**January 2024**

**COUNTRY LAKES HOA News**

PO Box 632

Mechanicsville MD 20659

**1st Quarter Newsletter: January - March #12**

**St. Mary’s County Sheriff’s Office –** Suggested all members keep doors locked while at home if possible. Keep automobiles doors locked when parked. There have been a few cases with people going through automobiles at night and people walking into member’s homes. Keep outside bright with LED lighting, lowest cost today. Protect yourself and your property. ***See Something, Say Something***

**Code Enforcement** – The county are checking homes in the Country for automobiles with no tags. It is unlawful to store any automobiles on your property that are not tagged. Any vehicle or trailer that is not for sale, being repaired, or covered must have a tag.

**Lighted Sign Rental** – If you want something stated on the lighted sign at the park. Please go to the website to contact the Event Coordinator to plan for this to happen. Happy Birthday, Happy Anniversary, Congratulations, etc. Sign rents for $5.00 for a 24-hour period and can be rented for up to four (4) days. Members must have dues pay in full. All rentals are at the discretion of the board for approval.

**Dues Management** – The Country Lakes Dues statement is mailed out the first of June and full payment is due back by/on July 1. Any member behind in their dues is subject to be turned over to the lawyer. Once a member is turned over, it is no longer in the hands of the dues manager or any member of the CLHA Board. All concerns will be directed to the lawyer. If you have any questions, please call or email Property Manager. Property Manager will make contact back to you as soon as possible as there is no office housing CLHA Board members.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Cable Fence Line Around Park** - The cable fence line around the playground area will be cleaned up with the weeds being cut back 6 feet from cable. This will make things look cleaner and nicer for all who use the CLHA Park.

**The Board is Actively Looking for Bids to Completed This Task**

**Past Events:**

**Spring Clean-Up** – This event is scheduled for Spring and Fall. So far, the board has not decided on a Spring clean-up date. Anyone who is interested in chairing this event is asked to contact the board to help organize this event. The board will provide the job description along with gloves, and trash bags for the job. This is a fun event that will be taking place for a few hours. If you are a high school student and need community hours for graduation, this is great way to get your hours completed for graduation.

All are asked to keep an eye on the park and neighborhood. If you see anything that looks suspicious, please contact the St. Mary’s County Sheriff’s office (911) so we can keep our investment secured.

**National Night Out** – August 6th, 6 pm – 8 pm,We are excited to have State Police Helicopter Trooper 7,St. Mary’s Sheriff’s Department, Maryland State Police, St. Mary’s County Parks & Recreation, St. Mary’s County Fire Department, St. Mary’s County Rescue Squad, SMECO, USDA, and more. Last year was a big hit with all the organizations coming to share and talk about their goods, and answering questions from the many people that attended. Come on out for hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, desserts, water, and cold drinks at no cost. Kids games, lots of handouts! A good time will be had by all.

*A Hugh successfully night was had by all that came. Many County professionals attended such as State police, Sheriff’s Department, Rescue and Fire departments, Animal Control, State and County Highway, and so much more. Many Hamburgers and Hot Dogs were provided without any leftover!*

**Vendor Fair** – September 7th from 9 am – 2 pm, Will be held on the grounds at the park. Country Lakes Board is looking for Arts & Crafts vendors **NOW** who would like to set up at the park to sell their goods for this event. This is an event to help raise money to buy more playground equipment for the park playground. Please look on the **Country Lakes Homeowners** **Association website** for information on this event.

*Another year! Another Hugh Success! 17 vendors showed to set-up their displays with Jewelry, POSH, Sentry, Wood Working, Foods, Wreaths, along with Axe Throwing and handling swords with HEMA. Many vendors donated items for the CLHA raffle table. Thank you “ALL” who came and supported this event! Look forward to seeing everyone next year!*

**Fall Clean Up** – September 28th, 9 am until (around noon), This event will start at the park as people are placed in groups to clean a designed area. Gloves & trash bags will be provided along with snacks and drinks. If your high school child needs community credit towards graduation, this is a great way to receive community credit. People are needed to pick up trash along the roadway within Country Lakes. All are welcome to help.

*Volunteers picked up 15 bags of trash and debris from our roads. Thank you to the members that came out and pick up in front of their front yards. Thank you as well to St. Mary’s County Department of Public Works for their cooperation and collaboration to assist and support this event. Looking forward to more volunteers on our next clean up!*

**Trunk or Treat** - October 26th, Will be at the park starting at 5 pm until 7 pm. Weather permitting, cars will back up to the ball field and display their decorations from the back of their automobile (if you choose to decorate). About 300 trick or treaters may pass by your automobile trying their best to *“****scare you****”,* or have you guess who they are dress as??? A fire will be in the center also if the weather permits. Prizes will be awarded to the two best decorated vehicles!!!

*Truck or Treat was successful with a whole lot of kids along with grown-ups to walk past seven (7) vehicles with all decorated. The CLHA gave away two awards with Beauty and the Beast, along with Blow-Up Monster receiving the two awards. The fire was burning as the kid’s kick-off the trick or treating at 5 o’clock and continue until the end. Thank you “All” who participated in this very popular event. Looking forward to more vehicles next year for this HOA annual event.*

**Scouting For Food** – WHEN: November 2nd Saturday, from 10am – 2pm

WHERE: Country Lakes ball field parking lot.

WHAT: Non-perishable, unexpired food items

WHO: Scouts BSA Venturing Crew 1785

WHY: To help those in need in our local community

Visit us at - facebook.com/crew1785

*No response from the Scouts to date*

**Santa Visit at The** Park – December 15th, Sunday from 12 noon until 2 pm. Santa will be at the Pavilion to wish all the good children “Merry Christmas”. Santa will have a conversation with each child. Bring your camera to get that special picture of this great event. Hot Chocolate and Hot Cider will be provided.

*Many little ones came to see Santa and enjoyed a candy cane given by Santa along with hot chocolate and cookies. Many thanks to all who came and helped with this annual event.*

**Meet and Greet** – December 8, At the Pavilion starting at 1 pm. This annual Meet & Greet will election the new officers for 2024. Elected are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The board is made up of the four (4) executive board members and twelve (12) voting members at the monthly board meeting. All others are invited to the open meeting but are not eligible to vote. All members have the right to vote at the Annual meeting and special called meetings. To quality for an executive position, you must be on the board for not less than one (1) year.

*The Meet 7 Greet Meeting was called to order at 3:05pm. Five (5) board members were present with two (2) members present. Three (3) board members were not present. E Green open meeting. Annual Treasurer’s Report was not given. Meeting was turned over to John and Jackie Yates, Nominating Committee. Calling for the vote, Elaine Green was Elected President, James Loveless was elected Vice President. No one was nominated for secretary or treasurer. Elaine Green will act as secretary until a secretary is appointed. James Loveless will act as Treasurer until a treasurer is appointed.*

**Home Christmas Decorating Contest** - December 20th – 22nd From 5 pm until 7 pm, the board will ride throughout Country Lakes to select the best decorated homes. All other members are also eligible to select their three (3) best decorated homes and go to the Country Lakes Homeowners Association to the “**President website**” to send in their picks by 8 pm on the 22nd. The President will calculate all votes and the Dues Manger will verify that all picked are in good standing with dues paid up to date. The winners will be posted on the lighted sign at the park showing the winner’s address so all can ride by to check them out.

*The best decorated homes were selected with all votes counted by President and status checked by Treasurer/Property Manager.*

*Winners are;*

*36940 Tanyard Drive – 5 Votes*

*36765 Asher Rd – 4 Votes*

*27090 Mill Seat Rd – 3 Votes*

*Winners were announced on Facebook, and lighted sign at the park.*

**Newsletter** – Will be published January 1, April 1, July 1, October 1. Please send items to PO Box 632 Mechanicsville MD 20659. Please mark “Newsletter” outside on envelope to get to the correct board member handling newsletter.

Thank you and have a Great Winter!

Jim / The CLHA Board