

The Voice of StillWaters

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR GENERAL MANAGER, "GRIFF" GRIFFIN

NOVEMBER 2023

A Thanksgiving Message

On October 3, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving on November 28, 1861. This proclamation set the precedent for America's National Day of Thanksgiving.

In honor of the great President Lincoln, who gave us hope and freedoms that we still work for, I would like to issue my proclamation of thanksgiving:

The 2023 year that is drawing to an end, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful gifts and healthful skies filled with sunrises and sunsets that inspire us. We easily forget from where they come, and which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften our hearts in StillWaters. In the midst of our changes in 2023 and the magnitude of work which sometimes seems unending, results have become part of our community's language. Our community is being maintained, the Covenants and By-Laws are being respected and in turn, we protect our homeowners and community.

We are staying within our budget, savings have been found, lawsuits have been settled, the property and grounds are being maintained, maintenance and repairs have been taken care of in a timely matter, and there have been changes to our office staff that offer positive customer service to our homeowners and excitement for 2024. With strength and energy from our board, office staff, volunteers, maintenance, landscape & ground crew, security, and communications have brought us all closer as a community. Our population has steadily increased with kind and goodhearted neighbors. We are thankful for the gracious gifts and good work of each one of us at StillWaters. Even those who have dealt with us in anger have nevertheless remembered we are all part of the StillWaters family.

It seems to me that it is fit and proper that we should all be grateful and acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole StillWaters Community. I do therefore invite the StillWaters Homeowners, our City, State, and Federal Governments, and also those in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November, as a day of Thanksgiving and praise for all the good fortunes that have come from hard work. I recommend to us all that while offering thanks for such blessings, that we care, remember, and pray for all those who are suffering and are feeling the loss of hope and love. To all who wish they were home with their loved ones, to all that

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SWRA Business Hours

Monday 8 am -5 pm Tuesday 8 am -5 pm Wednesday 8 am -5 pm Thursday 8 am -5 pm Friday 8 am -5 pm

FAX: 256-825-2991 Phone: 256-825-2990

Email:

info@stillwatersra.com

Website: www.stillwatersra.com

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Mike "Griff" Griffin

Community

Association Manager

Mike Dean
Associate Community
Association Manager

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR GENERAL MANAGER, "GRIFF" GRIFFIN



(continued from page 1)

go day by day working on a better day, we ask and pray for the intercession of the Almighty Hand to heal their wounds, to restore hope to them as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and Union. Don't give up, you are not alone.

I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as your Community Association Manager and for the StillWaters Board of Directors deciding to add the hiring of an Associate Association Manager, Mike Dean, who has made a huge difference in taking on this role at StillWaters. In closing I would be amiss in not saying a huge Thank You and Blessings to the StillWaters Board of Directors for giving me this opportunity and to my staff for all their hard work on a daily basis; Mike Dean, Associate Association Manager; Office - Robin Ulrich, Shana Ellis, Anita Gardner, Janie Clements; Maintenance – Alan Price, Mike Mattiace, Crayton Vickers, Huey Mettes, Joey Price; Housekeeping - Evelyn Mann; Landscape & Grounds – Jeremy Vickers, Justin Lyle, William Spraggins, Patrick Mooney; Gate – Clyde Ware, Brandy Price, Crayton Vickers, Tommy Thornburg, Levis Gamble; Service Patroller – "Finch" Fincher.

"The light in me comes from the polish and good work from all those around me."

Blessings and Thanksgiving to All.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

November is here with lots of changing colors on the trees and falling leaves on the ground. As this season of Thanksgiving is upon us, I think we will all agree that we have so many blessings to be thankful for and a common blessing we share is that we are blessed to live full-time or part-time in such a beautiful area. Take a minute to slow down and enjoy the beauty of the season and count your blessings.

We would also like to thank the volunteer elves who will be decorating in the next few weeks to make our neighborhood festive for the upcoming holidays. Many hours have already been spent and many more will be needed for this undertaking from these volunteers and from our StillWaters staff to make this happen.

The Board is extremely grateful for the loyal and hard-working staff that SWRA is blessed to have. Their dedication to our community is appreciated as is their expertise and dependability. There have been a lot of changes this year and the SWRA Staff members

have stepped up to make this a banner year. Please express your thanks to them when you see them throughout StillWaters.

The SWRA Architectural Review Committee (ARC) has had another busy year. So far they have handled 209 permits in 2023. This five-member volunteer group is vital to StillWaters as we continue to grow. They are charged with keeping all these projects in compliance with our governing documents in an effort to protect and promote consistency which positively effects all of our property values. Our thanks to Chairman Lee Eastman, Liz Bradford, Drew Heederik, Mike Knight, Perry Shy and Staff coordination by Assistant Community Association Manager, Mike Dean. They do an excellent job!

Your seven volunteer Board members wish each of you a wonderful, peaceful, and Happy Thanksgiving!

SWRA NOMINATING COMMITTEE APPOINTED



The following people have agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee for the next election of two Board of Directors for SWRA:

Tom Nicholson	205-807-5373	Debra Knight	678-215-5115
Chuck Lehman	770-487-6218	John Prophitt	256-825-2387
Claire Kuhn	205-999-0155	-	

If you are interested in serving on the Board or know of someone that you think would be a good candidate, please contact one of the NC members or Community Association Manager Griff Griffin with questions. After the nominating committee reports to the Board, other names may be added to the ballot by petition. Property owners under the 1987 covenants not selected by the Nominating Committee may run for the Board by obtaining a petition signed by a minimum of 20 property owners in good standing with the Association.

The election is for two positions for 3-year terms. The new members will begin serving March 2024 with the results of the vote announced at the Annual Membership Meeting. Remember nominees must be property owners in good standing and under the 1987 covenants.

SWRA BYLAWS, ARTICLE VII NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Section 7.1. The Board of Directors shall appoint a Nominations Committee of five (5) members, two (2) of whom shall be Directors and three shall be non-Directors. The Committee shall be appointed at least 60 days before any members' meeting at which elections for the Board of Directors is to be held. The Committee shall nominate candidates to fill Board vacancies at least 30 days prior to the election and provide that list to the Secretary. No member of the Nominations Committee shall be eligible to be nominated. Nominations of members must be in good standing, and may also be made by petition signed by twenty (20) or more members, in good standing, filed with the Secretary at least thirty (30) days prior to the election.

PINEVIEW POOL



BOAT STORAGE AND GARBAGE ROLL-OUT SERVICE

Invoices have been mailed to all who have a space in the SWRA boat storage yard and are signed up for the garbage can roll-out service. The fee for the garbage roll-out service is \$150 per year for the first can and \$50 for a second can. The annual rental fee for a boat storage lot is \$300. Please remember to send in your payment. If you have not received an invoice please contact Robin@stillwatersra.com.

WHO CAN RUN FOR A SEAT ON THE SWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS?



This article has been published in the SWRA newsletter before to inform property owners about the SWRA Board responsibilities. Please read the entire article if you are interested in becoming a SWRA board member.

There are four different sets of covenants in StillWaters that Board members have to be familiar with. All property owners under these covenants are members of the Association and vote in the board of director's annual election. However, only property owners who own property under the '87 covenants and are in good standing with the association are eligible to run for a seat on the StillWaters Residential Association Board of Directors. There are two seats on the board up for election in 2024. Each seat is elected for a three-year term beginning March 2024.

There are two different opportunities available for a property owner who qualifies and would like to run for the Board of Directors. One is to contact the Nominating Committee and inform them of your interest to run. The other opportunity is to run by petition. This information can be found in the Bylaws Article VII, Section 7.1. This article will discuss both opportunities.

RUN FOR BOARD BY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Each year a five-member Nominating Committee is appointed by the SWRA Board of Directors to find qualified, willing board candidates to volunteer for the board. The Nominating Committee works diligently each year to present the best qualified candidates to the association members. The Nominating Committee is charged to put forth who they have determined to be the best candidates for that year to fill the open board seats. SWRA Board members Debra Knight and Tom Nicholson will serve on this year's committee as the two Board member representatives (as per the Bylaws) and three additional residents will be asked to serve with them.

The Nominating Committee works several months to interview, discuss and review possible candidates. The committee always requests that anyone interested in running for the board contact them for consideration or leave your name with Griff Griffin and he will pass it on to the committee. Any qualified property owner interested in running for election to the SWRA board can contact a member of the Nominating Committee or SWRA Board member to discuss what is required to serve.

RUN FOR BOARD BY PETITION

A qualified property owner may run by petition for the board. The person interested in running for the board must pick up a petition at the SWRA office. The potential candidate must obtain signatures from twenty separate property owners governed by the '87 covenants and in good standing with the association. As of the date of this newsletter, there are about 1500 properties governed by the '87 covenants so it should be very easy to obtain twenty signatures. The petition must be filed with the SWRA Board Secretary at least thirty days prior to the election. It does not matter if a candidate is selected by the Nominating Committee or runs by petition. All candidates' information is published in the newsletter and all names are listed on the election ballot.

Being a volunteer SWRA Board Member is not easy. Each SWRA Board member attends a minimum of two board meetings per month on the first and third Tuesday of each month. There are additional committee meetings, special meetings, phone calls, and social events, all of which board members must attend. Board members discuss and make decisions that will not always be the most popular among all property owners but is the best decision for the community as a whole. Board decisions must also follow what is required in the governing documents within the limitations of these. Being a board member takes hard work, a good bit of time and dedication. Many residents have been contacted over the years about running for the Board but very few are willing to commit to the time and effort that will be required if they are elected. If you are interested, make the commitment and run for an open board seat either by contacting the Nominating Committee.

SWRAGOVERNANCE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT



In 2022, the Stillwaters Residential Association (SWRA) Board recognized the need to enhance the operational effectiveness and flexibility of the current Bylaws. The current Bylaws were last amended in 2005 and contain references to outdated memberships, timeframes, and committees. The Board devised a strategy to focus on the following: identifying issues with the current Bylaws, identifying sections within the Bylaws to be amended, developing specific amendment language, executing an educational campaign with property owners, and seeking formal approval for the amendments.

As part of that strategy, the Board sought feedback and comments from owners through several focus group sessions. Those sessions involved a give-and-take dialogue between dozens of property owners and the Board. As part of those sessions, the Board presented specific justification and language for each proposed amendment for feedback and comments. Those sessions left the Board optimistic, that with sufficient awareness of the proposed changes, property owners would support an amendment effort. It is important to note that NONE of those amendments addressed any increase in the annual maintenance or assessment fees, those are only defined in the covenant documents, not the Bylaws.

Changing the Bylaws requires 60% of the owners' vote, in person or by proxy, at a special meeting. However,

prior to calling the special meeting, the Board plans to execute an educational program through various methods to provide property owners with information regarding the proposed amendments to allow a more informed decision process. This campaign will transpire over the next several months before the actual voting process. Property owners will be encouraged to take advantage of this campaign to ensure any issues and concerns may be addressed prior to the voting process. The Board wants this process to be as open and transparent as possible to ensure the success of this project. As always, property owner participation is extremely important.

The Board would ask that each property owner begin to familiarize themselves with the current SWRA Bylaws. Each property owner should have been provided a copy of the Bylaws in the Welcome Packet provided when you bought property in Stillwaters. If you cannot find your documents, the Bylaws and covenants are available on the SWRA website or from the office.

Over the next several months, the Board will provide copies of the proposed amendments to the By-laws and announce the schedule of events leading up to a Called Special Meeting to vote on the amendments. Please read the monthly newsletters and Eflash messages to keep up with this very important event. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Community Association Manager.

SWRA ANNUAL ASSOCIATION FEE FOR 2024

At the October 3rd SWRA board meeting, the SWRA Board of Directors approved a \$100 assessment for 2023 effective on property as of October 15, 2023. It will be invoiced along with the 2024 annual fee.

The SWRA annual association fee will be set to the current amount plus the *Cost-of-Living Average* (COLA) percentage increase as allowed per the Association documents. The previous annual fee was \$471. The annual fee for 2024 will be \$486.

The annual fee is due on January 1, 2024, and is considered past due if not paid by January 31, 2024.

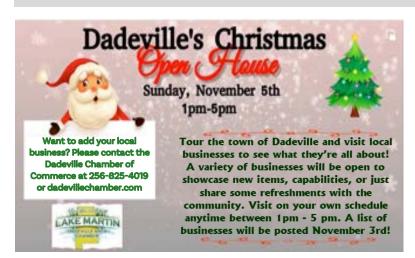
Invoices for the 2024 annual fee will be mailed to all SWRA property owners at the end of December. Failure to receive an invoice is not an excuse for not paying the 2024 annual association fee. Contact the SWRA office if you do not receive an invoice by January 1, 2024.



EAGLE RIDGE UPDATE



The remainder of the house pads for Phase I have been completed along with all of the utilities except for the power. The base for the roads has been installed along with all of the curbing. Paving of the roads should start in early November. The landscaping to replace the trees that were removed from the buffer zone will be installed between now and the end of the year. Construction of the first houses should begin in January 2024. Current plans are to build the houses along Moonbrook Drive first.



Copper's Grill will be participating with complimentary champagne cocktails. Join us and other local businesses and get to know your local Dadeville Community! Sunday, November 5th between 1 and 5 p.m.

RIVER BIRCH COTTAGES UPDATE

Home construction in Phase I continues to progress. Seven homes have been completed and sold and there is one new home currently under construction. Phase I has a total of fourteen lots.



COMING SOON

NEWLY REDESIGNED STILLWATERS WEBSITE

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, it's crucial for businesses and organizations to keep pace with the latest trends and technologies. StillWaters Residential Association is all set to make that leap. Keep on the watch for the formal announcement and launch.



Image by CosmoStudio on Freepik

STILLWATERS SOCIAL CLUB

A good time was had by all who attended the SWRA Social Club on October 26th in the SWRA Community Room. One couple who attended has been living in SWRA for only three weeks and another has lived here since 1994. The SWRA Social Club is for all members. The next event will take place on Thursday, January 18, 2024. Mark your calendar now.

Cleav Peavy entertained us with his beautiful voice and guitar. The songs were from the 60's and 70's. Great songs to sing along with Cleav and even dance. It was so much fun!! Thank you, Cleav!



















A MESSAGE FROM STILLWATERS VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE

STILLWATERS

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VOLUNTEER

Effective immediately members of the StillWaters Volunteer Fire & Rescue Fire District will be able to pay their Annual Fire Dues (or past due balances) using your Credit or Debit card

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STILLWATERS-OWNED LOT SALES

Since the auction in 2003 when property owners took over the responsibilities of managing the residential association, SWRA has obtained ownership of various lots through the "Deed for Debt" program where an owner turns over the parcel to SWRA in lieu of past due fees owed or through "Tax Sale" acquisitions. SWRA is a homeowners' association but not the Developer. Those rights went away at the auction.

Over the years the number of SWRA-owned lots has topped 80! The Board has always offered these lots for sale but has decided to become proactive again in trying to sell these lots to individuals. The sale of a lot relieves the association of paying property taxes and fire dues on that parcel but more importantly changes that lot back into one that produces fees and assessments annually. This is in addition to any money collected on the sale of the parcel.

PLEASE note if you have a tree-covered lot next to you and you want it to remain that way, it may be a good time for you to purchase that lot. Over the years we have found that people often assume that the lot next to them will remain as it is, and they are surprised or upset when someone starts building on that lot. Don't wait until it is too late for you if you want to protect the lovely, wooded area next to you!

SWRA has engaged in a contract with Associate Broker Sealy Hargrove of Roots Real Estate. We are listing a few in MLS at the time. Newly listed are:



- Stagecoach Lots 2,7,8
- Stillwaters Dr Lots 13,14,25
- Bent Hickory Lot 12
- Fawn Lane Lots 5,6,11,16
- Palmer Lots 37,40
- Bambi Ct Lot 15
- Pineview Lot 3

The lot sales program has been successful as we have closed on many already and have offers in the works on a good number of others. This is great for all SWRA property owners!

If you are interested in a SWRA-owned lot, please contact Sealy directly at <u>SealyH@gmail.com</u> or by phone at 334-444-4527.

Please click on the link below or enter the web address in your browser search bar to see the land plats: https://www.flexmls.com/share/9Sy4q/Selected

DADEVILLE COMMUNITY CHORUS TREE LIGHTING

When: Sunday, November 26, 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Where: Pennington Park, 121 N Spring St., Dadeville, AL 36853

HOMESense

The Importance of Fall HVAC Maintenance for Homeowners

As the days grow shorter and the temperatures begin to drop, it's time to prepare your HVAC system for the fall season. Regular maintenance is crucial to ensure your heating and cooling equipment operates efficiently and effectively, providing you with a comfortable home environment year round. Let's delve into why fall HVAC maintenance is essential and how it can lead to significant energy savings.

Homeowners who invest in regular HVAC maintenance save an average of \$115 to \$236 per year in energy costs. Plus, the well-maintained heating systems can be up to 15% more energy efficient. Other reasons to give your home comfort system a little more TLC this season?

1. Energy Efficiency:

A well maintained HVAC system operates more efficiently, resulting in lower energy consumption. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, proper maintenance can reduce heating and cooling costs by up to 30%.



2. Longevity of Equipment:

Regular maintenance not only keeps your HVAC system running smoothly but also extends its lifespan. Replacing heating and cooling equipment is a significant expense, and preventive maintenance can delay the need for a replacement, saving you thousands of dollars.

3. Improved Air Quality:

During fall, allergens and debris tend to accumulate in HVAC systems reducing indoor air quality. Routine maintenance includes cleaning and replacing air filters, ensuring cleaner air circulation and a healthier living environment.

(Article courtesy of edwardsplumbing.com)



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