

# MILL CREEK HOME



Newsletter of the Mill Creek Homeowners Association, Charlottesville, Virginia  
also available online at [www.millcreekhomeowners.org](http://www.millcreekhomeowners.org)

## Mill Creek Needs You!

The Mill Creek Board needs new members—will you volunteer to serve for a year? The Board is making steady progress on essential services now that membership is higher than in recent years. But two members are moving away, and we can maintain momentum only if other homeowners will join us.

Talk with any Board member to learn more.

— Addeane Caellegh, Editor

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## Mailboxes

In April, Board members and volunteers conducted the annual survey of mailboxes, and the improvements over the past year were noticeable on every street.

This year notices were sent to 38 homeowners, mostly to request fresh paint to the mailbox, the wooden structure, or both. And, like last year, notices went to a couple of Board members. (In 2012, notices were sent to 91 homeowners, most of them about major repairs.)

Only four notices were sent about making major repairs this year. Several homeowners received notices because their mailboxes and structures were freshly painted but not the approved color for Mill Creek mailboxes. We requested that the color be corrected when the structure was next repainted.

**Options if you need repair or rebuilding.** Fellow homeowner Mark Louisell will repair or rebuild a mailbox. You can contact him directly at 409-8439 or mlouisell2@hotmail.com, and details are available on the Mill Creek website. If you use local carpenters to build a new mailbox structure, please ensure that they follow the traditional model accurately.

**Gardening around mailboxes.** The volunteers enjoyed seeing the lovely gardening that some homeowners have put around their mailboxes, not to mention the lovely front gardens throughout the neighborhood.



### Mill Creek e-mail list

An e-mail list is being built to allow for rapid, convenient information exchange between the Board of Directors and homeowners. Member-at-Large Brian Lewis is collecting the addresses. Your information will not be used for commercial purposes or provided to anyone else, and your participation is voluntary but encouraged.

Please contact him to give your e-mail address or check that the accurate one is on file:  
Brian Lewis, [biglew57@comcast.net](mailto:biglew57@comcast.net).

## English ivy is hazardous to trees

Homeowner Janet Eden, a certified arborist and a member of the Board, has advice about dealing with the English ivy that threatens your trees.

English Ivy can choke and kill the trees we value for their beauty and shade and the privacy they give our yards. The small ivy plant can strangle trees, accelerate rot, attract mosquitoes, and cause mature trees to fall during storms.

**Dangers of English Ivy.** Ivy in the upper canopy can block sunlight and cause lower branches to die off. It competes for nutrients, and holds moisture that can also attract mosquitos. It can add significant weight and contribute to the loss of otherwise healthy trees.



*a tree choked by English ivy*

### How to remove

1. Uses garden clippers to cut ivy at the bottom around the entire trunk of all infested trees.
2. Pull all ivy vines out of the ground around the base of the tree, making a 2-foot ring around the tree. This will protect the tree from future infestations, but not forever! It will be necessary to repeat periodically.
3. Once the ivy is cut, leave it on the tree. Do not pull it off because that could harm the tree. The dead ivy will eventually blend into the tree bark and the leaves will fall off slowly.

This information is adapted from an Arlington County website that contains photos and more information:

<http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/parksrecreation/documents/file85274.pdf>

## Get community news fast! Join the Mill Creek email list

Homeowner Barbara Mann maintains the community email list and sends notices about a wide range of neighbor and local news. She sends notices from our community police officer or the county, alerts about problems, agendas and minutes for HOA Board meetings, and special community announcement as well as homeowners' requests for information about local contractors or offers of services to fellow homeowners.

Contact Barb Mann at  
[bjm2r@virginia.edu](mailto:bjm2r@virginia.edu) to join.

## Come to Mill Creek Board meetings

—2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm—  
*note: the meeting has been changed to Tuesdays*

~ All homeowners welcome ~

**Share your ideas, ask questions, learn about current issues.**

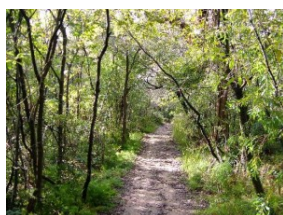
Meetings are held in members' homes—watch for an announcement through the community email list or contact any Board member to learn the location of the next meeting.



## Biscuit Run Trails

### neighborhood resource and regional attraction

Our community has a valuable recreational resource: the network of woodland trails along Biscuit Run Creek. The creek runs roughly northeast to southwest through the Foxcroft and Mill Creek communities and alongside Lake Reynovia and the Mill Creek South communities before turning west and south through the new Biscuit Run State Park.



Homeowners from these communities and beyond use the trails for walking, running, hiking (some of the hills are steep), cycling, and riding dirt bikes.

**What are the trails?** They are a combination of walking paths, old fire roads or farm roads, and sometimes rough dirt bike trails. At a few places, small parcels of privately owned land lie between our communities and the boundary of the new park.

**Who maintains the trails?** There is no formal maintenance, although someone maintains a short bridge over a streamlet and others chop up large trees that fall across the path. There are no signposts or markers. Some parts of the path—through Mill Creek, for example—are broad and usually in good condition, but others are rough, narrow, and sometimes steep. It is easy to become lost, and walkers need to be cautious as they learn the trails

**Questions and decisions ahead.** The communities along Biscuit Run will face major decisions about the trail in the next couple of years. The existence of the trail presents both problems and opportunities for the surrounding communities.

Several concerns have arisen over the years:

- Liability: for injuries, especially since Mill Creek does not maintain the trail through its property and cannot control access
- Damage done by ATVs and dirt bikes
- Use as access route for hunters in fall and winter.

A community meeting in the fall will focus on Biscuit Run trails—see notice below.

#### Directions to the trail

Walk to the meadow at the end of Southern Parkway and take the asphalt path to the woods.

- At the edge of the woods, take the fork to the left and go downhill to the main trail.
- Turn left to take the long straight path alongside the Mill Creek and Lake Reynovia.

### Community Meeting: Biscuit Run Trails and County Planning —Fall 2013—

The Mill Creek Board is planning a community meeting about Biscuit Run trails. Dan Mahone, the Outdoor Recreation Supervisor for Albemarle County, will speak about the County greenway system. The County hopes to link up trails such as the Ravanna Trail and the county and city trail networks with Biscuit Run State Park, once the park is developed.

He will discuss the location and ownership of trails near Biscuit Run and describe the actions necessary to make trails part of the greenway.

*Watch for date and times.*

## Ticks, fleas & your pets

In the second of the series about pets, Liz Lewis from Timberbranch Court offers valuable information about keeping your dogs and cats healthy in summer.

**The basics.** Keep your grass short; comb your pet regularly with a flea comb; if your dog is long haired, give it a “summer cut” so you can find the ticks and fleas easier; wash your pets bedding often, and vacuum your home frequently, disposing of vacuum bags immediately after use.

**Flea and tick products.** Although you can find shampoos, sprays, powders, monthly treatments and other products to control ticks and fleas at stores, on the internet and veterinary offices, deciding what products are safe to use isn't simple. Some studies have found potential hazards with certain ingredients, so it is strongly suggested that you discuss the various options with your veterinarian and, of course, always read the labels carefully.

**If you use conventional flea and tick products, follow these simple steps:**

- **Never** use dog treatments on cats, and vice versa.
- Always be certain of your pet's weight before purchase to ensure proper dosage.
- Don't split one "large dog" dose in half for two small dogs (or combine two "small dog" doses for one large dog).
- Read and follow all instructions when using these products.
- Do not use these products on elderly or pregnant animals without talking to your veterinarian first.

## Board members will inspect common areas

Don't be surprised if you see two Board members walking through common areas, some of which may run behind or beside your property. Over the next few weeks, Board members Pam Riley and Janet Eden will inspect the common areas to check for hazardous trees.

*Remember our speed limit!*



### Mill Creek Board

**Neal Grandy**, President & Co-Treasurer  
Grounds Committee [nrg2p@virginia.edu](mailto:nrg2p@virginia.edu)

**Brian Markot**, Vice President &  
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