

November/December 2009

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

co-op-er-a-tive

adj.

1. Done in cooperation with others: a cooperative effort.

2. Marked by willingness to cooperate; compliant: a cooperative patient.

n.

An enterprise or organization that is owned or managed jointly by those who use its facilities or services.

We all know that "Cooperative" has several meanings. When I first moved to Vail's Grove 11 years ago, I used to say, "My house is co-oped." Sounds like a military state or a legal institution, right? Not necessarily something you'd want to live in. I never thought about what it meant to live in a "Cooperative" and did almost nothing to recognize I was part of one. Then a few years ago, I joined the Aesthetics Committee and met some really nice people who were always doing good things for our community. The next thing I knew I was elected to the Board of Directors and today I am its Chairperson. Who knew?

I know I am not unique in this experience. Many people move here, some have even lived here a very long time, and, don't get involved in our Cooperative. It is completely understandable because we all just bought houses in a nice neighborhood, right? However, we are all part of something bigger. We pay Common Charges for the services we receive and we learn to live by the Rules & Regulations that keep our community safe, beautiful and well, yes, "cooperative."

Without the hard work and dedication of volunteers, we would not be getting a sewer system nor would we have this chance to save our beautiful Peach Lake. Having volunteers in our Cooperative also means we can keep our costs down. Our Board of Directors and all of our Committee Chairs and members are people who are volunteering their time and, often, their professional expertise to benefit the rest of their Community. We need more people to do that, plain and simple.

So, during this holiday season, when you are counting your blessings, please think about the one that is Vail's Grove Cooperative and find a way you too can contribute to our overall well-being.

On behalf of the Vail's Grove Board, our Committee members, and our wonderful staff, Cindy and Jay, I wish you all a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

Victoria Desidero

Peach Lake Coalition Groundbreaking: An Earth-Shattering Success!!

Tom Duffy, Chairperson of the Peach Lake Coalition, spoke to more than 150 attendees at the Vail's Grove Pavilion on Nov. 21, with Peach Lake providing the sunset lit scenery. Robert Gregory led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a Thanksgiving Blessing by Monsignor Moore of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Reverend McKeon of St. Lawrence O' Toole Roman Catholic Church and Pastor Rick Julian of Brewster First Baptist Church. Rev. McKeon blessed the lake and then sprinkled the Peach Lake water on the attendees.



To this point, the project has received more than \$19 million in grants, \$3 million in low interest financing and another \$4.4 million in financing is expected. US Congressman John Hall presented the community and Southeast Town Supervisor Michael Rights and North Salem Supervisor Warren Lucas with additional checks totaling almost \$7 million in Federal Stimulus Funds as managed by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation. State Senator Vincent Leibell presented both towns and the Peach Lake Coalition with Proclamations, naming the day: "Peach Lake Preservation Day."

More than 20 shovels were handed out to deserving leaders for the groundbreaking ceremony.

The party was held inside the pavilion, beautifully decorated by Diane Bamford and Pat Butler and our own Jay Moore. Cindy Battreal helped with the covered dish entrees provided by the community as well as hors d'oeuvres donated by 121 Next Door. Charlie Voelkl made this a real class affair with the white lawn chairs and linen table cloths. For more on this event, please see Peggy Boyle's story enclosed.





The Vail's Grove Christmas Party will be on Saturday, December 19, 2009 from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Please join your friends and neighbors for this festive event. There will be fun Holiday activities for the kids, dinner, DJ and dancing; and, **OF COURSE...** the arrival of SANTA who will hand out parent provided, wrapped gifts to all the little kiddies. Tickets are on sale at the Co-op office from December 4th through December 14th, and are \$10 per adult, \$3 per child. Children 3 and under are free.



Our Neighbor's News

Our best wishes to Helen Vail for a speedy recovery and our condolences to Jim Burns on the passing of his Father, James Lloyd Burns.



Vail's Grove Cooperative Holiday Cookie Exchange

Take a Break from the Holiday Rush and share in the Christmas Spirit with old and new friends on Sunday, December 6, 2009, 3 PM
Vail's Grove Pavilion
RSVP Meghan Cassidy
meghanacassidy@comcast.net
Adults only please

WANTED:

Someone with creative flair and a big heart to Chair the Welcome Committee. This committee puts together Welcome Baskets for all new members of our Community. If you are interested in volunteering your time and skills, please contact the Office. Our sincere thanks to Donna Dyer for her service as Chair of this Committee for the past few years.

FROM THE OFFICE..... I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and wish everyone at the Grove a joyful Holiday Season and Happy New Year. A big "THANK YOU" to Kathleen Devitt for cleaning and organizing our little library here at the Pavilion. Please come by and choose a book!
Cindy



Vail's Grove New Year's Eve Celebration Live Music!

Thursday, December 31, 2009
Come ROCK in the New Year with your friends and neighbors at Vail's Grove Pavilion!
Doors open @ 7:15 and dinner starts @ 7:45
\$25 per person! BYOB
Reservations available through Vail's Grove Office @ 914-669-5100 (10 a.m.-3 p.m., Mon-Fri)
All reservations must be paid in full by 12/23/09
For more info contact: Joan Ford @ 845-669-9425.
Chris Dress @ 914-646-5860, or Ed Keith @ 845-661-6048

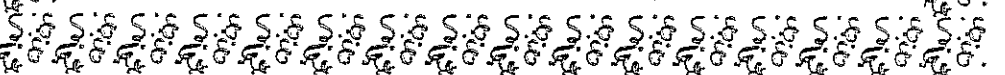
Vail's Grove Cooperative Undertakes Comprehensive Survey Project

The Vail's Grove Board of Directors has voted to survey each property in Vail's Grove. Shareholder parcels, as well as common properties, will be included. One impetus for this project was a recommendation by the North Salem Building Inspector, who said that it would become increasingly difficult for our shareholders to get variances for building projects without the information that a professional survey provides. Our neighbors at Bloomerside already have surveyed their properties. The surveys will be relatively simple and not as detailed as an individual survey that you may already have for your property. The Land Survey Committee has commissioned Terry Bergendorff Collins, Professional Land Surveyor in Brewster, for this project.

The project will conclude before the end of 2010, at which time we will have a map of the entire Grove delineating the length and width of each shareholder parcel, with the orientation of the house and measurements of the distances to each sideline and to the front and back of the property. For properties on the lake, measurements will be taken five feet back from the lake to compensate for water levels and soil erosion. All common properties and fire roads also will be included.

Any shareholder who has an independent survey of their property is encouraged to bring it to the Office to be placed in their file, if it is not already there. In the event of any property line discrepancy, the Land Survey Committee will bring the matter to the Board for review and recommendation. Shareholders impacted by any discrepancies will be notified of the date of the Board review. The Committee is currently discussing ways to grandfather existing structures so that shareholders will not be required to move a structure that may impinge on a neighbor's until such time as the property is sold.

The Board of Directors anticipates that the information the surveys provide, will benefit all shareholders, and prevent property line disputes that have occurred in the past.



Peach Lake Coalition Groundbreaking/ Blessing/Thanksgiving Celebration
An Earth-Shattering Success!!
By Peggy Boyle, Peach Lake Coalition

As Tom Duffy, Chairperson of the Peach Lake Coalition, approached the podium on the side porch of the Vail's Grove Pavilion in the spectacular afternoon of November 21, 2009, with Peach Lake providing the sunset lit scenery, many have become accustomed to, the phenomenal program began.

Tom Duffy introduced our esteemed Robert Gregory, to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance, amidst several American flags gracing our pavilion.

What then followed was the Thanksgiving / Blessing Service presided by Monsignor Moore of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Reverend McKeon of St. Lawrence O Toole Roman Catholic Church and Pastor Rick Julian of Brewster First Baptist Church. As Monsignor Moore quoted scripture from the book of Genesis, Rev McKeon sprinkled blessed Peach Lake water on over 150 people in the audience and then proceeded to bless the lake. Pastor Julian movingly blessed all those who worked hard to see this day happen.

This long awaited celebration happened just two years after another successful Peach Lake Coalition sponsored event, our Autumn Evening Celebration, which recognized so many wonderful leaders in our four neighborhoods that surround the lake. That event, which was attended by many elected officials and those running for office, put Peach Lake in the front and center on their agendas as well as reintroduced the issue to those in office and all the regulatory agencies. Perhaps inadvertently, some put Peach Lake on the back burner, due to its inherent complexity.

However, since that event two years ago and with the collaborative efforts and full court press of the Peach Lake Coalition, 10 million dollars was finally released by Westchester County, funds that had sat stagnating since 1997. Then the petitions were signed by the community, sending word of the neighbors support of the project, which Albany needed to see to authorize the formation of the sewer district. After the sewer district was formed, commitments of funds and low interest financing kept flowing and flowing.

At the time of the Groundbreaking Ceremony on November 21st, over 19 million dollars in grants was given to Peach Lake, in addition to 3 million dollars in low interest financing; with another 4.4 million dollars in financing expected. The two years of consistent face to face Peach Lake Coalition meetings to get the job done, resulted in this moment. NYCEFC followed suit and this past summer held all the regulatory agencies accountable and the engineering firm to not miss a step in order to secure federal funds. The Coalition and Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) were in lockstep to see this project through and the resultant groundbreaking ceremony is proof of that firm resolve.

Before the shovels were given out, US Congressman Hall presented the community and the Southeast Town Supervisor Michael Rights and North Salem Supervisor Warren Lucas with additional checks totaling almost 7 million dollars in Federal Stimulus Funds as managed by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation. Fred Testa, the EFC Community Liaison and long time friend of Peach Lake and his superior, Timothy Burns attended the event and were just thrilled to receive shovels as a mark of their contribution to seeing this day happen. The momentum of this day just kept building.

After the check presentation, State Senator Vincent Leibell presented both towns and the Peach Lake Coalition with Proclamations, naming the day, Peach Lake Preservation Day.

Then more shovels were handed out to deserving leaders. Tom Duffy gave out shovels to those in the past for their years long efforts. Former Supervisors, Sy Globerman and Paul Greenwood, former Westchester County Legislator Ursula LaMotte, along with Dave Bruen on behalf of the PLEC organization were presented with the shovels by Jim O'Brien and Charlie Voelkl.

Fran Ott presented shovels to those in office now, Congressman Hall, Senator Leibell, Assemblyman Greg Ball, Legislator Peter Harckham, North Salem Town Supervisor Warren Lucas, Southeast Town Supervisor Michael Rights; and to Regulatory Agency representatives; Brenda Drake, NYCDEP, Willie Janeway, NYSDEC, Fred Testa/Timothy Burns NYSEFC and Sarah Cwikla, Project Engineer for Stearns and Wheler.

Lastly but most importantly, the Peach Lake Coalition neighborhood representatives were presented with shovels. It was the community residents who were responsible in every way for making this day happen. I was privileged to hand the shovels to Tom Butcher, Diane Bamford and Pat Butler on behalf of Bloomerside Cooperative; Charlie Voelkl on behalf of Northern Westchester Country Club; Fran Ott on behalf of Pietsch Gardens and Tom Duffy on behalf of Vails Grove Cooperative. Tom then was good enough to give me a shovel of my own. All of us then gave Mary Bécker a shovel in memory of Robert Becker who did so much to make this day happen as well.

The rather large group of shovel bearers lined up to break ground. One dedicated photographer got the best shot of most of us by jumping into the lake for the best view.

The party continued inside to the beautifully decorated pavilion by Diane Bamford and Pat Butler and our own Jay Moore. Cindy Battreall helped to coordinate the covered dish entrees provided by the community as well as hors d'oeuvres donated by Restaurant 121. Each Peach Lake Coalition community contributed to the event. And special appreciation to Charlie Voelkl for making this a real class affair with the white lawn chairs and linen table cloths. Thanks to Jim O' Brien for playing the Black Eyed Peas song "Let's Get it started!" at the moment of the shovels going into the ground. Thanks also to Sue Enos for taking many photographs of this historic event.

Before the DJ took over, Tom Duffy reminded all of us of the archeological presentation of artifacts found while surveying Peach Lake. He also reintroduced Bob Gregory who presented Margaret Flannery with a beautiful framed photo of Peach Lake by our own Sue Enos in honor of Margaret's enormous contribution to the community. Since Margaret is expected to head south to be near her family, we are hoping she will set this picture on a wall facing west to remind her of our wonderful Peach Lake sunsets.

Tom Duffy, on behalf of the Peach Lake Coalition, presented me with a gorgeous array of flowers in a beautiful basket, with a "peach" colored bow, to show how much the community appreciated my involvement. I assure all that I got more out of this experience than anyone. I have made lasting friendships with many great people. Working hard on this issue, solidified my many experiences, many with my husband Denis, with taking action when needed and not waiting for someone else to do the work. My kids saw the fruits of organizing and working with so many devoted fine people to reach our goal of making Ms Millie Martin's dream come true of "restoring Peach lake to its pristine condition." I can only hope those generations that follow us know the history of this lake and how close we came to seeing it fail. Due to the work of the countless hours many volunteers dedicated to this cause and millions of dollars from the state, NYC and the federal government, Peach Lake will remain the jewel it is for generations to come. Thank you.