



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE JOHN LAWSON
Association President

Hello Neighbors,

My name is John Lawson and I am the current board president of the Ashbrook Homeowner's Association. I have lived in Ashbrook for the past 8 years. I joined the social committee a couple of years ago and have been a board member for the last year. To be honest with you, I decided to step up and join the board as no one else seemed to be interested in helping out. I am happy to see that, over the past couple of months, more and more residents are getting involved to help improve our neighborhood and keep it a desirable community in which to live.

I am excited to be a part of the efforts in helping to re-energize our community and I see a bright future for Ashbrook. If you have some spare time, please consider joining one of the board committees. As a reminder, every homeowner and tenant in Ashbrook is an association member and all are welcome to attend monthly board and committee meetings. Attending regular meetings is a great way to stay informed on what is happening in Ashbrook.

JUST A LITTLE
Reminder

PARKING LOTS

BOTH THE COMMUNITY CENTER AND PLAYGROUND PARKING LOT AREA GATES WILL BE CLOSED AND LOCKED AT DARK EACH EVENING. ANY VEHICLES INSIDE WILL AT THIS TIME WILL BE SUBJECT TO TOWING AT OWNERS EXPENSE, EXCEPT THOSE AT APPROVED FUNCTIONS.

THE LAKE

THE LAKE IS PRIVATE AND IS FOR USE BY ASHBROOK RESIDENTS AND ACCOMPANIED GUESTS ONLY. PLEASE REMEMBER WHEN FISHING THAT ALL BASS ARE CATCH AND RELEASE ONLY! ONLY ELECTRIC BOAT MOTORS ARE ALLOWED ON THE LAKE AND SWIMMING IN THE LAKE IS NOT RECOMMENDED.

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The Ashbrook Community Calendar of Events is available on the community web site, www.AshbrookOnline.com.

Its a great way to stay informed.

And if you have not signed up for email notifications, you can do that on the web site.

BOARD MEETINGS: Second Tuesday's of each month. Mark your calendars for the following dates. August 9th, September 13th, October 11th, November 8th, and December 13th

We invite all residents to come to these meetings.

NOTICE

INFO REGARDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS AND BUSINESS PROCESSES

The Board of Directors normally meets at 7:00 P.M. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Ashbrook Community Center. Ashbrook owners and residents are encouraged to come to the meeting in order to better understand the business and decisions made by the Board.

The Board meeting has a preset Agenda of items to be discussed and perhaps voted upon, and the meeting will be conducted per “Robert’s Rules of Order” (Article 3, Section 7 of Ashbrook’s Recorded By-laws).

Please note that these Board meetings are not public forums for the owners and residents. At the end of each section of the Agenda, there is a time allocated for attendees to briefly speak or ask questions regarding that section, and a time allocated to speak to General Content.

Please also note that any new ideas or suggestions NOT on the current Agenda will normally not be discussed or be dealt with in this meeting, but will be routed to the proper Committee to be considered at the next upcoming Committee meeting. After the Committee does “due diligence” on the item, the Committee can recommend it to the Board for discussion and consideration in the Agenda for the upcoming Board meeting.

At any time, if residents/owners have ideas, concerns, violation complaints, or general complaints, they are encouraged to email them to the Management Company. If they have a particular complaint about a violation they have received, also email that to the Management Company. These items will be promptly forwarded to the proper people to deal with them. Email: christopher@acswest.org.

Thank you for your cooperation,
John Lawson, President
Ashbrook Community Association



TREASURERS REPORT

Don MacQueen—Treasurer

TREASURER'S REPORT

William Megginson, Treasurer

As of May 31, 2022, Ashbrook had \$138,850.02 in our checking account and \$87,962.02 in our Money Market Capital Reserve account, giving us total funds in the bank of \$226,812.04. As usual, all of our bills are paid current, and we remain in good financial condition.

Due to the 2 years of Covid lockdowns, we did not see a need to raise the dues for the HOA, seeing that we had curtailed many of the social activities during that time, even though the economy was indicating that prices for goods and services were going to increase for 2022.

Based on our solid financial condition and the fact that we continue to accrue sufficient funds in our Reserve Account to cover future repairs, replacement, and major maintenance, the Finance and Audit committee recommended that the 2022 ACA dues remain at \$242.00 annually. This recommendation was approved by the Board. Members in good standing may elect to pay this amount by January 1, or choose to pay \$60.50 the 1st day of each quarter (January, April, July, and October). Per our rules and regulations (listed in your disclosure book as well as online at www.ashbrookonline.com under the Overview tab on the sidebar) the management company furnished the Finance and Audit committee and the Board with the list of members not in good standing who will be required to pay annual dues in their entirety by January 1st of the following year. These members will receive a letter advising such and that if the dues go delinquent that their account will be immediately be sent to a collection attorney for action.

Please remember that our financial books are always open to members in good standing, and if you would like more information regarding anything particular to please feel free to contact me at 804-874-3597 or via email at meggmobil@gmail.com



BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Mark Thompson-Committee Chair

We are working with Quality Landscaping and are on a solid path to keeping our grounds in tip top shape. Everything from fence repair to tree limbing will be occurring soon to help improve the optics of our neighborhood. In addition this year, the walking paths have been repaved and the footbridge near the clubhouse parking lot has been extensively repaired.

The Lake Committee

Mark Thompson-Committee Chair

It has been a big project over the past 4 years to help increase the catch rates in bass, bluegill, and crappie in our lake. 4 years ago we partnered with (DWS), The Department of Wildlife Resources and they were able to take a fish population sample. The results were that the largemouth bass had a substantial food source with shad and bluegill but that there weren't that many bass in the lake. The bass were either very big(19+ inches) or very small (under 10 inches) but none in between. At this point we took steps to ensure that the bottom food chain had a place to hide and thrive by installing artificial structures for bait fish. Grass carp were introduced into the lake 3 years ago to help control vegetation growth which has been very successful. The lake was stocked with 800 large mouth bass 2 years ago and last year we stocked the lake with an additional 1000 large mouth bass. By fishing the lake myself as well reports from others fishing on the lake the catch rate has increased significantly and we are seeing fish in the 10-15 inch range that weren't there 4 years ago. A new lake fountain has been installed in the northeast inlet by the clubhouse parking lot. This fountain provides constant circulation and aeration of the lake which reduces algae, eliminates foul odors, helps decrease mosquito activity, reduces bottom sediment, and helps to enhance the habitat of fish life. Overall, the lake is in great condition and life in the lake is thriving.



Ashley Lawson-Committee Chair

I want to begin by thanking everyone who helped to make the Summer Picnic a huge success. It was wonderful to see everyone out and interacting with residents of the community once again. As you know, COVID put quite a damper on planning social events the past couple of years but the time has come to resume the fun in Ashbrook. Watch for the posted signs for reminders! Come out, have fun, support your Social Committee and your Neighborhood.

If you have spare time, creative ideas, and or simply want to help out at events, please consider joining the Social Committee! Contact Ashely Lawson at fordao88@gmail.com.

2022 Social Events Calendar

August 2nd	National Night Out
August 20th	Anything but the Boat Event
September 17th	Elementary & Teen Night
October 15th	Fall Yard Sale
October TBD	Pumpkin Carving Contest & Trunk or Treat Event
December 10th	Breakfast with Santa

We will also be bringing back the holiday lights and decorating contest for 2022. Prizes will be awarded for the best light displays in the neighborhood. Stay tuned for more information regarding. We are also working on events for next year and would love input from the community. Please feel free to contact me at the email above with any suggestions and recommendations. As always if you have time, please consider joining the social committee.

Check out our page on Facebook:
Ashbrook Residents Social Committee



Jo Ann Ruitenbergh, Committee Chair

There are many things that need approval in advance by the ARC (architectural review committee). Some such items include:

- ⇒ Any exterior additions
- ⇒ Attic ventilators
- ⇒ Awnings & Sun Trellises
- ⇒ Decks and/or Dock Replacements/Additions
- ⇒ Permanent Decorative Yard Decorations
- ⇒ Dog Houses and/or Dog Runs
- ⇒ Driveways
- ⇒ Fences
- ⇒ Flagpoles
- ⇒ Vegetable Gardens and/or Raised Garden Beds
- ⇒ Greenhouses
- ⇒ Heating and A/C Units
- ⇒ Hot Tubs, Whirlpools, and/or Spas
- ⇒ Landscaping, Planting, and Lighting
- ⇒ Mailboxes
- ⇒ Painting and Staining of Decks, Porches, Exterior Doors, House, etc.
- ⇒ Playhouses and/or Forts
- ⇒ Pools (larger than 250sq.ft. surface area)
- ⇒ Permanent Grill and/or BBQ structures
- ⇒ Recreational and/or Play Equipment
- ⇒ Roofing including Solar Collectors
- ⇒ Storage Buildings and Sheds

It is always better to submit the property improvement request form for your upcoming projects rather than making assumptions. Not doing so can result in costly fines and/or additional repair, replacement, or demolition costs if project is out of compliance. Please contact Jo Ann Ruitenbergh, committee chair at 804-639-0532 or via email billandjo94@comcast.net

SAFETY  **SECURITY**



Robert Winkler
William Megginson
S/S & Neighborhood Watch

It is time to re-energize the neighborhood watch and regain our sense of community. It is every resident's responsibility to report any illegal or suspicious activity to CCPD by calling 911 or the non-emergency number at 804-748-1269. Take pictures if possible and jot down any important details such as vehicle make & model, license plate number, vehicle color, description of any persons including clothing details etc. Please remember...stay alert, be aware, BUT most importantly...BE SAFE.

New neighborhood watch signs are in the process of being installed throughout the community including at each playground, community center gate, and storage corral fencing. In addition, security cameras are operational in and around the community center building. Any and all illegal activity will be reported to CCPD.

We are looking for block captains! Block captains maintain a list of emergency contact information for a certain number of residents in case of an emergency and people need to be contacted etc. Contact me today for more information.

Flock safety provided a very informative demonstration to the ACA Board at the July meeting for installation of solar powered security cameras. These cameras, if approved, will be placed at the main entrances of the neighborhood. Please visit www.flocksafety.com for more information. We anticipate that the Board will vote on installation at the August 9th Board meeting. We realize many of you may have questions or concerns regarding the flock safety camera systems and encourage you to visit their website for more information.

The area surrounding our quaint peaceful neighborhood is growing at a rapid pace. Energizing the neighborhood watch and increasing community awareness will help keep our community a desirable and safe place to live.

We are looking forward to planning some informative meetings and events. Some of the topic ideas we are considering for meetings include but not limited to:

- ⇒ Cell Phone and Internet Safety for Kids
- ⇒ Drugs Today and What You Need to Know
- ⇒ What To Do If Someone Breaks In
- ⇒ Keeping Teens Safe While Home Alone
- ⇒ How To Properly Report a Crime
- ⇒ Proper Use of Home Security Cameras

We need your support to make our community thrive and continue to stay safe for everyone. All residents are welcome! We want you to join us and be an active member of the neighborhood watch and the safety & security committee.

Email: ashbrookwatch@gmail.com
call/text at 804-464-5419

Join us!

Neighborhood Watch Safety & Security Committee Meeting

**Thursday, August 18th
7pm
At the Clubhouse**

**Did you know, there is a monthly
neighborhood crime report?
Join us and CCPD Officer Hagen for this
informative neighborhood meeting.**

**It's time to get involved, stay informed,
and get to know your neighbors!**

FIREWORKS

As many of you may be aware, there was a major house fire in the community on July 4th due to “improper disposal of fireworks”. Our thoughts are with the family as they deal with this unfortunate situation and we are thankful that no one was injured. We all enjoy a good fireworks display and while some of us are guilty of bending the rules now and then, it is important to remember that fireworks are dangerous and can damage property. Most importantly, please be aware that fireworks are **ILLEGAL** as Chesterfield County prohibits anyone who isn’t a “licensed and permitted fireworks professional” from using, possessing or selling fireworks. Violators can be charged with a Class 1 misdemeanor (up to a year in jail and a \$2,500 fine).

Chesterfield County Fire Prevention Code

The Fire Prevention Code is as follows:

- **5601.1 Scope:** The manufacture, possession, display, storage, handling, sale or use of fireworks shall comply with the provisions of this chapter.
- **5602.1 Definition:** Fireworks shall mean any firecracker, torpedo, skyrocket, or other substance or object, of whatever form or construction, that contains any explosive or inflammable compound or substance, and is intended, or commonly known, as fireworks and which explodes, rises into the air or travels laterally, or fires projectiles into the air. Fireworks shall not include auto flares, paper caps containing not more than an average of 0.25 grain (16 mg) of explosive content per cap, or toy pistols, toy canes, toy guns or other devices utilizing such caps and items commonly known as party poppers, pop rocks and snap-n-pops.

5601.2.2.1 Violations (County Ordinance): No person shall store, possess, offer for sale, expose for sale, sell at retail, or use or explode any fireworks, or pyrotechnic special effect materials, except as provided in the rules and regulations issued by the code official for the granting of permits for supervised displays of fireworks or pyrotechnic special effect materials.

www.chesterfieldcounty.gov/531/Fireworks-Regulations

Ashbrook Newsletter

Mary Winkler-Newsletter

The Ashbrook Community Newsletter is officially back in circulation thanks to Mary Winkler. The main purpose of the newsletter is to relay valuable information to the residents of Ashbrook. This is the first of two newsletters scheduled for the remainder of 2022, the Fall/Winter newsletter will be sent out in October of this year. Newsletters will be mailed to all homeowners and tenants of Ashbrook. If you have suggestions and/or recommendations for the Ashbrook Community Newsletter please email to Mary Winkler: newsletterashbrook@gmail.com.



Ashbrook Community Suggestion E-BOX

Terry Guthrie, Association Vice President

Every homeowner and tenant in the neighborhood is a member of the Ashbrook Community Association (ACA). The ACA board members understand that it can be difficult to attend monthly board meetings. For this reason, I recommended that a suggestion E-box be established as every resident has a right to be heard. Valid suggestions and/or recommendations will be read and discussed at the next board meeting following the date suggestion email is received. The email address to submit suggestions is:

ashbrooksuggestionbox@gmail.com

VIOLATIONS

OF ASHBROOK COVENANTS, RULES, & REGULATIONS

There are basically three types of violations, and specific processes in place for handling each type:

1st Types:

GRASS CUTTING: A violation letter is sent out with each violation. Starting with the 3rd, and with each subsequent violation, there is a non-compliance penalty assessment.

TRASH CANS LEFT OUT OF SCREENED AREA AFTER NOON OF THE DAY FOLLOWING PICKUP: A violation letter is sent out with each violation. Starting with the 3rd, and with each subsequent violation, there is a non-compliance penalty assessment.

2nd Types:

All other violations that can be quickly remedied; i.e., trailer parked in driveway, junk left out in yard, bags of leaves left in yard, front porch cluttered, portable swimming pool in front yard, wheelbarrow or other equipment left out in yard, etc. A violation letter is sent giving 48 hours after receipt to correct violation. Starting with 2nd written notice of the same recurring violation, and with each subsequent recurring violation, there is a non-compliance penalty assessment.

3rd Types:

Violations or more major nature that will take longer to correct; roof stains, power washing needed, house needing payment, repairs needed to porch railings, bare spots in lawn, yard erosion, shutter falling off, dead tree in yard, etc. A violation letter is sent giving 14 days to correct violation or work out an acceptable plan with the management company to correct violation. After 14 days there is a \$10 per day non-compliance penalty assessed until violation is corrected, with a cap of \$900. If violation is not cured, the Board may have attorney seek court order to have the violation cured.

In all cases, the violator is to notify the management company in writing or by email when violation is corrected so a re-inspection can be conducted for verification or if violator has a dispute regarding the violation.

INSPECTIONS

Don MacQueen, Ashbrook Violations Inspector

Property inspections are done from the inspector's vehicle of items/structures that can be viewed from the street and are dependent on the direction of travel. Photographs are taken from the vehicle and processed through ACS West Inc., the management company for ACA.

We ask that residents be proactive instead of reactive by performing self inspections of their property weekly to ensure compliance and avoid any violation notices and/or un-necessary fines. Remember to please consult with the Architectural Review Committee prior to any major projects, repairs, or restorations to ensure compliance. (see pg.6)

Some of the most common violations include but are not limited to:

HOUSE

- ⇒ Power washing needed
- ⇒ Roof stains
- ⇒ Repairs/painting needed
- ⇒ Missing Trim on house
- ⇒ Non-normal items on porch
- ⇒ Window air conditioners
- ⇒ Sheds/structures out of compliance

YARD

- ⇒ Tall grass/or weeds
- ⇒ Shrubs trimmed
- ⇒ Trash recycle cans left out past deadline
- ⇒ Kiddie pools/recreation items (front/side yards)
- ⇒ Leaves/debris removal needed
- ⇒ Vehicles parked in yard
- ⇒ A/C, propane tank not properly screened
- ⇒ Fences out of compliance
- ⇒ Mailbox and posts

DRIVEWAYS

- ⇒ Grass in driveway
- ⇒ Repairs or cleaning needed
- ⇒ Trailers or equipment in driveway
- ⇒ Unlicensed and/or damaged vehicles

COMMUNITY CENTER IS AVAILABLE FOR USE



Community Center is here for the enjoyment of all ACA members. If you would like to get residents together for daytime games, bridge, mah-jongg, bunko, checkers, chess, quilting or crafts, kids play groups, over 50's luncheons and socials, etc., you can use the community center at no charge!! Our Social and Recreation Committee will help you get it organized and reserve the times for you. Contact Ashley Lawson. Her email address is: fordao88@gmail.com. If you would like to rent the Community Center for that special event, please contact Mark Thompson @ 804-525-0765 for rates and availability. You can also contact via email at mthomps1582@gmail.com

TENNIS COURTS

The courts are to be used only for tennis and pickleball, not for skateboarding, bike and scooter riding, playing cricket, or a dog run.

If you are a member-in-good-standing (no outstanding past due dues or violation fees) and would like to be able to use the tennis courts, you can get a key for a \$25 key deposit, which is refundable in the event you decide to return the key in the future. These are Medico Security Keys and it is illegal for anyone to make copies. Please contact Christopher Bertsch with ACS West at christopher@acswest.org



Buying or Selling In Ashbrook

Buying In Ashbrook:

Set-Up Assessment Billing. Contact ACS West to set up how your assessments will be billed. 804.282.7451

Review ACA Disclosure Package. State Law requires the seller to provide you with a ACA Disclosure Package prior to closing. The Disclosure Package will disclose information on any current covenant/ARB violations and outstanding assessments fees that may be due the Association which you would become liable for once you close.

Inform Christopher Bertsch with ACS West of your new telephone number. Please email the ACA management company at christopher@acswest.org so that we may include your information in our database and telephone directory.

Moving Out Of Ashbrook:

Order a ACA Disclosure Package. State law requires you to provide a ACA Disclosure Package for a potential buyer who has signed a contract. As the ACA has two weeks to put together the Disclosure Package, it is recommended that you order the packet immediately after the contract has been signed. Email Christopher Bertsch with ACS West at Christopher@acswest.com for pricing and ordering information.

Provide the ACA with a "Settlement Statement" for the ACA to begin billing the new owner of the property you are selling. You will need to show that there's been a legal transfer of property by providing the ACA with a copy of your Settlement Statement (HUD). This information is also on the Community Web Site.





2022 Approved Actual Budget

Ashbrook Community Association, Inc.

INCOME	
OPERATING ASSESSMENTS	\$169,678.00
INTEREST EARNED-OPERATING	\$100.00
INTEREST DELINQUENT ASSESSMENTS	-
LATE FEES BILLED	-
CLUBHOUSE INCOME	\$3,000.00
VIOLATION CHARGES	-
VEHICLE STORAGE INCOME	\$5,400.00
BOAT RACK INCOME	\$450.00
BAD DEBT RECOVERY	-
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$178,628.00
EXPENSES	
MANAGEMENT FEE	\$58,128.00
WATER/SEWER	\$750.00
ELECTRICITY	\$6,750.00
COMCAST-SECURITY CAMERA	\$2,000.00
LEGAL EXPENSES	\$2,000.00
TAX RETURN & AUDIT EXP	\$3,200.00
CORPORATION FEES	300.00
INSURANCE	\$7,000.00
WEBPAGE/EMAIL DISTRIBUTION	\$700.00
GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE	\$1,500.00
POSTAGE	\$5,000.00
COPIES	\$2,000.00
ADDITIONAL SECURITY	\$10,000.00
SAFETY & SECURITY CONTINGENCY	\$500.00
GRASS CUTTING & TRIMMING	\$38,500.00
SEASONAL PLANTS/GROUNDS IMPROVEMENT	\$4,500.00
TREE REMOVAL	\$5,000.00
FOUNTAIN MAINTENANCE	\$800.00
ALGAE TREATMENT	\$4,500.00
RESTOCK LAKE WITH FISH	\$2,000.00
PLAYGROUND	\$2,000.00
GENERAL REPAIRS	\$7,500.00
CLUBHOUSE RENTAL MANAGER	\$1,000.00
SOCIAL COMMITTEE EXPENSES	\$13,000.00
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$178,628.00
RESERVE	
RESERVE ASSESSMENTS-CAPITAL	\$10,916.00
INTEREST EARNED-RESERVES	-
TOTAL RESERVE INCOME	\$10,916.00

YOUR DUES DOLLARS--WHAT DO YOU GET FOR YOUR MONEY??

In 2020 dues were increased by 10% to a total of \$242.00 annually or \$60.50 per quarter and will remain the same during 2022. (Virginia law allows the Board to raise the dues 10% per year if they so choose).

That equates to \$20.17 a month- about the cost of dinner for one at a decent restaurant.

But what do you get for your money??

A great playground and two tot lots for your family's enjoyment.

2 basketball courts, sand volleyball court, 2 tennis courts, 2 cornhole game pits, a soccer field, and a 6 station disc-golf course.

Several walking and bike paths throughout the neighborhood.

Maintenance and upkeep of all recreational equipment.

A large picnic pavilion with 10 picnic tables.

Several charcoal grills and 8 picnic tables scattered throughout the recreational areas.

Lakeside small-boat rack storage for \$50. per year.

Free usage of a stocked lake for fishing and boating (no gas motors).

Park benches strategically placed throughout the neighborhood.

2 community picnics a year, 2 Elementary/Teen nights with Game Trucks and Laser Tag, and a National Night Out event.

Breakfast with Santa and a Christmas party for the adults, plus several other social events.

Professional day-to-day management of Ashbrook's business affairs, dues processing and collections, insurances, bills and bookkeeping, and taxes, (with a CPA yearly limited audit).

you get a lot of value for your money.

Overseeing of covenant enforcement to ensure the neighborhood conforms to the criteria whereby it was set up and property values are protected.

A website where you can stay updated with Ashbrook info and events.

A very reasonably priced community center to rent for your parties and personal non-commercial events.

Grass cutting and maintenance of common areas and some roadsides.

Mulching, upkeep, and seasonal flower planting of the shrub beds and entrances.

Removal of dead trees from the common areas.

o A modified type of "halfpipe" where your kids are allowed to skateboard and rollerblade (at their own risk), unlike most places where that is prohibited.

A vehicle, trailer, and boat storage corral space for \$20 per month (compared to about \$75 per month at the mini-storage facilities).

o Email communication system to quickly get general or emergency info out to all residents who are signed up.

Security lighting of recreation areas and community center, and video surveillance of community center area.

Hiring of off-duty police officer on a regular basis to help prevent and investigate vandalism and crimes, and curb speeding and other violations in Ashbrook.

YOUR DUES DOLLARS--WHAT DO YOU GET FOR YOUR MONEY??

And this is not counting the value of the hundreds of hours contributed by our volunteer Board of Directors, Committee Chairs and Members, and the “Keepers of the Gates” to the recreation areas, to make this an attractive, enjoyable, and safe community for you and your family.

All in all, we hope that you will agree that you get a lot of value for your money.

Special Edition: Why Covenant Enforcement Matters

The Broken Window Theory and Your Community Association by Daniel B. Stretch

Walt Disney intuitively figured it out and adopted it even before the sociologists came up with it. Rudy Giuliani wholeheartedly believed in it and implemented it during his tenure as Mayor of New York City. What is “it”? An analysis of human behavior known as the “broken window theory.” We think it applicable to community associations as well.

A few qualifiers at the outset. When the concept was first published in 1982 in the *Atlantic Monthly* by noted social scientists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, it was initially perceived as a theory pertaining to urban criminology. That is essentially how it was applied and implemented by Giuliani during his tenure as the chief executive of New York City, where it achieved dramatically successful results, both statistically and empirically. But the theory has since been discussed and applied in other academic disciplines and spheres of human activity as well, with economics as one example.

We acknowledge here that the broken window theory has its critics. Nevertheless, there is a compelling, real-life quality to the theory. It seems to have an undeniable explanatory and predictive capacity. Many – perhaps most – Americans are able to recall experiences or places in their lives in which the theory seems to have been validated, in whole or in part.

So what is the theory? Reduced to its simplest form, it uses a broken window as a symbolic metaphor. The theory holds that if an abandoned building or a vacated residential dwelling has a broken window that is visible to the public, and if that window goes unrepaired, more windows in the building or the dwelling will soon be broken by acts of vandalism. If the owner or the community allows the deterioration of the building to continue to go unrepaired and unchecked, then eventually squatters may wind up living in the building, or minors may play in the building and commit further acts of vandalism, or drug users may use the building as a “shooting gallery” to indulge their addiction. Wilson, Kelling and other sociologists performed some practical experiments to test and prove the theory, but a description of those experiments, while fascinating, is beyond the scope of this article.

Why does this happen? Fundamentally, the theory's insight is that people are both adaptive and imitative beings. A person is adaptive in that he or she will usually conform their behavior to what they perceive to be the “norm” in their environment, so as to adapt and survive in that environment. In so doing they are essentially imitating those around them. A broken window that goes unrepaired sends a signal to the community. It implicitly communicates a message to the people who observe that minor but continuing indicator of social disorder. That message? No one cares. And if no one cares enough to repair one window, then the community won't care if more windows are broken, or if further acts of vandalism or social disorder are committed. In fact and effect, an unrepaired broken window – or litter on the street, or graffiti on fences – visually degrades the social order of that community and precipitates an ongoing decline of the acceptable and desirable social norm.

Decades before Wilson and Kelling developed and published their broken window theory, Walt Disney – being the genius that he was – intuitively understood this aspect of human nature. When he opened his first theme park (Disneyland in Anaheim, California) during the 1950s, he continually emphasized to his staff (paraphrasing here): *We will maintain our park in an immaculate condition, always... when our guests walk into our park in the morning, they will encounter a pristine environment, as perfectly maintained as humanly possible... we will strive ceaselessly to maintain the park in that condition throughout the day... when corrective maintenance is required, we will do it at night, so that when our guests stream through our gates every morning, they will find themselves in a wonderfully well-ordered and clean environment.*

One of my memories – still – from family vacations to Disneyland in my early childhood is of high school and college-aged young people, attired in straw boaters and spotlessly clean, light pastel-colored Disneyland staff uniforms, equipped with short-handled mini-brooms and dustbins attached to three-foot poles, constantly walking around the park, scooping up every straw wrapper, cigarette butt, candy wrapper and every other possible item of refuse and debris that didn't belong in Disneyland. That was their job. Their conscientious diligence and the scope of their activity impressed me, even at five years of age.

Why the unceasing effort? Because as Walt Disney informed his staff, people who come into an unsullied and orderly environment will be more likely to keep it that way. They will adapt to the norm set by that environment and they will therefore be more likely to respect Disneyland and their fellow guests. It didn't work on every guest's subconscious, of course, but it had – and has – the desired general effect, and Disney Corporation's philosophy in that regard continues to the present day.

Similarly, and in the urban criminology scenario, former NYC Mayor Giuliani implemented the theory to pull New York City back from the precipice of anarchy. Not many sentient individuals who were familiar with that city during the '70s and '80s would disagree with a description of the Big Apple as a chaotic, threatening, crime-ridden, nearly ungovernable entity. Its tourist trade had sunk through the floor. When he became NYC's Mayor, Giuliani faced a challenge that made the Aegean stables seem easy by comparison.

One might think that Giuliani would have concentrated his efforts on murder, rape, robbery and mayhem. He did so to an extent, but he also paid particular attention to aspects of the NYC environment that previous mayors had ignored. "Squeegee men," subway turnstile jumpers, graffiti "taggers" and aggressive, physically-intimidating panhandlers suddenly attracted considerable – and unwanted – law enforcement attention from the NYPD. Graffiti in public places, such as on subway cars, was removed and measures were instituted to prevent its recurrence. Dilapidated properties were sold and redeveloped. Central Park and other "common areas" were physically restored and made safe by a vigilant and visible law enforcement presence. Metaphorically speaking, Giuliani and his staff replaced the broken window.

The result? New York City became an environment that was no longer menacing in its underlying tone of disorder, crime and chaos. Social order was restored. By reducing the incidence of public and visible lawless acts and social disorder, however minor in nature, Giuliani established and enforced a new social norm, and that signaled to both NYC residents and to potential visitors that Gotham had turned a corner. Tourists returned, crime rates plummeted and the city prospered. New York City's precipitous decline into anarchic chaos had been arrested, and just in time.

We suspect that by now you have discerned the applicability of the broken window theory to community association governance. What is the norm or prevailing standard in your community? Is your neighborhood generally neat, clean, orderly and well-maintained? Or, conversely, do too many front lawns in your community look like the upland meadows through which Julie Andrews joyfully cavorted in the opening scenes of *The Sound of Music*? Is peeling paint the norm? Detached gutters? Missing or cockeyed shutters? Garbage cans – or even just garbage – at the curb 24/7? Trailers with watercraft parked in front yards? Broken fences, or even the presence of graffiti? What norm or standard does that appearance communicate to others... say, for example, to potential purchasers who may be driving through your neighborhood?

Because that's the important point, isn't it? You may not have known it when you purchased your home in your homeowners or condominium association community. You may not currently understand and appreciate the value of the restrictive covenants and related rules and regulations that govern the appearance and your use of your dwelling. But the fundamental purpose of such restrictions is to **preserve the value of your real estate investment**. Who among us purchased their home in the hope that they'll have to sell it someday for *less* than what they paid for it? Go ahead, raise your hands. Anyone? Didn't think so.

Like them or not, restrictive covenants establish a baseline, a standard, or yes, a social norm. Hanging toilet seats from a tree in the front yard (to cite an admittedly egregious example from a Louisiana HOA) deviates from and undermines that norm. And yes, the norm established by your restrictive covenants communicates a message to all who enter your community. It *signals* to others that the residents in your community take pride in their neighborhood and care about their homes.

That attitude may be motivated by community spirit, self-pride and self-dignity, or perhaps just by economic self-interest. Regardless, by setting and enforcing a standard of conscientious maintenance and aesthetic appeal, you're doing what Walt Disney did for Disneyland... you're making your community an attractive and welcoming environment which people will enjoy visiting and in which they may want to invest financially and emotionally.

So how to accomplish that goal? In the New York City example, Giuliani started with the small things, on the reasoning that if minor but visible and frequent violations were corrected, it would have a salutary effect on the larger problems. Again, that goes to the signaling aspect of the theory. Setting a standard – replacing the window – sends a message. Thus, a community association board of directors should of course take action (legal action, if necessary) against the usual one or two properties in the community that present visual blights within the neighborhood. That enforcement action in and of itself will send a message to the community.

After that, however, we recommend that a board of directors and the management agent concentrate on minor, more routine violating conditions. As we see it, this approach will accomplish four desirable goals for your association. First, it will hopefully prevent a minor violating condition on a lot (or condominium unit) from deteriorating into larger and more numerous violating conditions on the lot. Second, smaller problems are easier and less expensive to correct than larger problems, and thus property owners are more amenable to fixing smaller problems than having to spend significant amounts of money correcting larger violations. Third, preventing smaller problems from degenerating into larger problems can ultimately save the association from having to resort to litigation to enforce its covenants or use restrictions. And finally, paying attention to the details, the “small stuff,” signals to your community that a reasonable but rigorous norm is being established and will be enforced. Your members may grouse a bit about that, but most of them will understand and appreciate that such a standard actually serves their self-interests, economic and otherwise. And, with the signal having been sent, most of your members will adapt to and abide by the social norm established within your community.

In summary, we acknowledge that one could push the broken window theory too far with respect to its applicability to community association governance and covenant enforcement. But it *is* instructive as to preserving property values in your neighborhood

observable human behavior, and thus when implemented it can support the shared goal of Fix the window. Mow the lawn. Hide the garbage cans. Set and enforce a norm and thereby send the message that someone cares. All of your members will benefit from that approach, even if they don't realize it in the short term.

We Need YOU



IT'S TIME TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY. PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING ONE OF THE ASHBROOK COMMITTEES TODAY! CONTACT INFORMATION IS LOCATED ON THE BACK OF THIS NEWSLETTER. IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION THAT TO BE PART OF THE PROBLEM. LET'S KEEP ASHBROOK A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE!

**PLEASE REMEMBER,
ANY NON-RESIDENTS USING OUR FACILITIES
MUST BE A HOUSEGUEST
AND BE ACCOMPANIED
BY THE ASHBROOK RESIDENT!!**

Join Us For...
**NATIONAL NIGHT
OUT**

**Tuesday, August 2nd
6-7:30pm**



**Free Ice Cream
Free Snacks & Sodas**

**Raffle Drawing for Prizes
Meet McGruff the Crime Dog**

**EVENT WILL BE HELD AT THE
COMMUNITY
CENTER**

CLUBHOUSE

**COME OUT AND
MEET YOUR
NEIGHBORS!**



IF IT IS RAINING, THIS EVENT WILL BE

ANYTHING BUT THE BOAT THAT FLOATS & ICE CREAM SOCIAL EVENT

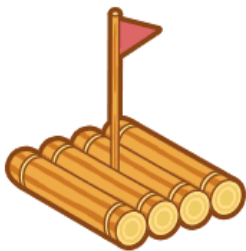


**SATURDAY, AUGUST 20TH
3-5PM**

FREE Mr Softee Ice Cream 4-5pm

First Come First Served

**It's time to be creative & have some fun on the lake!
Make a raft or float for a chance to win a prize!**



THE RULES:

NO TRADITIONAL BOATS!

(no jon boats, no pontoons, no kayaks, no canoes, no paddle boats)

Be Safe, Use Life Jackets, & Have Fun

Children Should be Supervised by Parent/Guardian Near or On Water

1st Place-\$200 Gift Card

2nd Place-\$100 Gift Card

3rd Place-\$50 Gift Card

**There is NO entry fee but please register your participation no later than
August 14th by emailing Ashley Lawson at fordao88@gmail.com**

3 People Need to Judge, first come first served!

Judges can not have any affiliation with anyone participating in event.

ATTENTION ASHBROOK YOUTH

Elementary Kid's Night

*Laser Tag, Video Games, and
Pizza Party*

For All Ashbrook
Elementary School Kids

(Note: Parents must be present
with elementary kids)

Saturday, September 17th
5pm-7pm

TEEN NIGHT

*LASER TAG, VIDEO GAMES,
& PIZZA PARTY*

For all Middle & High School Ash-
brook Teens

Saturday, September 17th
7:30pm-9:30pm

Limit of 2 non-resident guests per household.



Brought to you by Game Truck and the Ashbrook Social Committee

ASHBROOK COMMUNITY FALL YARD SALE

**Saturday, October 15th
8am-12pm**



There is no better time than Fall to declutter before the Holidays! So put out your unwanted items and make a little extra money. Signs will be posted advertising our community yard sales!

Join us for the first....

Fall Pumpkin Carving Contest & Trunk or Treat Event

*Date TBD and More Details to Follow
Regarding this Spooky Good Time...*

Stay Tuned....If you dare.



ASHBROOK HOLIDAY EVENTS

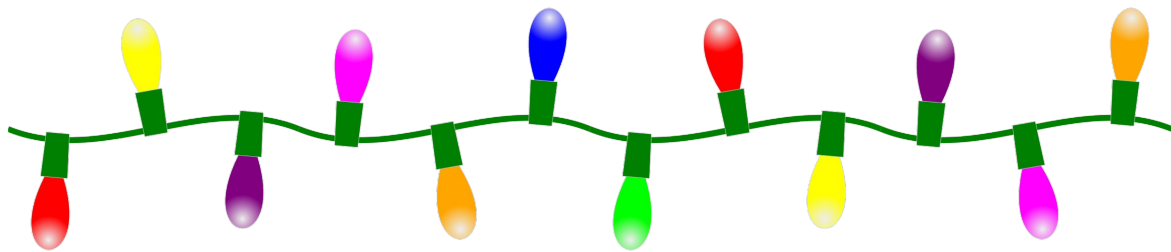


BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Saturday, December 10th

Time TBD Stay Tuned...

Join Santa for Breakfast at the clubhouse and get your picture taken!



The HOLIDAY Light Display Contest

is Back for 2022!

Prizes will be awarded to the best holiday lights and decorations displays! Stay tuned for more jolly details!



ASHBROOK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION:

ASHBROOK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

C/O ACS West, Inc. Suite 100
1904 BYRD AVENUE
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23230



Board Members:

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Treasurer	Mark Thompson	804.525.0765 mthomps1582@gmail.com
Member	William Megginson	804.874.3597 meggmobile@gmail.com

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Take the time
to solve
the crime.

748.0660
Securely And
Anonymously