

Apalachee Plantation

Homeowners' Association Newsletter

Annual Home Owners' Meeting
April 29, 7 p.m.

We will again meet this year in the cafeteria of Fort Daniel Elementary School.

HOA Dues—DUE NOW

BY NOW, you should have received your HOA dues for 2008. Many home owners understand their responsibility, and appreciate the work the Board does in their behalf, and pay their Association dues promptly. This makes it much easier for the HOA Board to pay tax and landscaping bills on time. Some home owners seem confused over why they are required to pay dues.

Writer Judy Hedding explains: "Homeowners' associations, or HOAs, are formal legal entities created to maintain common areas; they have the authority to enforce deed restrictions. . . . Single-family subdivisions have HOAs, which are usually created when the development is built. Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions (CC&R's) are issued to each homeowner, and HOAs are established to ensure that they are adhered to in order to maintain the quality and value of the properties involved."

Our HOA dues go to pay for landscaping of and taxes on all public areas within our subdivision, and maintenance of our two retention ponds, all mandated by our county, lighting at our entrance sign, Your board also

continued on page 2

Contents

Board Members and Contact Info	2
Drought-resistand Perennials	3
Water Ban Eased	3
Monthly Garden Advice	3
How to Report Code Violations	4
Take Pride in Your Neighborhood	4
Total Burn Ban in Gwinnett	4

HOA meeting and Election for Board Members

THE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION will have a meeting at Fort Daniel Elementary School, 7-9 p.m., on April 29, 2008. We will be electing new board members for 2008. If you are unable to attend the meeting please fill in the proxy below and mail it to the address below or send it with another homeowner who will be attending the meeting. If you are mailing your proxy please do so before April 19, 2008. It is very important for all homeowners to be involved in our association. Your home is the most important investment you will ever make. The best thing you can do to protect that investment is to be involved in the community where you live.

Please start considering if being a board member is in your future. We meet once every few months and correspond through e-mail the rest of the time. It will take very little time

and will leave you with a feeling of satisfaction that you have done all you can to protect your home and community. If you would like to be on the board, or would like to nominate someone for the board (get their permission first) but will not be at the meeting, write their names and contact information along with the position on the proxy form in the newsletter. We have a lot to be proud of in our neighborhood. Let's keep it that way.

Current board members running for reelection are:

President: Lee Adkins

Vice President: Ren Burnette

Secretary: vacant

Treasurer: Madeline Andrade

Member-at-large: Salvador Fuentes

Yards without water

TO MAINTAIN a WaterSmart Landscape with no irrigation, consider these tips:

Help your plants use less water. Cut back annuals and perennials during dry spells. They'll bounce back when it rains again.

Collect water to keep your valuable plants alive. You'll be surprised at how much drips from your air conditioner, and at how much you catch in a rain barrel under your downspouts.

Prioritize plants. When water is scarce, give it to your valuable or irreplaceable trees and shrubs first. Don't worry about annuals and turf grasses that are easy to replace.

Don't stress your plants. Don't fertilize when you can't water it in. And set your mower blade higher than normal to help keep your lawn alive during a drought.

Mulch. Cover the entire area from the trunk to the ends of the branches with pine straw, bark chips or shredded hardwood mulch. Use newspapers underneath to help the soil retain moisture.

A slight adjustment to your lawn mower can drastically increase lawn survival during a drought. Encourage deeper rooting by raising the mower blade during dry weather. Cutting the grass a little higher raises lawn survival rates and decreases water demand. Sharp blades also help reduce the need for water because dull blades shred leaf tips, causing the turf to use more water than necessary.

Adjust your mower to a higher setting and mow more frequently. Consider leaving clippings on the lawn. Longer grass blades provide shade and help hold in moisture longer.

Keep off the grass. Avoid walking on grass during periods of drought stress. Mow lawns as little as possible during droughts to avoid additional stress, and cut at the highest possible setting. Never remove more than 1/3 of the leaf blade in one mowing. Allow mulched clippings to remain on the lawn to help cool the soil and retain moisture.

continued on page 2

Drought Resistant Perennials to Bloom Year Round

IT HAS been a nice winter, nothing too extreme and we have had good amounts of rain which has started some of us thinking about what to plant in our gardens this year.

I have come up with a list of a several native flowering perennials that are drought tolerant (once established), that help feed wildlife and keep your garden flowering all year long. This list is by no means comprehensive but then you would be tired of reading before I was tired of writing.

Let us start with some early spring bloomers. *Sanguinaria canadensis*, Bloodroot is the first to open. We all know Phlox but we are specifically speaking of *Phlox nivalis*, Trailing Phlox which flowers very heavy in the spring and sporadically until late fall. Next is *Amsonia tabernaemontana*, Blue Star. It starts to flower as the phlox begins to fade. *Zephyranthes atamasco*, Wild Easter, *Zephyer*, *Atamasco* and *Rain Lily* are the many common names for this species. (The problem with common names is there are too many names for the same species). You can easily start with a few plants and soon have a nice size colony of these without much effort.

Blooming next is *Silene virginiana*, Fire Pink is a beautiful native with a red star shaped flower that is a favorite of butterflies and hummingbirds. *Callirhoe involucrata*, Purple Poppy Mallow is a show stopper with large fuschia flowers that continually bloom into fall, the interesting foliage is a bonus.

As Spring warms even more the orange *Asclepias tuberosa*, Butterfly Weed, *Lilium michauxii*, Carolina Lily, *Echinacea pallida*, *paradoxa* and *laevigata* all different species of Cone Flower. These are great choices because of their extended bloom times and heat tolerance.

When Summer arrives you will want to have the *Liatis* species, Blazing Star, *Lobelia cardinalis*, Cardinal Flower, *Phlox paniculata*, Summer Phlox, (a different species of Phlox than the earlier one mentioned), and *Salvia azurea*. If you are looking for a hummingbird magnet... plant *Lobelia cardinalis* and throw away those sticky feeders.

The late Summer season can be spectacular with plantings of *Coreopsis*, *Rudbeckias*, and *Solidagos* as they flower in shades of gold, yellow, and copper. For a spectacular contrast you may want to add *Symphotrichum georgiana*, Georgia Aster with the darkest purple flowers that are quarter in size and bloom profusely until frost.

As the year comes to an end and it is cold and dreary, the *Gentiana decora*, *Gentiana catesbaei*, or *Gentiana sapornaria* all have iridescent indigo blue flowers and can surprise anyone who has a damp boggy site to plant them. They flower in November and December and are an unexpected sight in the garden that time of year.

I have only shared with you here a very small listing of beautiful and well worth your time to seek out and plant choices for your garden. Have fun with it!

—Article by *Jim Rodgers*. of *Nearly Native Nursery in Fayetteville*. For drought resistant plants, visit www.nearlynativenursery.com

Water Ban Eased

Pending an EPD order issued by Director Carol Couch that provides an exemption to the Level Four Drought Response, hand watering will be allowed for 25 minutes per day on an odd-even schedule between midnight and 10:00 a.m. Odd numbered addresses can water on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. Even numbered addresses can water Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Hand watering is defined as one person with one garden hose with a spray nozzle that shuts off when it is released.

Always check with the County or State to check current restrictions and guidelines. If the water user participates in the Outdoor Water Use Registration Program, the individual can water newly installed landscapes, up to three days a week from midnight to 10:00 a.m. for a period of 10 weeks based on the odd-even schedule. The Outdoor Water Use Registration Program is currently being developed and is expected to be implemented by April 1. Georgians may also contact their county extension agents for assistance in getting registered.

HOA Dues, from page 1

cares for covenant and county violations, and permission for changes to existing property, such as adding fences, pools, tall plants, etc. This ensures that the value of your home does not unnecessarily decrease.

Your Board members are unpaid, voluntarily giving their time for the benefit of your neighborhood. Please do your part and pay your dues on time.

Remember, May 14 is the deadline after which late fees of \$10 per month are charged, and liens are placed on homes owing back dues.

If you did not receive your invoice you have two options. Contact the Board for a duplicate invoice, or simply mail they check for the dues of \$150.00 (see <http://www.apalacheeplantation.com/contact.html> for email, phone, and mailing address). Even if you did not receive an invoice, your dues must be paid by the deadline to avoid penalties.

For Judy Hedding's article about HOAs, please see: <http://phoenix.about.com/cs/real/a/HOA01.htm>

Yard Care, from page 1

and nutrients into the soil, decreases runoff and encourages the roots of grass to grow deeply and to become drought tolerant.

—Article courtesy of: Conserve Water Georgia. For further information: http://www.conservewatergeorgia.net/Documents/outdoor_tips.html

Board Members and Contact Information

President: Lee Adkins

Vice President: Ren Burnette

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Madeline Andrade

Member-at-large: Salvador Fuentes

E-mail: Contact Any HOA Board Member at: apalacheeplantation@yahoo.com

Mailing address: PO Box 923; Dacula, GA 30019

Website: www.apalacheeplantation.com

Lee Adkins can be reached at: 404-432-6878

*Monthly Gardening Advice from
the Gwinnett County Extension Service*

April

- Prune flowering shrubs such as quince, spirea and forsythia after blooming.
- Prepare beds and plant annual flowers.
- Lawn areas can still be planted from seed, plugs, sprigs or sod. Fertilizer can be applied to lawn areas provided it has been two weeks since the grass has greened up.
- As you begin mowing the lawn, sharpen the blades every 4-6 weeks.

May

- You may continue to plant shrubs in the landscape, but plan to water regularly to insure that they survive the coming warmer temperatures.
- Bermuda can still be planted during May. Pay careful attention to watering since temperatures will continue to rise throughout the month.
- Fertilize Bermuda lawn areas.
- Summer flowering bulbs, such as dahlias and gladiolas, can be planted.
- Don't forget to fertilize annuals and roses monthly throughout the growing season. Most vegetables should be side-dressed with fertilizers at this time. Be careful not to over fertilize.

June

- Prune azaleas and camellias after they have finished blooming.
- Spray gardenias to control white flies and sooty mold. Crape Myrtles should also be sprayed to control aphids and sooty mold.
- Keep a close eye on insect problems in the lawn area. Spittle bugs and white grubs can create serious problems in lawn areas during June.
- Warm season lawn grasses can still be

established during June. Keep a close eye to make sure adequate water is available.

- Fertilize Bermuda lawn areas.
- Marigolds, salvia, annual vinca and begonias can be planted. Pinch terminals of flowers to promote branching.
- Don't forget to fertilize annuals and roses monthly throughout the growing season.
- Watch for disease problems in the vegetable garden. Tomatoes can be sprayed with calcium chloride to help prevent blossom end rot.
- For more information see: <http://county.ces.uga.edu/gwinnett/AG/default.htm>

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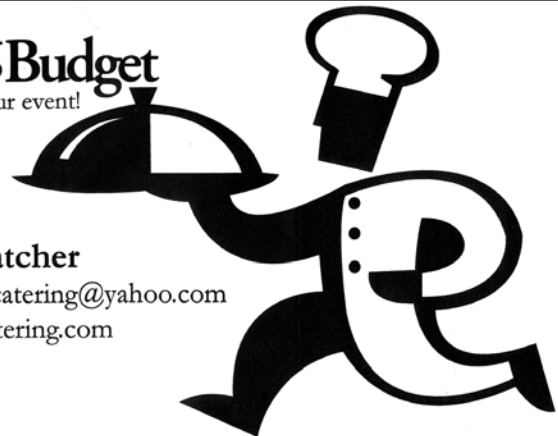
Ads

Ads can be placed for \$15 per year for homeowners and \$25 per year for non-homeowners.

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How to Report Violations

IN ORDER to report a code violation in the unincorporated areas of the county, please call the Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development's 24-hour hotline at 678.518.6032 or go to the website at: < <http://www.co.gwinnett.ga.us>> to report a code violation online. Anonymous complaints may be made. It is not necessary to personally speak to a code compliance officer to report a violation. Violations may range from storing junk vehicles on private property to operating a business, such as automobile repair, in a residential area.

To promote the safety and continued value of neighborhood property, the Apalachee Plantation Home Owners Association most frequently reports violations regarding tall weeds/grass, cars parked in yards, and commercial vehicles.

Violations of the Gwinnett County Zoning Resolution, Sign Ordinance, and Property Maintenance Ordinance are prosecuted in the Environmental Division of Recorder's Court and are subject to a penalty of up to \$1000 and/or 60 days in jail per violation per day.

To request updates or information about previously submitted violations, please call 678.518.6050 or send an email to the Code Compliance general email box at pncc@gwinnettcountry.com.

Be vigilant to protect the value of your home and neighborhood.

Be a Neighbor To Be Proud Of

Apalachee Plantation is one of the few remaining affordable neighborhoods in our area. In these difficult economic times, we can be proud of having invested wisely. But, our homes can lose equity rapidly if we do not maintain them.

A well maintained yard and garden can increase a home's value by 8-10%. A home in good repair will sell for a higher price than one left to decay. If you cannot afford to purchase weed killer for your lawn, at least keep the weeds mowed short to prevent their spreading onto your neighbors' yards. Collect rain water and plant drought resistant plants.

Report code violations to the county. One poorly maintained home hurts us all. Remember, no one has the right to ignore County requirements and restrictions, nor do they have the right to violate Association covenants.

Total Burn Ban in Gwinnett County May 1-September 30

The burn ban is in effect from May 1 through September 30 each year. Why is the burn ban needed?

The Georgia EPD imposes a ban on outdoor burning to comply with Federal Clean Air Regulations. During the summer months in Georgia, the ozone in the air we breathe can reach unhealthy levels. The Georgia EPD has identified open burning as a significant contributor of the pollutants that form ozone. Consequently, open burning in metro Atlanta and larger counties must be restricted during the summer months.

Penalties can be up to \$1,000.00 fine and/or up to one year in jail. There are other ways to handle yard waste. One is to compost it. Another is to contract with a garbage collection agency to haul away your bagged yard waste. If your garbage collection agency does not collect yard waste, check with your neighbors. Perhaps you can go in on a collection with someone whose agency will collect it.

For more information: <http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/ForestFire/GeorgiaBurnBan.cfm>