



## BURNING ISSUES

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August 2014



Will, son of Cindy and Randy Kennedy is in the moment!

### BHL Hurricanes Wrap Up Summer Swim with 3-2 season!

The BHL Hurricanes swim team came back strong in 2014 to begin a third decade of competition and fun in the Cobb Summer Swim League, retaining their spot in the coveted Gold Division. The 120-member team, aged 5-17 and coached by BHL's Jake Hotinger, Alec Mau, Chris Contreras and Meaghan Kalafut, pulled out all the stops to place again in the Gold by scoring big wins over rivals like Legacy Park, Marietta Country Club and Brookstone 2!

With just two home meets, the season ran smoothly thanks to coordinators Mary and Chris Kalafut, Janet Lynch, Elizabeth Porter, Brenda Hotinger and their posse of moms and dads who volunteered as timers, judges, restaurateurs, ribbon writers and nose wipers. The youngest team members could barely get across the pool at the

outset, but by the end of June were swimming like fish with help from the coaches. They were also mentored by older teammates who modeled sportsmanship and discipline, two of the team trademarks.

"We welcomed back many returning swimmers," commented Coach Meaghan, "but so many new BHL families really contributed to the overall success and fun of the season." Practices, which started after school in late May and ended with a brunch/awards ceremony at the end of June, kept the pool hopping most mornings.

Junior coaches this year were Justin Gohd, Natalie Dennis, Emily Hotinger and Lauren McCartney.

Now that swim team is over, the pool is open Swim at Your Own Risk (SAYOR) in the mornings before the lifeguard arrives for duty.

Lifeguard hours for the balance of the pool season are:

- Monday – Thursday: 3:30 – 7:00
- Friday: 3:30 – 9:00
- Saturday: 12:00 – 9:00
- Sunday: 12:00 – 7:00

As a reminder, no one under 18 is allowed in pool area during SAYOR without an adult member (age 18 or over) present. Also, the slide is closed without a lifeguard present. The pool will close on **September 8th**.

### BHL Town Hall

We have scheduled this event for **August 25th at 7:00 pm**. Topics we would like to discuss include the completion of the pool season, the landscaping violations process, and any other topic you're interested in. Please join us, light refreshments will be served.

## President's Corner – Architectural Violations

We have been going very slow and being very careful about issuing architectural violation letters. Currently, we issue them in clear cases of non-compliance.

Recently, board representatives and AIO did a drive-thru of the neighborhood.

The good news is that approximately 85% are doing a good job at maintaining their homes and yards. Ten percent could use some improvement, and five percent need stronger medicine.

If you receive a violation letter, you will have 30 days to correct or re-clama it. If you do not take either of these actions, we will issue you a second letter, and you will have 10 days to respond. If you don't correct the issue or respond to the second letter, we have the authority to begin fining you until you do.

Ultimately, we can turn your case over to a collection agency.

My recent experience with the collection company we employ is not pleasant. They are quite frankly brutal (and effective).

What you really need to know (and this applies to those delinquent on semi-annual fees or violation fines), is that once we turn your case over to them, there is no pulling it back. We have no other option once we take that step.

This can get ugly fast – with multiple charges piled on the original amount. Fair warning.

The first, best option is to reach out to the board and discuss your case as it is also our responsibility to help you find an acceptable solution. A little communication goes a long way.

Additionally, my sense is that All-in-One Management has been shouldering an unfair amount of the blame for the ACC violation process when this responsibility really rests with the board. We have given them guidance that they will not respond to individual homeowners wanting them to issue letters to a neighbor, but to bring all inquiries to us for action.

Finally, we don't mediate neighbor vs. neighbor feuds or civil matters. If you have an issue with someone, my recommendation is to first go talk to them and see if you can resolve the issue between yourselves.

The board is spending most of its time these days working off a number of deferred maintenance issues on the Clubhouse and other community assets while working to set BHL up for a longer-term sustainable, environmentally-sound future. This approach will ensure our resources go as far as possible.

I think you will like what you see as we get into the fall season. We are planning on doing a landscape re-design on

the Mars Hill entrance to BHL and will look at the Burnt Hickory Road entrance also.

All of these topics are fair game for the Town Hall on the 25th.

Terry Spoon, President

## Change of Landscape Companies

Beginning July 15th, **Unique Environmental Landscape** began the contract services for maintaining the BHL common areas including entrances. Seasonal flowers are not part of their annual contract (or any previous contractor).

Usually, we contract twice per year for seasonal flowers (~\$1500/planting). UEL will address the entrances but will not include summer flowers immediately. It is too hot and too late in the season to plant them. In the fall a vendor (or the BLH Garden Club) will be selected to dress up the entrances. Welcome them.

## Covenants Reminders

One of the reasons Burnt Hickory Lakes has upheld its beauty and value is due to our covenants. Adhering to them will ensure Burnt Hickory Lakes continues to be one of West Cobb's most coveted subdivisions.

All-In-One Community Management performs a monthly drive through Burnt Hickory Lakes to monitor covenant violations. The most recent drive through noted the following violations on BHL properties:

- 1) Garbage cans visible to the streets
- 2) Mulch and/or Pine Straw needed in flower beds - Our common areas and entrances were also in need of additional pine straw, pruning and general maintenance. We are currently working with our new landscapers to correct this problem.
- 3) Bare spots in yards - This is something that many of us are dealing with due to mature trees and dense shade. Various solutions to this continuing problem are: over seeding, new sod, or extending beds to cover densely shaded property.
- 4) Mailboxes replacement or repair/painting - Porter Paints has Burnt Hickory Lakes Green available for purchase. Replacements can be arranged through: Ralph Stalisky (Southern State Sign) 770-529-5945 or email rstalisky@yahoo.com.
- 5) Boats/trailers/recreational vehicles parked in driveways- These items may not be parked in home owner's driveways beyond 48 consecutive hours.

If you need to review the covenants, they can be found on our website: [www.burnthickorylakes.com](http://www.burnthickorylakes.com).

Mandy O'Rear  
BOD

## Street Paving

We are extremely fortunate to have the **C.W. Matthews** company doing the work for us. They are one of the best companies I have observed in my 20+ years in Georgia.

As a reminder, please turn off your outdoor sprinklers the day before they are scheduled to pave in front of your house. The asphalt bonding agent will not work with wet gravel or pavement. I have found this crew extremely accommodating with residents here. If you ask them, they will let you know the day before they are scheduled to do this work.

Thanks to all the previous board members who got the ball rolling on this paving. It has been a work in progress for many years.

Robert McGill  
BOD

## How TO Get The Most Money When I Sell My Home

Burnt Hickory Lakes is one of only two subdivisions in West Cobb that offer gorgeous homes with large private lots! We get the benefit of living in a neighborhood with the privacy of being a bit separated from our neighbors.

*My experience with buyers is they love our neighborhood but the homes tend to be very dated inside. Once a buyer is thinking they will have to put money into updating, the next thought is **offer low**.*

Since we have such a stable neighborhood, most owners have lived here many years. They have a large amount of equity and can afford to sell their homes low which in turn keep our property values very low as well.

There is a solution to this problem and that is to update your home. Even if you do have some equity, investing in upgrades will actually bring you even more money. We bought in here a year and a half ago because I knew this neighborhood would bring me a great financial return one day. We have replaced all the hardwood flooring, updated lighting and remodeled the kitchen, I am positive those updates will bring me at least double my investment when I go to sell it someday.

As a homeowner you always want to love where you live, BUT you also want to make money when you sell your home, minimal money in to get top dollar out.

Remember you do not have to invest thousands of dollars to make a difference; just a small amount of updates can bring you a great return. Here are some updates to think about:

- Kitchens and master baths will bring you the biggest return
- Update light fixtures and bathroom fixtures
- Paint your front door

- Plant some flowers
- Declutter – free and worth every penny

Keely George  
Maximum One Realty

## Garden Club!

The BHL-HOA Board is proposing the formation of a Garden Club. If you are interested please contact Robby McGill at [rm3.mcgill@comcast.net](mailto:rm3.mcgill@comcast.net). The initial function would be to design, purchase, install, and maintain the “seasonal flowers” at the entrances into the neighborhood.



Other functions and activities of the club will be up to the volunteers, members, and chairperson. The chairperson would regularly interface with the elected board for designs approval, operating funds, use of clubhouse, submit announcements, etc.

We trust that each of you would consider this opportunity to enhance the beautification of our community. Thank you in advance for your participation!

BHL-HOA Board

## BHL Tool Time: Odds and Ends

**River Birch:** Asked the new landscape company owner what his advice for keeping River Birch trees in line was. His reply was swift. Take a chain saw and cut them about 10 inches off the ground.

River Birch trees were planted here because they were fast growing trees albeit they are extremely “dirty” – lots of debris, branches and leaves, throughout the year. More and more people are taking them out.

**Leyland Cypress:** These trees were originally planted for screening/privacy as they grow very fast until reaching a height of 30-40 feet. Mine (5 trees) are either dying or seriously stressed as the needles inside the tree are all turning brown – more so than in any previous year.

Did a little research on the web: UGA Extension, Diseases of Leyland Cypress in the Landscape (B 1229), and here is what I found out:

- They have a relatively shallow root system and they are often planted too close together in poorly drained soil.
- Disease management is a real consideration for them, and there are three major diseases that affect them
  - Seiridium Canker or twig dieback: Drought stress is a major cause of this. Spring freeze and ice injury often predispose trees to infection.
  - Bot canker: Again, plants suffering from environmental stress – freezing, drought or heat.

- Root rot disease: Less frequent than the above two diseases. It rarely affects mature trees.

- Treatment: Proper establishment and care are the best defenses against any of these three sources of disease. Provide adequate irrigation (irrigate thoroughly around the base every 7-14 days) during the hot, dry summer months. However, avoid excessive watering. Mulch an area 3-4 feet beyond the lowest limb. You can remove dead twigs and branches; however, you will need to disinfect all pruning tools with rubbing alcohol or bleach.

If anyone has better advice on how to care for these trees, please share so that we can protect them in BHL. There are quite a few of them in BHL.

**Mosquito Control:** I wouldn't have believed it until I tried it. Mosquitoes rank right up there with Poa Anna in my book. Had a recommendation for treating the yard for them and son-of-a-gun, it works!

While we on the board do not endorse any particular vendor over another, we are developing a list of those that work for us and whom we consider good quality at a fair price. If you are interested, will be happy to pass the contact info along; however, you must initiate this contact by emailing me (MABear11@msn.com).

I can now actually sit on my deck and enjoy a summer meal outdoors with smelling like a citronella candle. Recommended treatment is once a month during the summer months.

**Grass in the Shade:** You simply cannot get grass to grow in the shade unless you have 6-8 hours of sunlight per day. However, I had one homeowner tell me that if you over-seed with fescue multiple times in the spring and early summer, you can get your Bermuda looking good and hers does. I still recommend Zeon Zoysia or a variant for shady areas.

**Grass Under Trees:** On the recent inspection, we noticed a number of people trying to get grass to grow under a tree. (See previous inspection comment). Recommendation: extend the pine straw. It still looks good.

**Pine Bark Wood Chips (Mulch):** More and more neighbors are going to the Color-fast wood chips. I may be making the transition next year. The color is guaranteed to last a full year so this means no more spreading pine straw twice a year. Of course, a bag doesn't go as far as a bale.

Terry

## The BHL Book Club

BHL Book Club meets every third Thursday of the month, 7pm at the Clubhouse. We are a very informal group, and would like anyone interested to come join us.

Everyone is welcome to bring their favorite book selections! Please email Debbie Ebers at [ebersd@bellsouth.net](mailto:ebersd@bellsouth.net) for any other questions or info.



## Men's Poker Night

Men's Poker Night every first Thursday of the month at Clubhouse. Come at **7 pm** for drinks, setup, and conversation and the game begins at **8**.

Football on the big screen! Bring some food and drink to share and meet your neighbors!

## Men of Mars Hill

**Fellowship – Bible Study – Community Outreach**

Please come and check out the Men of Mars Hill that meets every Saturday morning at the Clubhouse at 7:30 am for prayer, Bible study and fellowship. We wrap up by 9 am. All men are welcome.

John Zupancic --- [johnzupancic.atl@gmail.com](mailto:johnzupancic.atl@gmail.com) – Phone 678-333-4086

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