

September 6, 2016

Greetings, Bluff Creek Homeowners and Neighbors,

Our Homeowners Association Board met on August 24 for its quarterly meeting, and we thought you would be interested in the following updates.

1. Our New Website: Please visit our new site at www.bluffcreekestates.org. We plan to regularly update this site with useful information, including minutes from recent meetings and the neighborhood directory. Because it has personal contact information, it is password protected with the following password: [EMAILED TO HOMEOWNERS]. If you haven't signed up for the neighborhood directory, or if you haven't let us know if you prefer electronic or print communication, you can enter that information there. Please let us know, via our e-mail address at the end of this newsletter, if you have suggestions to improve the website.
2. Amendment to the Covenants: Attached with this memo, please see the amendment we plan to discuss at our Fall meeting, October 26th at 6:00 at the Cattlemen's Association Building, open to all in the Bluff Creek Homeowners Association. As we have presented at previous meetings, we hope this will allow more clarity and flexibility regarding the process of new construction, additions, or other property changes. We will circulate a draft of the Architectural Guidelines with the mailed meeting announcement as well.
3. The Lake: The fountain function has been more reliable recently, but still needs to be shut off periodically when solid material clogs the intake. There are funds budgeted for a replacement if necessary, and we are obtaining estimates. Also see below about shutting the fountain off in the winter. The algae treatment this summer was more successful, but did require an extra session. Predicting the level of algae abatement that will be needed, while staying close to our budget, is an important task of the Board every year.
4. The Geese: A nest collection earlier in the year was partially successful, but we're sure you've noticed that a couple of families are still calling the Lake home. The geese have been aggressive toward people and pets, and their waste is an unwelcome feature around the Lake. We have discussed the situation in person with a representative of the Missouri Conservation Department, who shared some tips to drive the geese away. There are no laws against harassing geese, and we prefer chasing them away over the alternative (a Department-run goose "roundup" in June/July leading to goose burgers). Although aggressive, geese are not equipped to inflict direct harm – injuries occur when people try to avoid geese and fall, run into trees, etc. First and foremost, PLEASE DON'T FEED THE GEESE. We want them to find a friendlier place to live. Also per the Department's recommendations, the fountain will be removed for the winter, allowing a more thorough freeze. Several members of the Board are forming a Goose Harassment Squad, so let us know if you would like to join. Exciting radio-controlled boat and drone opportunities may be available. Also let us know if you have had specific unpleasant encounters with the geese, or if you have tried to drive them away before. The Conservation Department requires us to record all of these episodes before they agree to a roundup.

5. Fishing: Continuing with Lake issues, please don't fish there. One of the "No Fishing" signs was uprooted and removed, but just because the sign isn't there, it's still not OK. Between the chemicals to kill the algae, the chemicals to grow the grass, the concentration of goose poop, and fall risk, it's just not a good idea.
6. Lot at Chinaberry and Lacewood (northwest shore of the lake): The Board is aware that this has become an eyesore, and we and Community Association Management remain in frequent contact with the owner and builder about starting construction or at least pulling the stumps and cleaning up. We presented them with a September 30 deadline to remove the stumps and weeds, to reseed with grass, and generally make the plot more presentable while awaiting construction. We recently received word that they plan to comply with that deadline.
7. Traffic Calming: Requests have been filed with the City of Columbia for the traffic monitoring and data collection required before any action can be taken on Chinaberry Drive. Such action could include additional signage and "speed humps" (flatter than full speed bumps). Please be considerate and mind the 25 MPH speed limit.
8. Bluff Creek Drive Entrance Fountain: Atkins continues to work on this, and it has been operational lately – although it has a leak somewhere that they are trying to locate.
9. Oceans Behavioral Health: CenterPointe's Certificate of Need for a 72 bed general psychiatric hospital in North Columbia was approved, and the start of construction on this facility (scheduled to begin in 2017) would strongly discourage Oceans from building in our neighborhood. Meanwhile, Oceans' appeal of their CON denial continues, and several Bluff Creek residents (including two Board members) continue to be involved in the opposition to Oceans' efforts.
10. Trail connection: We'll keep you updated on the eventual connection to the Grindstone Creek Trail at the north end of Bluff Creek Drive, but we hope you've had a chance to access the Trail at other points and enjoy it.
11. Fall Garage Sale: Dates are Friday September 30 and Saturday October 1.
12. Thanks: ...to Joanne Macher for a fun afternoon at her pool on August 7! We had about 20 folks enjoy a nice BBQ pool party.

The Board is always happy to hear and respond to homeowner observations and concerns. First calls should be to Pat Bess at Community Association Management (CAM), 573-499-4445. You can also email bluffcreekestates@gmail.com (will be automatically forwarded to each Board member and CAM).

If you don't hear back from either Pat's office or the e-mail above in a timely manner, try Erik L at 573-268-6219, or Dave S at 573-864-6401. Please remember that no one Board member can unilaterally make decisions or speak on behalf of the Board or the Association.