



Corrotoman Currents

The official newsletter of the Corrotoman By The Bay (CBTB) Homeowners Association

June 2014

Vol. 1 Issue II

Stay Connected!

Sign-up for the CBTB email distribution list to receive newsletters, meeting notices and other important information.

Just send an email to **CBTBay@gmail.com** with your name, lot number(s) and mailing address and you'll be added to the list.

We promise not to spam you!

Want to contact the Board?

Use **CBTBay@gmail.com** to reach them too!

Upcoming Events

Dock Clean-Up Day

8AM, Saturday, June 7th
at the CBTB Marina

June Board Meeting

8AM, Saturday, June 14th
at the CBTB Clubhouse

Pool Grand Opening Party

3PM Saturday, June 21st
at the CBTB Pool

July Town Hall Meeting*

10-11AM, Saturday, July 5th
at the CBTB Clubhouse

**See Pg 2 - Message from President for details*

Message from the President

Here and Now - Moving forward.

By Will Linne, President

I would like to thank the board and the community for all the support that I have received after being elected as your president for 2014-2015. Immediately after being elected I started to consider what I hoped to accomplish for this great community over my term. There were two items came to mind. First and foremost is to establish our neighborhood as a strong, active community where neighbors are neighbors and community involvement is strong. The second is to put us on firm financial footing, not only for the short term but the extended future as well.

I had the fortunate experience of being in the clubhouse office one day, where I found a number of photos taken at events over the past 40 years. I was amazed at how active everyone was in the community. There were parties with 50-60 people or more in attendance. Since last year, my wife and I have hosted a number of really fun events, but yet very few people showed up. Nothing near the "old days". What makes a community great is getting to know your neighbors in social settings. But also it's being an active participant. You actually never know who you might meet at an event who might turn out to be a really good friend. You would have never had that encounter had you not attended the event. There is also another important reason to attend these events. I know that not everyone can make the board meetings no matter what time they are held. I have asked my board to try and attend as many of these events as possible. This is a perfect opportunity for you to "bend our ear" and let us know what is on your mind. Where do you want to see the neighborhood go from here? We represent the community as a whole, but we need to hear from its parts to make sure we are on the right path. As I mentioned in the last newsletter we have heard from the community that communication is paramount. This is just an-

Cont'd on Pg 2



Message from the President - Here and Now - Moving forward. (Cont'd from Pg 1)

other way for us to hear from you and for you to hear what's going on in the community. I will speak to other ways that we are increasing communication further in the newsletter.

The next agenda item that I hope to address in our financial state. This is always a painful topic because it hits everyone where they feel it most- the pocket book. Especially the way the economy has been over these last few years. Since I am your elected representative, I am going to leave this decision in your hands. Everyone knows we have a very tight budget with which to operate within. Our current operating budget is based and funded on 1997 dollars. That is the last time that the annual dues were increased from \$60 to \$80. I ask everyone in the community if they would be willing to take a pay cut from their current income back to what they were making 17 years ago in 1997. That is exactly what we, as the board, are being forced to operate under. The larger pressing issue is that we are actually mandated by the state to fund a Capital Reserve Fund that is to be in place to repair and maintain all capital assets. The actual amount that is recommended as of this year is \$113,000. We do not have these funds in place and are in violation of this mandate. Because we did not have these funds in the Capital Reserve to repair the pool and tennis courts is the reason we were forced to levy the special assessment last year. We just can not continue to operate on \$47,280/year (591 lots times \$80).

Here is some food for thought. In 1997 the national average for a gallon of gas was \$1.23/gal, a dozen eggs were \$1.17, movie ticket \$4.59 and stamps were \$.32. Currently the national average is, gas \$3.71/gal, eggs are \$2.00, movie ticket \$8.35 and stamps are \$.49. So even though our current annual budgeted income is the same amount as it was in 1997, everyone else we purchase goods and services from has raised their prices to 2014 amounts. A perfect example is the cost of fuel. Fuel prices alone have caused the price of mowing to go up.

So this brings us to 2014. Actually 2015. But really 2016. I am starting a campaign to educate, inform and pretty much all out beg for your support in 2015. No one likes surprises. No one liked getting a bill for the special assessment. I can stop that from happening in the future. It is my intention to put on the 2015 ballot a vote to raise the annual dues to fair and comparable rate. A study will need to be done to see what that amount will be. It needs to be an amount that will be able to sustain the budget for years moving forward and so that the board and the community are not back in this same spot in the short term. The amount is not going to break any banks, but YOU will have the final say. By raising the annual dues there would not be a need for another special assessment in the future because our financial house would be in order. I will call for the vote on the 2015 ballot which means, if it passes, the increase would not actually take effect until March of 2016. So please keep informed and ask myself or the board any questions that you may have, but please VOTE YES! in 2015. Over the next year I will keep everyone informed as to the status of the proposed increase.

That is all I have for now. If you have any questions, concerns or would like to volunteer, please contact myself or the board through all the different avenues that we have put into place. I truly hope to see everyone try and come out and support YOUR community, even if it is only at one event a year. I would love to meet you in person, so that you can bend my ear.

- Will

P.S. - July Town Hall Meeting I would like to host a Town Hall meeting on July 5th from 10am to 11am. This is not a board meeting, but is a round table information gathering session. This is an opportunity for the community to come together and let their thoughts and ideas be heard. I am looking for positive, constructive and creative ideas about events, community, and where the neighborhood wants to go from here. Board members may be present, but they will be in the same capacity as everyone else. These meetings will be limited to one hour. I will determine the amount of time that anyone that would like to speak will have, after I see how many folks have something to say. I request that everyone be respectful of others time and keep within the allotted time.

Opening Soon! CBTB Pool . . . And This Year No Fee

The pool renovation is just about done and we look forward to a great grand opening on June 21st. (Just as soon as the pool is filled with water and ready to go, it will open and you can start swimming, but the party will be on June 21st!). A few new things, with the newly renovated pool: 1) No user fee for 2014. Because you paid your Special Assessment to renovate the pool, the Board unanimously decided there should not be a user fee this year. You will still need to fill out a pool application. 2) In addition to a new key, you will need a bracelet to use the pool. Bracelets for each member of your family and two guest bracelets, as well as the new keys, will be distributed to CBTB property owners in good standing. Please complete the application (available at www.corrotomanbythebay.org) and give it to the pool attendant for your bracelet and gate key. Email CBTBay@gmail.com with any questions.

Want to know what is happening?



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Naturally Growing Savings and Beauty

Robert Bennett, Architect & Professional Engineer
Chairman, CBTB Roads & Grounds

Each year CBTB spends approximately \$11,500 mowing our common area around the clubhouse and along the right-of-way of our roads. The major cost is \$8,000 per year spent on mowing the 18-acres around the clubhouse, swimming pool, tennis courts, party pavilion, golf course, playground and garage. Several years ago during a severe storm, numerous trees around these amenities were damaged and removed, but never replaced. As a result, we have a large open field with little shade in our hot summers, that is expensive to mow, and is neither appealing nor attractive. Making this acreage into the perfect lawn would require significantly more expense for seeding, fertilizers and herbicides, the run-off of which will harm the Corrotoman River and the Chesapeake Bay.

Is there another choice? What if we could have beautifully landscaped grounds and golf course that would be a real asset for the community while requiring less maintenance, reduced mowing and lower expenses? How can we accomplish this? Today, landscape architects design in harmony with nature by using native plants that significantly reduce maintenance costs, are better for the environment, and are attractive. These native plants also support native birds, butterflies and bees, and other wildlife, all of which improve our environment. A good landscape plan can begin modestly and let nature do the work to grow into a beautiful asset for CBTB. Our common property acreage can be much more than the barren field it is now. We need to start with a good plan and design so that it can be implemented over several years. The money we save from decreased mowing (and future higher and higher costs of mowing) can be used to offset the cost of low-maintenance landscaping.

It may take time to achieve, but the well-designed landscaping of the CBTB common area will benefit all property owners in CBTB now and for years to come. If you have suggestions about this, please let me know. Let's get a plan and dig in!

Enjoying Nature, CBTB Style

Steve Fuller, CBTB Board Member

I would like to thank people for their vote of confidence in my ability to serve them on the Board. Like many of you, the beauty of the CBTB community is what motivated us to purchase a home here. After a day or two of spring it seems we are into summer! The commons area is beautiful with the buttercups in bloom. So many yards have been decked out with dogwoods and azaleas, and some with bridal wreath spirea, that it has been a delight to drive through the neighborhood. As the tulips and daffodils disappear, the iris are making themselves beautiful, and soon the roses will be all decked out with blossoms. I'm looking forward to another summer of jumping in the creek, although there are a fair number of nettles there already. Hopefully they will disappear like they did last summer, and we can resume our bobbing to cool off. But if not, we will have a newly renovated pool to enjoy! The ospreys returned about a month ago, and a new nest is in a pine tree on the point next to ours. They have been chasing away an eagle, but it comes back to harass them when they catch a fish. We've seen a number of bluebirds, goldfinches, and cardinals, colorful standouts amongst the other birds. The hummers have returned and are spending considerable time dive-bombing each other while guarding the feeders on our deck. One of the functions of the Board is to maintain and enhance the property for the enjoyment of the lot owners and their guests. I will be working to fulfill this objective amongst others, and I hope you will talk with me about your ideas of how this can best be done.

Greetings from the Dock Master, Barry Jackson:

The summer is coming fast and we still have a few boat slips available at only \$150.00 per slip.

If you still haven't gotten your key to the gate, contact me. Please remember all lot fees and special assessments must be paid to use the dock and boat ramp.

We are planning a work day on Saturday morning, June 7th at 8:00 a.m. We need help cutting up some of the old trees that lie along the hillside. If you can bring a chainsaw and trailer.... that would be great! We would also like to power wash the dock, but need someone living close by to give us permission to use their water and outside spigot. Please give me a call and let me know if you can help. The number is 804 466-1097.

Currents Classifieds

Have something to sell or a service to offer? Send it to CBTBay@gmail.com no later than July 15th for the August newsletter. Listings are free for CBTB members in good standing.

Learn Spanish conversation this summer from a CBTB resident who is an experienced Spanish professor. 10 one hour classes for \$100.00. Classes held locally. Please call Maria - 804-462-0429.

Like photography? Have some great pictures of our CBTB community - either old or new? We'd love to have them for the CBTB website. Please email them to CBTBay@gmail.com.



Update Regarding the Special Assessment

By Maria Merkowitz, CBTB Board Member

Many of you in the association have asked for an explanation of the special assessment and how it will impact you and the community. Here it goes:

At a Board meeting held on November 9, 2013, the Board approved imposing a special assessment, totaling \$95,000, for the purpose of funding renovation of the swimming pool (\$35,000) and the tennis courts (\$60,000).

This amount divided by the 591 lots in CBTB means that each lot owner is responsible for paying \$160 per lot (\$95,000 divided by 591). This special assessment was issued in accordance with Virginia Code Section 55-514 which gives the board of directors the power to levy such an assessment if the money is to be used for the "maintenance and upkeep" of areas of the association responsibility – such as the pool and the tennis courts.

On November 30, 2013 the Board sent a letter to all lot owners informing them of the special assessment. While Virginia Code 55-514 states that an association may request a meeting to rescind or reduce a special assessment – this meeting must be completed within 60 days of the time notice of the assessment was sent out. Thus in our case a meeting needed to be held no later than January 29, 2014.

This code section also refers to an association's by-laws to determine the proper procedure for requesting the special meeting. CBTB by-laws (Article VI, sections 5 and 6) require that at least 25 members in good standing (those who are current on their bills to CBTB) must request the meeting in writing, and the bylaws also state that notice of any special meeting must be mailed to all association members 30 days before the meeting is to be held. Because the association's request was not made to the Board until January 11, 2014 there was not enough time (not 30 days) before the January 29th deadline, to hold a meeting. The bottom line is that the attorney hired by the Board of Directors, William W. Sleeth III has advised the Board that the special assessment was properly imposed.

Summer = Social Events!

By Bev Saunders, CBTB Board Member

The Social Committee has big plans for this coming year. We'll kick-off summer with the Grand Opening of our new pool on June 21st at 3PM. Hot dogs and all the trimmings will be set up in our pavilion. Check the Community page of our website at www.corrotomanbythebay.org for more details.

The Board plans on hosting a Fourth of July Party but we're looking for volunteers to help plan a parade, games and food. If you are interested or have ideas, please email us at CBTBay@gmail.com

These two events will be a good start to a great year of community fun. Hope everyone will jump on board and join in. If you want to host your own event (Appy Hour, kayak trip, ice cream social) the Social Committee will be there to help.

Also, we plan to hire someone to clean the clubhouse at least once a month.

CBTB Current Board of Directors

- Will Linne - President - 703-966-6307
- Barry Jackson - Vice President
- Robert Bennent - Secretary
- Chris Naumann - Treasurer
- Steve Fuller - Assistant Treasurer
- Judy Atlas - Board Member
- Roger Failmezger - Board Member
- Maria Merkowitz - Board Member
- Beverly Saunders - Board Member

Email the board: CBTBay@gmail.com

Send CBTB Payments To:

CBTB has retained Kilmarnock Tax and Accounting Services (KTAS) for our bookkeeping services. KTAS manages all finances, billings and payments.

All CBTB-related payments should be sent to KTAS:
 Kilmarnock Tax and Accounting Services
 22 East Church Street
 The Palmer Building, P.O. Box 2282
 Kilmarnock, Virginia 22482
 Phone: 804-436-0829
 Fax: 804-436-0010