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THE Villager



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myriverwoods.org

Trouble on the Court

Basketball Hoops down – Permanently

The River Woods Board decided to permanently remove the basketball hoops from the Sport Court, due to safety concerns, trash accumulation, and excessive noise resulting from many players coming in from outside the Association.

Earlier this summer, the number of complaints from residents living near the Sport Court began to increase as more and more youths from outside the association started using the Sport Court. These non-resident players left large amounts of trash on and around the court, which the crew had to clean up every morning. Complicating matters is that the police department can be reluctant to come out on trespassing offenses and requires forms and paperwork about specific trespasses before they take any action. So, the Board removed the hoops for several weeks in June and early July, hoping that, as outsiders came back to play and found no hoops, that they would look for other venues to play and party in.

These hopes were not realized. In early July the hoops were restored and within two days, large numbers of players from outside the Association again started pouring onto the courts. At one point, a resident told us, he and his son went down to play and the crowd of players from outside the Association wouldn't let them on the court. On another evening, a nearby resident walked down to the court to ask the crowd of players to keep the noise down, and they not only yelled at him to "F--- off," they accused him of racism and verbally threatened him to the extent that he quickly retreated to his house.

The Board simply will not tolerate this sort of activity. We wouldn't tolerate it from residents, let alone from people outside the Association who have no right to play on our Sport Court. It is clear the Sport Court has become an "attractive nuisance" that is bringing in outsiders who are leaving trash, making lots of noise, threatening residents and causing several nearby residents to call and express fears of these groups hanging around near their residences at night. Hence, unfortunate as it may be for the relatively few residents who have enjoyed using the Sport Court to play basketball, there will be no more basketball at the Sport Court.



What Happens to the Sport Court?

If we don't have basketball there, what will we do with the Sport Court? The Board has discussed this question over several meetings and has considered several alternatives, all of which cost money. We have ideas, but we'd like resident input as we mull over what to do. Please email the HOA office with suggestions.

One alternative we've considered is simply tearing out the Sport Court and the nearby (and nearly totally unused) mini-golf facility. For less than \$10,000, we could remove both and re-sod the area. Another

August Dates to Remember

The next **Board Meeting** will be held on August 20, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in HOA office

The **ACC** meets on August 27, 2024 at 5:30 in the HOA office.

The **HOA office** will be closed August 29 and 30 for Labor Day weekend.

suggestion we liked was removing the Sport Court and replacing it with a covered, open-wall pavilion on a concrete slab. This would obviously be more expensive, but could be used for Association-sponsored community events such as Night to Unite and Ice Cream Socials, as well as being available for residents to use for family gatherings, graduation parties, etc. There could be built-in grills as well as lighting for night events.

If you have other suggestions for using the area, or want to support these suggestions, we welcome your input and will consider all suggestions at Board meetings in the upcoming fall and winter months. Preferably by email.

Insurance Escrow Ending

For a number of years, the Association has been offering residents the opportunity to pre-pay their annual insurance premium by adding money to their monthly fees, and depositing that money until September, when the annual insurance premium is due. The idea was to make the September premium easier to pay in smaller monthly increments instead of in one lump sum in September. It didn't save residents any money — they still had to pay the full premium — but paying a portion monthly in advance made the full payment in September less impactful.

We are ending this program at the end of this fiscal year. The last escrow payment will be in September.

Why the change? Three reasons:

- **Excessive office time required, especially now that we have only one person working in the office.** Because our accounting software (QuickBooks) has no ability to conveniently set aside money from any over-payment, the additional money for insurance escrow had to be accounted for on a separate spreadsheet, with amounts entered by hand and triple-checked, taking a lot of time each month. When premium billing time came around each August, we had to let Kraus-Anderson, who does our insurance billing, know which homeowners not to bill, and then our Association Administrator had to — again by hand — subtract pre-paid amounts from the premium and bill those homeowners separately from our office. Again, a time-consuming project.

- **Low participation.** Fewer than 15% of River Woods homeowners pre-pay insurance with the Association.

- **Anyone can “self-escrow” at their own bank.** You can call your bank and have the bank move any given amount of money each month from checking to sav-

ings, so that when the insurance premium comes due, the money will be there. That is just as easy as prepaying with the Association, and you, not the Association, will get the interest from your prepaid money.

Not Getting Your Mail?

Don't Block the Mailbox

The post office has informed us that if a mail delivery truck can't access a mailbox because a car, a trash bin or anything else blocks access to the box, no mail will be delivered to that box. The driver is forbidden by USPS rules from leaving his truck to deliver mail to blocked boxes.

Night to Unite Set for August 6

Come down to the pool/Sport Court area at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 6 to meet your neighbors and have some tasty brats, hot dogs, chips, and other goodies. There will be a DJ, with trivia contests, music and games as well. City of Burnsville representatives have been invited as well. Please RSVP to annariverwoodshoa@gmail.com by July 30 so we know how much food to order.

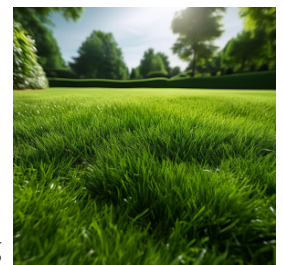
Also, please bring your own beverages and chair, as we don't have enough chairs for everyone.

The Welcome Committee sponsors this annual event in the hopes generating a community spirit among the residents of River Woods. If you'd like to join the committee and be part of planning community fun events like this, please let the office know.



Why Didn't I Get Mowed?

We sometimes get calls about un-mowed areas when people hear the crew running lawn mowers all over the Association. While it's possible that the crew might miss an area, the most likely reason for temporarily un-mowed areas is that the Association is just too big to mow in one day, so there are almost always some areas that aren't mowed until the following day. If a couple of days have gone by without areas around your house being mowed, please send an email to the grounds manager and we'll get it mowed or explain why it can't be mowed.



Which Email Is ‘Official’?

There have been occasions when our Grounds Manager has emailed a homeowner and the homeowner has said they would wait to “get an official reply from the office.”

Emails from the grounds manager and the office are *both* “official replies from the office.” Both the Grounds Manager and the Association Administrator work in the same building and discuss homeowner requests daily, often along with members of the Executive Committee. There is no longer a General Manager to report to. Both employees report ultimately to the Board, with the Executive Committee handling immediate issues on a day-to-day basis.

Responses from the Grounds Manager are just as official as emails from the Association Administrator. Bear in mind that, as owners in River Woods, you can always take issues directly to the board if you don’t agree with responses from the HOA office. To speak with the Board, just email Sarah, the Association Administrator, asking that you be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting to discuss your issue.

Dog Leads Lying on Common Areas Are Not Allowed

Per Association rules, any dogs outside their homes must be on a lead and accompanied by an adult. No dog is permitted to be tied up outside unaccompanied. This means the crew will be instructed to remove any dog leads on common grounds, even if attached to a unit. Dogs found on common grounds attached to a unit by a lead, without the owner or other authorized adult present, may result in a fine against the unit.

Pool Tags to Be Issued by Office

For the remainder of the pool season (which ends on Labor Day), any pool tags or replacement pool tags will be available only at the River Woods HOA office, not at the pool. To make an appointment to purchase a replacement tag, please email or call the HOA office.