a home in the Oaks, the buyer agrees via the Covenants to pay the annual assessment. In December the Board sets the assessment for the coming year, and that amount is communicated to the owners, along with the annual meeting notice, in January. Payment is due by the last day of February.

While almost everyone pays by the February deadline, each year some stragglers need a reminder, which is sent shortly after March 1st. For those whose payments are not received by April 1st, another reminder is sent. On or before June 1st, any accounts still unpaid are turned over to legal counsel for collection.

When necessary, LOHA has placed judgments against delinquents, liens on houses or garnished bank accounts. Obviously such action needlessly consumes time and money, including court costs – so everyone's cooperation is requested.

MAKING CHANGES: All property in the Oaks is subject to LOHA's Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. This document requires that property owners obtain *written approval* from the Architectural Control Committee before constructing or altering any structure, erecting certain fences, or cutting any hardwood trees. Using the form inside the cover of this newsletter, and posted on the LOHA web site, will ensure your request contains all the information needed by the ACC to consider your project. It is strongly recommended that you have the form signed by your immediate neighbors, which can expedite the review process. Mail the form to: LOHA ACC, P.O. Box 681, McLean, VA 22101-0681.

WELCOME TO LANGLEY OAKS: If you know a new family, or if you are a new family, please contact Welcome Chairperson Ron Torrence at [redacted] so he can provide a proper "welcome to the neighborhood." He also will deliver some materials to include the latest Directory, recent newsletters, LOHA documents and the like. This information will also be added to the web site directory and published in the newsletter. Please welcome:

