



# Woodlake

## **Currents Newsletter February 2010**

*A publication for members of the  
Woodlake Homeowners Association*

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<b>Welcome</b>	<b>George McGinn</b>

### **Board of Directors Report**

This newsletter highlights some of the key actions completed by the Woodlake Homeowners Association in 2009 and plans for 2010. Details on several items highlighted below are discussed later in this newsletter.

**Private Streets:** The transfer of the four remaining private streets in Woodlake (Boxwood, Cedar Hill, Fall Circle, Great Oak) to the City of Durham was completed in 2009. This transfer is of substantial importance to all Woodlake residents in that it relieves the HOA of the obligation and risks associated with maintaining the streets, water lines, and sewer lines on these streets, and thus the need to maintain a financial reserve to cover the potential expenses. The transfer is also significant in that maintenance will be provided by the city's professional staff, rather than the volunteers on the Woodlake board of directors.

**Revisions to the WHOA Handbook:** The WHOA handbook was last updated in 2003. Since that time, a number of sections in the handbook were incorrect (e.g., references to Kildaire Management Company), needed to be updated (e.g., to reflect improvements that have been made in the HOA's website and listserv),

or made more clear or consistent with the HOA policies (e.g., procedures for assuring compliance with Architectural Review Committee procedures). An updated handbook is being distributed to all residents and homeowners in conjunction with this newsletter. Homeowners in Pineywood and Lake Village Townes are required to comply to both the town home regulations and the WHOA handbook and ARC.

**Call for Volunteers:** We all want to live in a community where we feel safe, where private and common property are well maintained, and where we can enjoy ourselves and our neighbors. Although Woodlake uses a professional property management company (CAS Inc.) to take care of day-to-day duties, the decisions that most affect us are made by neighbors who volunteer time because they care about our community. However, for Woodlake to continue as a vibrant community, we need more residents to get involved by volunteering their time and talents. Specific activities needing additional volunteer involvement include our Neighborhood Watch program, Architectural Review Committee, and Recreation Committee. If you would like to get involved with any of the above or to participate in other WHOA activities, please send an e-mail to [board@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.org).

## Finance Committee

The WHOA continued its history of fiscal stewardship, finishing 2009 with total revenues of approximately \$207,700 vs. budget of \$208,000 and total expenses of approximately \$207,300. The surplus of approximately \$400 will be applied to WHOA reserve funds. The major expenses incurred during the year included:



In addition, approximately \$110,000 was paid from reserves for road re-pavement associated with the private street conversion and for the lake improvements to improve water flow at the north forebay.

Economic conditions during the past year are a concern to all of us. In developing the 2010 budget, the Board agreed to focus on maintaining Woodlake's current level of services and facility maintenance, while doing some "belt tightening" on discretionary expenses. As a result, the Board was able to adopt a balanced budget for 2010 that does not require an increase in dues. Woodlake continues to be an appealing community with a reasonable dues structure compared to similar nearby communities.

## Revisions to Association Handbook

The new handbook has been reorganized to make it easier for residents to find needed information and several sections have been expanded to better describe WHOA services and activities. Key changes to the handbook are described below. If you have questions, please e-mail [board@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.org).

- Added Section 1.4 regarding inspection of a homeowner's lot to assess compliance with WHOA rules.
- Updated Section 2.1 on how to contact Woodlake's current management contractor, CAS Inc.

- Revised Section 3.4.3 regarding the role of Community Relations in coordinating several Woodlake activities (e.g., Neighborhood Watch, the Welcome Committee, the Recreation Committee) that are involved with improving communications among residents.
- Added Section 6 which discusses the various means by which the WHOA communicates with residents (e.g., the website and listserv).
- Added Sections 9 and 10 regarding use of the clubhouse and exercise room.
- Revised Section 20 to include many of the changes and clarifications to Architectural Review Committee (ARC) requirements and procedures for obtaining approval for architectural changes and maintenance to private property in Woodlake. Most of these changes had been discussed in last year's newsletter and on the website, but had not been previously included in the handbook. See the ARC section of the newsletter for additional details.

## Notification & Enforcement Policy:

The WHOA Protective Covenants and Handbook cover a number of topics. These policies exist for the mutual benefit of the entire community. Unfortunately, situations arise when it is necessary to notify residents of violations and request that the problem be corrected. The WHOA Board has the following three-step notification and enforcement procedure for addressing problems when they arise:

1. A reminder notice asking for the situation to be fixed or for an explanation of special circumstances (e.g., why more time is needed) within 10 days of notification. Based on past experience, most homeowners and residents correct the problem within this time period.
2. If no action is taken within 10 days, a second letter is sent informing the homeowner that the Board will hold an enforcement hearing on a specific date unless the problem is resolved by not later than 48 hours prior to the hearing.
3. A hearing is set by the WHOA Board, allowing the homeowner to present relevant information. Based on the homeowner's presentation, the Board can either reach an

agreement with the homeowner to resolve the issue or assess a fine of up to \$100 per violation. If the violation is not resolved within 5 days after the homeowner is notified of the Board's decision, a fine of up to \$100/day can be assessed and HOA privileges (e.g., use of the pool and voting) can be suspended.

If a homeowner repeatedly violates a rule, the notification and enforcement process can be shortened. These procedures are based on the requirements in the North Carolina Planned Community Act Board (NC Statutes, Section 47F). The Board hopes that enforcement actions are rarely required, but also recognizes that all homeowners need to understand that action will be taken when necessary to protect our neighborhood's best interests.

If you have questions about the above, please contact the Board by sending an e-mail to [board@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.org), by contacting CAS (the association's management contractor; their address and phone number are on page 8), or talking directly to a board member.

### **Architectural Review Committee**

Woodlake is a planned community governed by a Homeowner Association (HOA) and protective covenants. These covenants specify restrictions to changes that homeowners may make to their property.

Requests for changes to the appearance of the homeowner's property (e.g., changes in paint color, construction of decks or fences, removal of large trees) must be submitted to the ARC using the forms provided on the WHOA website and in the white footlocker at the clubhouse entrance. The application process is described in Section 20 of the handbook. Questions regarding the process should be e-mailed to [arc@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:arc@woodlakecommunity.org). This address can also be used to alert ARC members of a pending request.

HOA covenants provide that penalties may be levied against a homeowner for failure to obtain approval prior to beginning any work. Penalties may include fines, removal or modification to a new/changed structure, or repainting a house to its original color. Neighbors' objections, if any, will be

considered before the ARC makes a decision and may result in the denial of a request.

Modifications to the house interior and routine exterior maintenance (e.g., replacing rotted fascia boards) do not require approval by ARC. However, if exterior maintenance work is extensive (e.g., involving siding or window removal), homeowners should notify ARC of the planned work by submitting an application form, but neighbors' signatures are not required.

The revised handbook contains a number of new sections regarding changes requiring ARC approval (see Sections 20.4, 20.5 and 20.6 for details). Some of the key changes relate to approval of:

- Retaining walls or other changes that will affect surface water drainage;
- Rain barrels, solar panels, or clothes lines; and
- Removal of trees and some landscaping installation work.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

The Buildings & Grounds Committee oversees maintenance of the trails, lake, clubhouse, swimming pool, and all other WHOA property. The committee strives to enhance both the quality of life and the value of property within the community. Some of the work is done by volunteers, but most of it is performed by contractors.

Projects planned for 2010 include upgrades to the pool bathrooms, refurbishment of the decorative lighting at the clubhouse and neighborhood entrances, and enhancing the vegetated barrier around the lake to reduce goose access to the trails. If you would like to join this committee, have suggestions for other projects, or have concerns or questions, e-mail: [grounds@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:grounds@woodlakecommunity.org).

**Clubhouse:** A number of improvements were made to the appearance of the main room of the clubhouse. These improvements include newly painted walls, some new furniture and decorations, and new wall art. Included is a rotating display of photographs. If you are interested in displaying your photographs, email [clubhouse@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:clubhouse@woodlakecommunity.org). These changes have made the room much more inviting for group meetings and other activities.

**Landscaping:** Woodlake's landscape contractor is Sands Landscape Management. In addition to weekly maintenance, their work includes improving the planting beds at the entrances and other high traffic areas within Woodlake.

**Lake and Pond:** The major project undertaken by the Building & Grounds Committee in 2009 was the removal of approximately 300 cubic yards of sediment from the north inlet to the lake and the installation of a water recirculation system in the same area. This work was done to address the influx of sediment into the lake and the odor and algae problems that occur due to stagnant water conditions during hot dry weather in the summer. A submerged barrier was also installed to simplify sediment removal in the future without having to drain the lake.

The growth of algae and elevated levels of nitrogen and phosphorus in the lake and pond continue to be a concern. To control algae growth, homeowners are asked to limit the use of nitrogen and phosphorus during spring lawn fertilization. Because all surface runoff in Woodlake drains into the lake, every lawn in our neighborhood contributes to the buildup of nutrients in the lake and pond. Two things to remember:

- Most soils in our area naturally have ample phosphorus. Use a low phosphorus fertilizer on your lawn unless you are doing major lawn renovation (best done in the fall).
- Fescue (the primary grass in Woodlake) benefits from fall fertilization and needs only a small amount of fertilization in the spring (equal to ½ lb of nitrogen per 1000 square feet). Applying more than this amount promotes rapid growth (and lots of mowing). The best time to fertilize fescue is in the fall.

Please keep these two facts in mind when you (or a contractor) apply fertilizer to your lawn.

**Canada Geese:** The population of Canada geese residing at Woodlake continues to be a concern. The geese leave droppings on the trails, damage grassed areas, and promote algae growth in the lake due to increased nutrient levels. One reason the goose population is so large is that some residents and visitors feed them. Your cooperation in not feeding them – and asking others to do likewise is much appreciated.

## Website and Members Information

Be sure to checkout the Woodlake website at [www.woodlakecommunity.org](http://www.woodlakecommunity.org). The WHOA website provides information for use by Woodlake residents, including e-mail links for contacting the Woodlake Board and various committees, a list of announcements that have been sent out via the Woodlake listserv, and electronic copies of documents and forms (architectural requests, pool and exercise room access, clubhouse rental, etc.). The new design also includes photos of our community, updated news and events, and a virtual gallery.

We invite anyone from the artistic side of the community to contribute to the virtual gallery. Art in all forms and formats is welcome. Contact [webmaster@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:webmaster@woodlakecommunity.org) if you would like to share your work in the gallery.

You are encouraged to register to receive email via the Woodlake listserv. This is one way to know what is going on and contribute. You can also reply to messages if you have a comment or question. WHOA does not want to become part of your junk mail so no one is being added to this feature except by choice.

Another feature of the website is a community communications bulletin board/blog accessible through the Members page. Under this new system, if you are a registered user, you can subscribe to the comments section and receive an email when comments have been added. Previously, this was more cumbersome and required logging in to read comments or to check for updates. Comments and questions are posted through the website but now you can choose to receive copies of comments by email or not as you wish. For a login account go to the homepage and click the register button. (Note: Registering for the Members page is not the same as signing up for e-news.) Comments are welcome.



**Sign up for e-news through the website homepage. This is the best way to be kept up to date with activities and neighborhood information.**

**([www.woodlakecommunity.org](http://www.woodlakecommunity.org))**

## Neighborhood Watch

Woodlake consists of over 600 homes and townhomes. Our Neighborhood Watch program is built on eight areas, which were then subdivided into "blocks" containing 10-20 houses each. Neighborhood Watch is one of the most effective and least costly ways to reduce crime in residential areas. It forges bonds among residents, helps reduce burglaries and robberies, and improves relations between police and the communities they serve. Neighborhood Watch's sponsorship of the neighborhood summer BBQ party and National Night Out (NNO) are two examples of encouraging neighbors to know each other better and to look out for one another.



*Some of Durham's Finest (including resident Suzanne MacDonough and Mayor Bill Bell) at Woodlake's NNO gathering*

There were 38 police reports filed for burglaries and larcenies in Woodlake in 2009 (compared to 33 in 2008). Of these, at least 12 were believed to have been the result of a single perpetrator who was caught by Durham police in September. Another 10 were thefts from unlocked cars that occurred on two nights in the fall. The remaining 16 incidents were a mixture of burglaries (8) and larcenies (8), most of which occurred between April and October. The encouraging news from the crime data is that there were only two incidents reported during November and December.

Neighborhood Watch's goals for 2010 are to:

- Have block captains for all Woodlake streets (we currently have captains for 45 of the 50 blocks in the Woodlake),

- Improve resident awareness of crime prevention and safety in their area through increased contact and communication, and
- Further decrease criminal incidents in Woodlake.

If you do not know who your block captain is, send an e-mail to: [watch@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:watch@woodlakecommunity.org).

### What can residents do to improve safety?

Here are a few suggestions discussed at the recent Neighborhood Watch meeting:

- **Know your neighbors!** You can make a big impact on crime by noting anything out of place or suspicious in the neighborhood and calling the police to investigate. If your neighbors are on vacation, but there is a strange car in their driveway - call the police!
- **Improve security around your house:** Add motion sensor flood lights. Put a lock on the door to the crawl space under your house. Keep shrubs near your house trimmed. Consider installing a home alarm system.
- **Don't let criminals know when you aren't around.** Pickup your newspaper in the morning, don't leave trash and recycling bins on the curb. Leave lights on timers when you are away. If a criminal thinks you are at home, he or she will likely move along.
- **Don't tempt criminals.** Don't leave wallet, purse, GPS, iPod, or other valuables in your car unattended. Don't leave door or windows unlocked - if you have a garage, dead bolt the door from the garage into your house.

Crime can occur anywhere. Know your neighbors and report anything suspicious to the police. By taking a few simple precautions, we can keep each other – and Woodlake – safe!

## Welcoming Committee

The Woodlake Welcome committee's mission is to personally welcome new homeowners and to help them understand the wider community we live in via a welcome package that includes information about the area and a map of Durham.

This year the committee welcomed a member who is a Lake Village Townes resident. We are excited that newcomers to the Townes will be welcomed into the community by one of their neighbors.

If you have a new neighbor, make them aware of the WHOA web site and send a message to the Welcome committee at [welcome@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:welcome@woodlakecommunity.org). Our usual notification of new ownership sometimes takes awhile as it's tied into a home's closing process. By using the WHOA web site link, the committee receives faster notification and can visit the new owner in a more timely manner. Checkout the Welcome page of the website by clicking the welcome button at the bottom of the homepage.

The Welcoming Committee is also an opportunity for existing residents to get to know new neighbors. If you would like to be a part of this committee, send the committee an e-mail.

### Recreational Information

**Pool Season:** The pool season for 2010 is May 22 to September 26. More information will be available on the Recreation page of [www.woodlakecommunity.org](http://www.woodlakecommunity.org).

**Exercise Room:** An exercise room is available adjacent to the clubhouse. It contains a treadmill, an elliptical trainer, and a weight machine. To obtain access, go to the Woodlake website ([www.woodlakecommunity.org](http://www.woodlakecommunity.org)) and then click on "Administration" and then "Forms" to get a copy of the Registration Form. Fill it out and fax it to CAS to have your electronic "pool key" activated to use the exercise room. The room is open 5:00 AM – 11:00 PM

**Library:** A neighborhood library is open each Monday evening from 5:00-7:00 pm (except holidays) at the Woodlake clubhouse. The library operates on a "bring one, take one" policy to allow residents to share books and other reading materials. The collection includes fiction, non-fiction, children's material, and "timeless" magazines (on gardening, home repair, etc). The library also features movies for loan. Donations are always welcome.

**Woodlake Seniors Group** meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10 AM in the Woodlake Clubhouse. Visit the website for this year's schedule of activities. We invite all Woodlake seniors to join by sending your email address to [seniors@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:seniors@woodlakecommunity.org) so that we can notify you of our meetings and keep you updated on planned activities.

**Poker Night** meets the first Friday of every month in the clubhouse. It is open to all Woodlake men. This is a great way to end a busy workweek and relax before heading into the weekend. Joaquin Aguayo, who has organized this fun event, says there are only two requirements. You must be a Woodlake resident, and you must come to have fun. Refreshments are provided, so just show up for a good time. For more information, contact Joaquin Aguayo, 210 Lakeshore Dr., [jaguayo@fmrealty.com](mailto:jaguayo@fmrealty.com) or call 919-641-2253.

**Woodlake Easter Egg Hunt** is scheduled for Saturday morning, April 3 at the clubhouse. If you would like to help with planning or egg collection, please contact [kids@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:kids@woodlakecommunity.org).

**Softball players** - If you are interested in playing co-ed softball, contact [sports@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:sports@woodlakecommunity.org). All experience and skill levels are welcome, but you must be at least 18 years old. The Parkwood League plays games on Sunday afternoon during the summer and fall at the field next to the Parkwood library.

**Call for Volunteers** - The WHOA is interested in promoting recreational activities, such as a 4<sup>th</sup> of July party and a Fall Festival, but doing so depends on the availability of volunteers to coordinate these activities. If you are interested in helping, please send an e-mail to [recreation@woodlakecommunity.com](mailto:recreation@woodlakecommunity.com).

### General Interest Information

**Annual Meeting:** The Woodlake Homeowners Association annual meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 27. Please mark this date on your calendar.

**Clubhouse Rental:** The Woodlake clubhouse is available to Woodlake residents for party and meeting rentals. For additional information and reservations, visit the website and go to Building and Grounds and click on Clubhouse or email [clubhouse@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:clubhouse@woodlakecommunity.org).

The board is looking for a volunteer to manage the clubhouse rentals. There is a small remuneration for this position. If you would like more information about this position, please email [clubhouse@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:clubhouse@woodlakecommunity.org).

**Clubhouse Parking Lot:** The parking area at the clubhouse is to be used only for activities at the clubhouse or pool or for homeowners and their invited guests using the lake, playground or walking trails. In response to safety concerns, we are restricting late night and overnight parking (11:00 PM – 5:00 AM) Vehicles parked at the clubhouse during these hours are subject to towing. The cost of towing is the responsibility of the vehicle owner.

**Waste and Recycling Containers:** Garbage, yard waste, and recycling containers should not be placed at the street until the evening before pickup and should be removed from the curb by the evening after pick-up. When not at the curb, containers should be stored in an unobtrusive location (e.g., in the garage or a screened area in the side yard).

**Trail Use by Bicycles:** The trails are primarily for use by pedestrians and runners. For safety reasons, use of the trails by bicycles should be limited to going to see a friend or getting to the clubhouse/pool or the American Tobacco Trail. It should not be used for riding laps. If you see a bicyclist riding laps or going too fast, please inform them of the rules and send an e-mail to [board@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.org).

**Solicitors:** There are “no soliciting” signs posted at Woodlake entrances. If a solicitor knocks on your door, you can ask him or her to leave your property. In addition, if they are selling a service or product, you can ask to see their “peddler’s license” issued by the City of Durham that contains their name and address and ask to see a picture ID. If they do not have such a license or if you feel suspicious about the person’s actions, note where they go after leaving your house and call the Durham police. In some instances, these individuals are “checking out” the neighborhood. The police have done a good job following up on such instances.

**Pet Etiquette:** Pet owners are responsible for their cats, dogs, and other critters 24 hours a day. Three key rules apply when your pet is not in your own yard:

- Keep your pet on a leash when you are taking them for a walk,
- Do not let your pet pee or poop in another resident’s yard, and
- Pick up after your pet’s poop.

One of the benefits of living in Woodlake is the walking trails. However, casual inspection of the trails indicates that a number of pet walkers are not picking up their pet’s poop. Goose poop is a nuisance, but it degrades quickly. However, dog poop is much more persistent (it is much slower to biodegrade). There are pet waste bag dispensers at several locations along the trails. Please use these bags or bring one from home. If you see someone who doesn’t pick up after their pet, bring it to their attention.

There are many reasons, in addition to the obvious one of courtesy, to clean up after your pet. Did you know that pollution from dog waste poses a health hazard to human beings and other pets, both in the water and on land? Bacteria and parasites contained in the waste can infect adults and children with bacterial infections and parasites. Dog droppings can also contribute to high levels of fecal coliform bacteria in the lake and pond. By simply cleaning up after your dog each day, you can help prevent water pollution and protect aquatic life.

So next time you take Fido for a walk, make sure you clean-up after him or her. It’s such a simple and courteous thing to do, and such an easy way to make a difference for people, pets and aquatic life.

In addition to these Woodlake policies, there are City of Durham animal control ordinances. If someone is violating these policies, please contact animal control at 560-0630.

**Litter:** Please don’t litter when you are walking or driving in our neighborhood or elsewhere. Be respectful of other residents and of Mother Nature.

**Join the Team - Get Involved** – Don’t forget that together we make this a great community! Get to know your neighbors by joining one of the committees (such as recreation or neighborhood watch committee) or volunteering to help with seasonal planting or holiday events. Whether you have one day a year or one day a week to get involved, we welcome you. If you would like any information about volunteering, contact [board@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.org)

**Woodlake Homeowners Association**  
c/o CAS, Inc.  
5915 Farrington Road, Suite 104  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27517-9900



**Want to know what is going on in Woodlake?** Community news is disseminated through the community e-news. Sign up to receive these e-mails on the WHOA website [www.woodlakecommunity.org](http://www.woodlakecommunity.org).

**Key E-Mail Addresses to Remember:**

WHOA Board of Directors - [board@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Architectural Review Committee - [arc@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:arc@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Building and Grounds - [grounds@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:grounds@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Communications - [communications@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:communications@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Community Relations - [relations@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:relations@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Neighborhood Watch - [watch@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:watch@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Recreation - [recreation@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:recreation@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Senior Group - [seniors@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:seniors@woodlakecommunity.org)  
Woodlake Welcome - [welcome@woodlakecommunity.org](mailto:welcome@woodlakecommunity.org)

**CAS Contact Information:** CAS Inc. assists with day-to-day operation of the Woodlake Homeowners Association. Our Account Manager is Todd Petherbridge. To contact Todd, call 919-403-1400, send a fax to 919-403-1499, or e-mail [todd@casnc.com](mailto:todd@casnc.com). Normal office hours are 9-4 on Monday through Friday. For after hours emergencies, call 877-420-9320