



in this issue >>>

Issue 2

Spring 2021

Presidents Message

Updates from the Board

Spotlight on Expenses

Be considerate of your neighbors

Community Projects

ATVs in the Community

Board Member Spotlight

Hearthstone Committees

Clubhouse/Pool Reopening Update

A Hearthstone at Hillsborough Community Publication

BOARD TALK

presidents message >>>

Cicadas, Covid 19 and ATVs

As if the COVID pandemic isn't enough to worry about, [droves of cicadas](#) will soon be infesting 15 states, including New Jersey. See our article on page 4 so you know what to expect.

ATVs have once again appeared on our property now that spring has arrived. The Board recently discussed the situation with the Hillsborough police and have determined steps to minimize the disruption. See the update on page 4

The Board continues to monitor the legal and health requirements for reopening the pool and clubhouse facilities. See our update on page 5.

"Board Talk" is focused on improving communications throughout the Hearthstone Community. Please send your comments to Jim Vonderhorst.

Additional Community Information is at:

<http://www.hearthstoneathillsborough.org>

be considerate of your neighbors >>>

Show them that you care!

Living in an active adult community like ours may be different than what you experienced prior to moving to Hearthstone. Homes may be closer to one another, home lots are probably smaller and yes, there are those Rules and Regulations that we all must follow. Please keep the following in mind to be a better neighbor...

Please complete a Modification Request Form

Modifications must be approved for all exterior work

Please follow the one-way signs on upper Weber (by the "lollipop")

We have had a number of close calls recently due to residents and guests not following the signage.

Please Obey Speed Limits

There are posted speed limits in our community. This is for the safety of all. Please slow down and watch your speed. Be sure to **STOP** at all stop signs. Running through these signs puts you and your neighbors at risk. Remind your guests, and delivery personnel, of the speed limits.

Please Park Considerately

Parking is at a premium in our community. If parking on the street, don't take two parking spaces.

Please Use the Pet Area

When walking your pet, please be considerate of the community and your neighbors. Do not allow your pet to relieve themselves on a resident's property. If an emergency happens on the way to the Pet Area, have them use the common area between the street and sidewalk and then clean thoroughly. All residents are required to pick up after their pets and dispose of properly.

spotlight on expenses >>>

Do You Know What Your Homeowner Fees Pay For?

Since the introduction of the 2021 budget, many residents have asked questions about the budget. In an effort for more transparency, the board will use Board Talk as a means to help the residents better understand the (HOA fees) Community Budget. We all pay monthly HOA fees: single family homes and Condominiums pay \$239 and the Town Homes pay \$294. The higher Town Home monthly fee is due to an added assessment for future roof replacement. Some of the monies are used for items that can be seen, such as lawn maintenance, snow removal, trash collection, pool operation and cleaning of the club house. We also have to contribute monies to our reserve accounts. Reserve accounts will be used for future major infrastructure repairs such as street repaving and sidewalk replacement. All items that have been mentioned can be found in the budget. The budget is available to all residents upon request. Here are some other examples...



Trash Removal

185 families can create a considerable amount of trash in a short period of time. Our community is required to dispose of our own refuse so we hire Republic Services to provide trash pickup twice a week. Our yearly cost for this service is \$30,120.

updates from the board >>>

Architectural Review Committee Updates: Bob Bottini

The ARC Committee is currently working with residents on 6 projects.

Landscaping Updates: Joyce Eldridge-Howard

Spring cleanup has been completed. Stumps and dead trees needing removal have been identified and we are awaiting bids from our contractors before work can begin. 104 trees were identified last year as needing pruning. Budgeting has been approved and work will begin in late June after trees have fully bloomed

Building and Grounds Updates: Don Andersen/Bob Rolando

Belgium block and sidewalk areas needing repair have been identified. (See pink stripping paint throughout the Community) Waiting for contractor bids before work can begin.

Budget Update: Don Andersen/Jim Vonderhorst

1st quarter expenses are within budget but we will need to continually monitor as we enter a high expense season.

Hearthstone Community Manager: Nancy Capella

We continue to monitor, along with our attorneys, the NJ State guidelines for safely reopening the clubhouse and pool in a Covid-19 environment. See our special article on page 5 of this issue.

2021 board projects >>>

Every year, the Board must identify any potential projects for the new year that must be planned for and expensed against the 2021 budget. The Board has identified the following as projects to be addressed for the new year:

- Reopen the Community Center as Covid-19 restrictions are eased
- Reestablish the free Consumer Reports Workshops for the Community (pending the reopening of the Community Center)
- Repaint/Repair the Community Signs at the community entrance
- Update and distribute the Rules and Regulations pertaining to exterior home Modification Requests **DONE**
- Examine Board Election procedures and revise as necessary
- Revise and update a Welcome Packet for new residents **DONE**
- Address traffic issues within the community, possibly with additional signage
- Address utility box issues in the Condominiums; remove arborvitae and revise landscaping as necessary. **PENDING**
- "Buffer" trees replacement per Township Guidelines. **PENDING**
- Determine if a new Capital Reserve Study is needed and proceed as

Depending on the needs of the Community and our budget, projects may be added to or deleted from this list during the year

Your 2021 Hearthstone Community Board Members

Jim Vonderhorst	President
Joyce Eldridge-Howard	Vice President
Don Andersen	Treasurer
Bob Bottini	Secretary
Bob Rolando	Trustee
Nancy Capella	MEM Property
	Mgmt.

Did You Know?

Installation of a "Ring" doorbell/camera DOES NOT need a Modification Request

coming soon >>>

Welcome Packet for our New Residents

board member spotlight >>> joyce eldridge-howard

Joyce has been a resident of the Hearthstone community since August of 2007. She has served on the Hearthstone Board for three and a half years and is currently vice-president. Joyce has one loving son, named Michael who's a financial advisor. Joyce began her career as an elementary teacher at all levels and then served as a gifted/talented coordinator, guidance counselor, VP, Principal and Director of Elementary Education. Joyce retired after serving 40 years. After retirement, Joyce created an educational consulting business for ten additional years.



Thinking of replacing landscaping? (or any exterior modification)

Contact Nancy for a Modification Request Form, complete and submit your request. Installation may begin AFTER receiving approval from the Architectural Review Committee

Upcoming Meetings

The next Executive Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 26th at 1:00pm

Our next open Community Meeting has not been scheduled as yet. Details will follow.

Would you like your birthday to be recognized in "Board Talk"?

Send your name and date of birth to Bob Bottini at:
zajsara04@icloud.com

The cicadas are coming!



As if the COVID pandemic isn't enough to worry about, **droves of cicadas** will soon be infesting 15 states, including New Jersey. This phenomenon, referred to as Brood X, will see trillions of the insects emerge from the ground. The event only occurs every 17 years, and it's nearly upon us again.

Michael Raupp, PhD, professor emeritus of entomology at the University of Maryland, told ABC News, if you have an insect phobia or even just a distaste for bugs, you may want to consider leaving town or staying inside during the reemergence. "There will be spectacular numbers of cicadas emerging very heavily," Raupp said. "I tell people, look, if you just can't bear this, just get out of town for a few days." If you do want to plan a getaway, aim for the end of May and the beginning of June, as that's when Raupp predicts the height of cicada activity. However, the expert insisted they're not something to be afraid of.

Raupp wants people to understand that cicadas "aren't going to bite their pets, they're not going to harm their cats and dogs, they're not going to carry away small children like the monkeys in *The Wizard of Oz*."

Once the cicadas emerge, they will head straight for the treetops to mate, which involves the males creating raucous sounds to attract their partners. After the cicadas meet their matches, the females seek out a tree branch to lay their eggs. According to Raupp, they tend to opt for younger trees, and if the creatures shack up in a young tree, it could cause the branches to snap. **He suggests protecting trees that were planted in the fall with 1-centimeter netting. And don't even bother planting new trees this spring—hold off until autumn.**

ATVs in the community

After a conversation with the Hillsborough Police Department, the Board will be taking the following actions to assist the police in their efforts and minimize the ATV concern in the community, primarily behind the Steele Condos:

1. Write a letter to the Hillsborough Police Department reinforcing that Hearthstone is private property and we do not want, nor condone, ATVs on our property. The letter will also reiterate that we fully encourage the police to enforce all no trespassing laws on our property.
2. Erect additional "No trespassing" signs in the area of the property in question

We agree with the Hillsborough Police Department that these steps will not guarantee elimination of the problem but should, when combined with increased awareness and surveillance by both the police and homeowners, decrease the number of ATV violations.

PLEASE REMEMBER: For the police to enforce Hillsborough ordinances preventing the use of ATVs on private property, officers must observe the act in question. You, the resident, should always call the Hillsborough Police when you see ATVs on the property.

clubhouse/pool reopening update >>>

Current Situation as of April 30th:

1. Insurance Companies are still not covering Covid related lawsuits which puts all of the financial risk on the Association. In other words, a covid related lawsuit, win or lose, would be an expense against each of us as members of the Association. **This is the Board's primary concern.**
2. Governor's executive orders and Health Department requirements for homeowner associations have not changed since this time last year. Opening of the pool and/or any part of the Clubhouse would require us to spend a significant amount of non-budgeted money (possibly requiring the need for a special assessment or increase in monthly dues) to meet the following requirements:
 - Face masks required except when in pool
 - 6 foot social distancing must be enforced; patio would have to be taped off.
 - Sanitizing of pool furniture or pool users would have to bring their own furniture. Limit capacity (50%) (?)
 - Availability and regular use of use of hand sanitizer
 - Signs placed in pool area specifying requirements
 - Must have an on-site "Ambassador" to check people in and enforce rules and regulations (approx. cost is \$30-35 an hour) (Approximately \$20,000) (NO Volunteers are allowed)
 - Restrooms must be sanitized periodically during pool usage
 - A scheduling process /software would have to be acquired for pool, tennis, bocce, etc.
 - Additionally, the Hearthstone Board may require users to be vaccinated, restrict access to homeowners and their spouses only and limit pool hours of operation.

Since, the Board has primary responsibility to ensure the financial health of the Community for all homeowners, we have decided to keep the pool and Community Center closed at this time.

However, the Board will be taking the following actions:

1. Assuming that Insurance Companies will continue not to cover Covid related lawsuits, **we will be asking all homeowners to vote on a change to our Association by-laws to include a "Tort Immunity" Clause. If passed by two-thirds of our homeowners,** Tort Immunity would grant immunity to the Association for Covid related lawsuits unless there is gross negligence by the Association. In other words, even with this change in our by-laws, we would still have the expense of following all of the health requirements listed above. **Watch for additional communication within the coming weeks.**
2. Contact our pool company to determine the exact cost of having them provide the personnel, equipment and materials to meet the health requirements listed above. This information will assist the Board in making future reopening decisions.

The Board appreciates your co-operation during these difficult times. Keep in mind that we are committed to following all regulations that will keep everyone safe and ensure the financial health of the Community. If you hear of other communities that have decided to open their amenities, they are taking a significant risk in the event of a lawsuit and may be assessing their homeowners increased fees to cover the costs of Health Department requirements.

Your Healthstone Board will not do either under the current circumstances.

Please contact a Board Member or Nancy if you have any questions.

condo corner >>>

Your 2021 Hearthstone CONDOMINIUM Board Members

**Rob Kenific
Kathleen Perl
Jan Senese
Thelma Emory
Donna Lutzky**



hearthstone committees >>>

All residents are welcome to join the various committees that our community has to offer. If you would like to know more about the committees in Hearthstone or become a member, please contact Nancy or the following contact numbers:

Committees	Contact
Social Activity	Thelma Emory (908) 359-6223
Knitting	Fran Cavagnaro (908) 359-5282 Ilona O'Sullivan (908) 428-6328
Book Club	Joan Ebersbach (908) 428-4857
<u>Mah Jongg</u>	Contact Clubhouse Office if Interested (908) 359-1102
<u>Bunco</u>	Contact Clubhouse Office if Interested (908) 359-1102
<u>Bridge</u>	
Summer Water Aerobics	Joan Kathenes (908) 829-4055
Architectural Review (ARC)	Bob Bottini -Chairman Rich Schaefer Walt Vestea Tom Cavagnaro Bob Wollenberg
Alternate Dispute	Nancy Capella, Info
MEM Property Management	
Headquarters: 65 Challenger Road, Suite #320, Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660	
Phone: 201-798-1080 Fax: 201-798-8588	
Emergency Number: (800) 506-3360	



**All Social Events and planned meetings at the Clubhouse
are postponed due to Covid-19 until further notice**

Knitting (crochet, needlepoint, etc.) meets in the Clubhouse. We offer to teach those who want to learn how to knit or crochet. (Call Ilona (908)359-5282 or Fran (908)428-6328).

Bridge meets in the Card Room. Join us Tues. from 7PM to 9PM.

First Thursday of the month at the clubhouse 7PM to 9PM

Book Club Meets via ZOOM - The purpose of the club is to enlighten our members and get them out of their "comfort zone" with their "normal" type of book they read. You'd be surprised how many other types of books you may like. Join us for stimulating discussion about a new book every month. The group, led by Joan Ebersbach, discusses the book we've read during the last month and chooses a new book for the following month.

