



*Bull Run Mountain Civic Association
PO Box 374
Haymarket, VA 20168*

BULL RUN BULLETIN JANUARY 2015

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year and greetings to the residents of Bull Run Mountain Estates from the Bull Run Mountain Civic Association. The board of directors and I wish that all of you will have another great year on the mountain.

You are reading our annual newsletter, produced to renew greetings to the residents of the mountain, to welcome newcomers to our area, and introduce them to the BRMCA. The BRMCA is a civic association, not a homeowners association. We facilitate community activities; provide a voice to our county government; maintain BRMCA properties; ensure legal and insurance requirements are met; and work with the county on the maintenance of BRMCA-owned roads. The aforementioned efforts are meant to benefit our community, regardless of membership status in the civic association. It is an all-volunteer group, headed by a nine-member board of directors.

Last year was quite busy. January snowstorms, each followed by warm days and freezing nights, resulting in icy conditions throughout our road system. Public Works made us aware that, due to recent studies, their position on the use of salt on tar and chipped surfaces has changed. Limited use of mild salt will not damage the road surface. As such, we will begin adding this option to our ice mitigation strategy, along with the heavy use of gravel to aid in traction and speed melting. We also have plans to add roughly 50 gravel barrels, specifically at the high, mid, and low points of hills and switchbacks.

During 2014, the BRMCA recommended and Public Works contracted the clearing of community-wide ditches and culverts, and the filling of potholes and deteriorating road edges. A number of sink holes were also fixed. These road items were discovered either by the board of directors road survey, which is performed every two to three months, or by residents, both member



and non-member, reaching out to the BRMCA roads committee with specific concerns. All concerns are passed directly to Public Works with the board of directors framing each item through the lens of whole-of-community priority. This lens encompasses value in terms of how many residents benefit from the fix, public safety, timing (example, potholes cannot be filled mid-winter due to the low temperature), and the remaining road maintenance budget. The new Roads Coordinator, Matt Roth, outlines in the Roads Report the 2015 road maintenance projects the BRMCA intends to recommend to Public Works.

The BRMCA board of directors and roads committee meets once a month, typically the third Sunday at the clubhouse, at noon. These are open meetings and all residents, regardless of membership status, are welcome to attend and be part of our roads committee. Resident involvement will serve to strengthen our ability to quickly address road maintenance issues.

We recognized that many residents want, and all residents deserve, increased transparency into the BRMCA activities. As a result, we have posted prior meeting agendas and notes, along with our roads worksheet, which will soon be transitioned into a map view. We appreciate the feedback that spurred this change and welcome further feedback. To foster feedback, we added an anonymous posting function on our www.brmca.net website.

In our Membership Drive article below, Treasurer Deborah Buckingham explains why we ask for membership dues and what they pay for.

It is our view that as good citizens, we have a responsibility to our community to maintain our roads through the activities of the BRMCA. This responsibility and obligation to maintain the private roads in our

Friend us at Facebook at
Bull Run Mountain Estates



community is also stated explicitly in a number of legally binding documents. The Roads Committee Controversy article describes this topic in greater detail.

The dues submission form is located at the bottom of this newsletter. We are hoping to encourage timely dues payment with a bonus this year. According to the bylaws, dues are due at the first of the year. To encourage on-time payment, the board has voted to allow any resident who pays their dues by February 15 a free, one-day non-commercial rental of the clubhouse during 2015. Please add your email address so we can send noteworthy information throughout the year.

Speaking of the clubhouse, see Clubhouse Chairman Paul Scheingold's report below about improvements performed in 2014 and planned for 2015.

We will continue to use our website, www.brmca.net, operated with thanks to our webmaster Bruce Roemmelt as the primary vehicle to communicate with residents.

Regards,
Josh Weinstein, President, BRMCA

2014-15 BRMCA OFFICERS

President – Josh Weinstein
Vice President – Alan Bratburd
Treasurer – Deborah Buckingham
Secretary – Jane Sudol

BRMCA BOARD, MEMBERS AT LARGE

Director – Jim Price
Director – Glenn Cruickshank
Director – Paul Scheingold
Director – Matt Roth
Director – Eric Davies

Roads Point of Contact – Matt Roth
Clubhouse Committee Chair – Paul Scheingold
FireWise lead – James Price
Webmaster – Bruce Roemmelt

COMMUNITY WEB CONTACTS

Board members, Activities Committee and FireWise:
board@brmca.net

Road Committee: roads@brmca.net
Clubhouse Committee: clubhouse@brmca.net
BRMCA website: website@brmca.net

Roads Voicemail #: 703-753-3024

Monthly Meetings. Normally the Board of Directors meets on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 11:30 a.m. at the Clubhouse on Ridge Road. Check the BRMCA Calendar on the web site. (http://www.brmca.net/?page_id=39) to confirm dates and times. Residents are invited to attend.

Clubhouse Report, Use and Rental



This was a big year for the clubhouse. In May, the civic association, working with neighborhood volunteers, put a new metal roof on the clubhouse. This project replaced an old and failing composite roof. The new metal roof should last decades and preserve the life of the clubhouse.

Less visible, but just as important was the work inside the clubhouse. We replaced a problematic oil furnace with two new heat pump systems. Not only will this give us more dependable heat in the winter, it will let us keep the clubhouse cool for summer events. Because this heat pump works automatically in the winter, it will now allow us year-around use of the clubhouse. Previously, we had to close over the winter because the pipes would freeze. The clubhouse is now available for rental and resident usage all year long.

And we're not done with the clubhouse improvements. This year we are planning a kitchen renovation project. Our goal is to renovate the kitchen by tearing out all the fixtures, counters, cabinets, etc., except for the service counter, then repaint and replace the fixtures with free-standing stainless steel restaurant-type fixtures and open stainless steel shelving in order to keep all the wall and floor surfaces exposed to facilitate cleaning. The project will also entail replacing the present T-12 ceiling lights with T-8 or T-5 fixtures. We plan to keep the existing range and refrigerator and the kitchen is already equipped with hot water on demand. We hope to start this project in the spring, and will notify the community in advance so that residents who want to help can plan for our kitchen-raising day.

Our mountain clubhouse setting offers a rustic appearance. Kitchen accommodations include appliances, refrigerator, stove, and microwave. The dining area includes a large fireplace for presenting the perfect ambiance for gatherings. Other commodities include restrooms, tables, and chairs. This clubhouse has hosted community groups, weddings, and picnics for all ages. (See our rental agreement on-line at www.brmca.net for details). *Paul Scheingold*

Roads Committee Controversy

The BRMCA and the Gainesville District County Supervisor, Pete Candland, are currently disputing where the Roads Committee should reside. Supervisor Candland claims that the BRMCA is not representative of the entire community, is not transparent, and does not allow residents to voice road concerns to the county.

The BRMCA disagrees with all his points. An analysis of our road maintenance recommendations reflect fair and even representation across members and non-members alike. In fact, a Candland representative stated that a similar county study revealed the same findings.

The BRMCA is transparent in that we have always divulged information upon request. We recognize that improvements can be made and are working towards that end. In terms of resident voice to the county, the BRMCA has never filtered resident concerns, nor do we encourage any form of censorship – every resident should have direct access to the county. Resident concerns received by the BRMCA are passed directly to Public Works. What the BRMCA does is add whole-of-community context to the resident concern. This context is needed so that our annual road maintenance budget is not spent too early in the year on individual projects, leaving no funds for community-wide projects.

Supervisor Candland intends to create a county-run committee comprised of resident volunteers. Sounds similar to the current process except that it's sponsored and run by the county, and members of that committee are acting as agents of the county, so that they can fall under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). FOIA has its benefits and drawbacks with the latter being underplayed by Candland (see BRMCA site for details)

The county has also downplayed the importance of ownership and liability. The deed for the roads and right-of-ways from the Bull Run Development Corporation to the BRMCA, puts ownership of the private roads solely in the hands of the BRMCA.

Further, the Roads Agreement, a contract between the county and the BRMCA, puts the obligation to maintain the roads solely in the hands of the BRMCA. The issue of where the road committee resides is not a question of control, but a question of liability. This fact was evidenced after the original tar and chip project. The county enjoyed indemnity while a resident sued the

BRMCA and a few residents for tar and chip encroachment on their land. The county cannot enjoy the benefit of indemnity while taking none of the responsibility inherent with ownership and liability. In essence, the Candland's Road Committee could make decisions the BRMCA can be sued over. Fair? No.

This topic is described in detail, including points from the opposing point of view, on the homepage of the www.brmca.net website. We encourage you to read about this topic and voice your support. Make your voice heard regardless of which side you support. By the time this newsletter reaches your door, the road committee controversy might be in the rear view, so please do not hesitate to take action.

Interested in roads issues? Want to be on the BRMCA Roads Committee?

Any mountain resident, whether a BRMCA member or not, can be a member of the BRMCA Roads committee. The only requirement is that you show up regularly at the committee meetings and commit to working in a positive, constructive, and collaborative manner for the betterment of the roads. If you are interested, contact Matt or Josh. *Matt Roth, Roads POC*

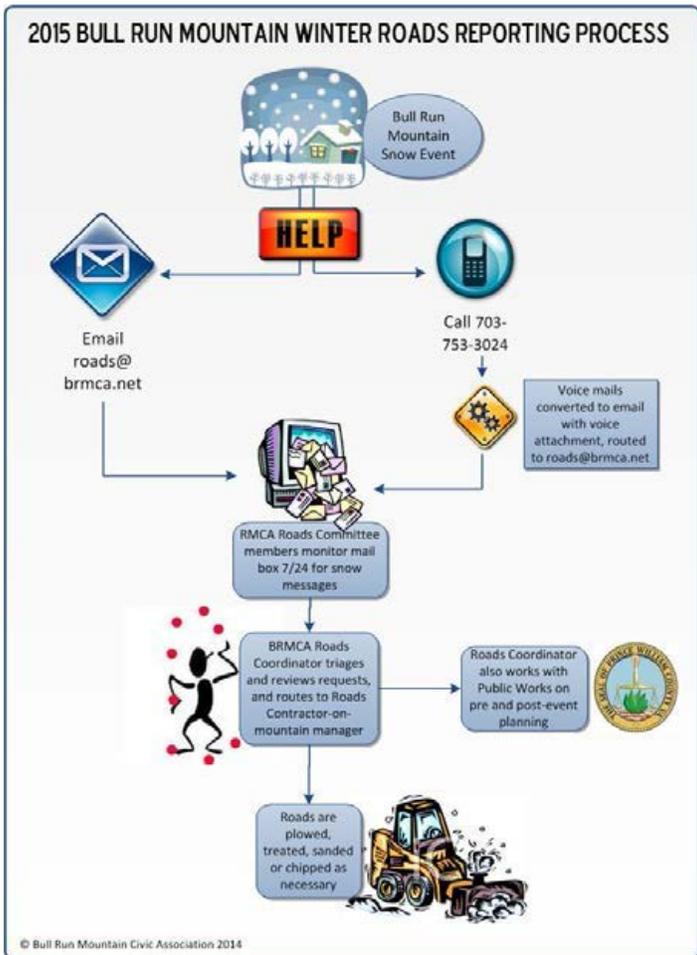
Winter Driving and BRMCA Snow Policy

Our mountain is small by comparison but the challenges are abrupt and significant when driving up from the flat areas below. Accessibility is more restricted, roads are narrow and steep and temperatures tend to be lower. Residents are expected to equip themselves according to their needs. This equipage should include tires with good, fresh tread, perhaps four-wheel or all-wheel drive vehicles and chains may be appropriate.



BRMCA Snow Reporting:
Email roads@brmca.net or call
703-753-3024 and leave a message

We have a new snow reporting process this year. Go to the BRMCA website for all the details about how to report road conditions.



In the case of the first two we have sent the requests to the county to have these issues addressed by the county’s contractor with the hope that these would have been finished well before winter weather begins to dominate our agenda on a weekly basis. With regard to the guard-rail issue, we have been requesting the county to initiate the work required to ensure that the guard-rail installation can be done efficiently with all the required surveys, permits and permissions. Our original intent was to press the county to have this issue addressed and finished in 2014, but even with our pro-active approach little progress has been made to date. Our goal in the coming year is to work with the county to renew its efforts to study, plan and execute the addition of guardrails to make our roads safer in inclement weather.

Matt Roth

Membership Drive

The Bull Run Mountain Estates community is home to almost 500 households. As with many civic associations, a wide range of services and financial obligations are necessary to maintain our beautiful and unique neighborhood. Our elected Board of Directors are an eclectic group of experienced executives, professionals, business owners, and retirees. They are all mountain residents, some have been here for 25+ years. This year’s transition promises a more modern, transparent, and effective association than ever before. We’ve built a modern and robust web site, www.brmca.net, serves as the transparency many on the mountain say the BRMCA has been lacking.

The civic association funding is only raised by voluntary dues paid by the residents. This means the electricity, water, taxes, and insurance paid for the Clubhouse is financed by our dues. Some of our other services and financial obligations include fiscal reporting to the IRS, maintenance and insurance of our common properties, such the fire reserve pond, printing and distribution of our newsletters, maintenance of the web site, (www.brmca.net), and the Firewise lunch. It also includes special community events like hosting the PWC County supervisor candidates, and Pot Luck Dinners.

This past year, we used dues and our capital fund to pay for a new roof on the clubhouse, and put a new heating system into the clubhouse. These are significant improvements to our clubhouse which will benefit residents, year-around, for years to come.

The very fact that we depend on voluntary dues indicate the need for our membership drives. We need an

When the snow falls, our road committee will call for snow removal by our contractor when snow totals approach 4”. In case of ice formation, we are prepared to order the application of gravel and/or salt. For conditions in between, gravel barrels are located near steep slopes and switchbacks. For your own safety and convenience, we suggest keeping a short shovel in your car.

Please give way to vehicles going uphill to maintain their momentum. Remember that all-wheel-drive vehicles have little or no advantage in stopping or going downhill. Manage your speed in accordance with your equipment – it is easy to lose control in slippery conditions.

Maintenance Issues

There have been a few road maintenance issues and improvements that have been recommended by the BRMCA to improve the safety and accessibility of the roads in the past year. These are, in no particular order, tar and chipping/repair of certain roads that have deteriorated over the past year, placement and filling of additional gravel barrels at key points, and the addition of wood guard rails at dangerous points on the mountain.

engaged and effective civic organization that can help improve the community for our children and neighbors. Now is the time to come together and make a difference, and your membership and volunteer participation is more critical today than at any point in our history.

The BRMCA and its volunteers supports all the residents of the mountain, not just those who pay dues. Everyone on the mountain benefits from the roads, the facilities and the activities. In turn, please do your part and support your civic association. The voluntary dues are \$50 per household or for lot-only owners. We believe that this amount is both reasonable and helps us cover the costs of maintaining community assets on the mountain.

And there's a reward! Besides the warm civic duty feeling you get when you support your community, there is a real reward. As in past years, members who pay their annual dues by the 15th of February, 2015, are entitled to one day's free rental of the clubhouse for a non-commercial activity during the year, a **\$175 savings!** These free rentals are done on a first come, first serve basis. The cleaning deposit still applies.

The by-laws of the Association (Article IX, Section 2) say "Dues shall be payable in advance on the first day of January in each fiscal year." Please join or renew your membership today and help us continue the good work that so many volunteers contribute to our mountain way of life. The membership fee is an annual payment of **\$50** and entitles you to vote in BRMCA elections. Consider membership and help shape our Association. Thank you for your support. *Deborah Buckingham, Treasurer*

Your Inputs/Suggestions Invited

What would you like your association to do for you? How can we improve life in our community? What kinds of events would you like to see? How can we (you) use the clubhouse to meet your needs? Would you like us to facilitate community activities? - sponsor a scout troop? - hold garage sales? - return to Saturday or Sunday morning breakfasts at the clubhouse? Can you recommend activities or events you enjoyed when you lived somewhere else?

We are limited in resources but if you'd like to participate or even lead some of these activities we'd like to talk with you. Contact us at Board@BRMCA.net.

Attention Readers

If you have friends or new neighbors who have recently moved to Bull Run Mountain, please tell them of our

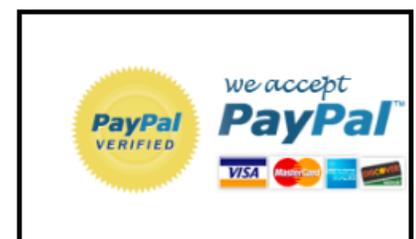
newsletter and web site. Suggest they get in touch with our board@brmca.net and give us their name, address and e-mail. Their names will be added to our list and a copy of the newsletter will be mailed to them. We'll use their e-mail for announcements and information. Of course, we hope they will join our association!

FIREWISE Brush clearing

This past year, we again had a very successful BRMCA –Firewise Chipping Project. Each year, the BRMCA works with the state Firewise program to conduct activities on the mountain that help lessen the danger of wild fire. We work with property owners to help reduce fuel – brush and dead trees – from their properties. Any residence on the mountain could sign up for the program.

We applied for and received a \$4,500 grant from the state. This year, the grant supported hiring a forestry crew with a large wood chipper and trucks. On Saturday Sept 27, Monday Sept 29 and Tuesday Sept 30, our contractor reached 28 out of 29 requested locations this year, both roadside locations and on neighbor's properties.

The crew finished one day early, on Sept 29. All of the locations were inspected beforehand to gauge accessibility. All of the requested visits onto neighbor's properties, save one, were performed on the first day. We were unable to reach onto one neighbor's property due to a lack of space for the equipment. This is a vast improvement over the number of locations we reached last year. *Jim Price*



BRMCA 2015 MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL

Complete and mail this form, along with your check to:
BRMCA Membership, P.O. Box 374, Haymarket, VA 20168-0374

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

(Include City, State and Zip if different from Haymarket)

Telephone No: _____ E-mail: _____



Bull Run Mountain Civic Association
PO Box 374
Haymarket, VA 20168

Free Clubhouse Rental – Details inside!