



## Community Calendar and Notes

### May 8, 7pm-8:30pm

RFHOA Monthly board meeting  
Provinces Library meeting room  
2624 Annapolis Road  
Severn, MD 21144

March 28 - Memorial Day

### June 5, 7pm-8:30pm

RFHOA Monthly board meeting  
Provinces Library conference room  
2624 Annapolis Road  
Severn, MD 21144

### June 9, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.-

**St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church** on Route 175 and Rt. 295 (BW Parkway) is having its annual yard sale. Proceeds from the yard sale are used to sponsor an educational program for children in their sister parish in Sucre, Bolivia. Help support these worthwhile cause by stopping by and shopping! Hot dogs and drinks will also be available for purchase

June 14 - Flag Day

June 17 - Father's Day

As always, homeowners are welcome to attend the monthly meetings of the board.

Upcoming board meeting schedule:

July 10, 2007

August 7, 2007

September 11, 2007

October 9, 2007 (General Meeting)

November 8, 2007

December 4, 2007

If you would like to have an announcement added to our next community newsletter or would like to get information on placing an ad, please contact the newsletter editor via email at [newsletter@ridgeforest.org](mailto:newsletter@ridgeforest.org) or by writing to the address listed in the left margin.

## May 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## June 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

### May - June highlights:

- Time to think about Termites!
- Community Front Entrance and Common Areas Improvements

### Inside this issue:

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# Ridge Forest Chronicle

Volume XI, Issue 3

May-June 2007

## Termite Season - Beware and Prepare

( Source: <http://www.mda.state.md.us> )

Nationally, more than one in three homes has had a termite problem, however many homeowners do not protect their homes from likely invasions. In fact, 60 percent of homeowners have never had a preventive termite treatment at their current homes. Your home is a valuable asset. Don't let the lack of a \$100 termite treatment rob you of \$100,000 in home value.

Spring is termite swarming season throughout Maryland, a time of year when billions of reproductive subterranean termites take flight from their colonies in search of new homes to infest. Swarming termites are one of the most obvious signs that you could have a termite problem, and that you need help.

The termite species that is indigenous to Maryland is the Eastern Subterranean Termite (*Reticulitermes flavipes*). As its name implies, it lives beneath the soil. Termites, like ants and bees, are social insects and live in colonies. The termite colony is comprised of several castes including a queen, soldiers, winged reproductives (swarmers) and workers. The winged reproductives, or swarmers, are the form most commonly seen by homeowners. Ant colonies also release winged reproductives (flying ants). Many times termite infestations go unchecked when a homeowner mistakes termite

swarmers for flying ants.

While termite swarmers are a nuisance, they do not cause damage. Their sole function is to find a mate and begin a new colony. The "worker" caste makes up the bulk of the termite colony and is the only individual in the colony that forages for food and is directly responsible for causing damage to wood and cellulose containing materials. They have no eyes or wings and are soft-bodied, whitish in color and approximately 1/4 inch in length.

**The most frequent concept for control for subterranean termites** is to prevent or break the contact between the termite colony and wood. Soil treatments are usually not intended to kill termite colonies. If done properly, soil treatment creates an effective barrier against subterranean termites entering and damaging a structure. For the majority of people, termite control is not a do-it-yourself project due to the lack of the necessary equipment needed to do a thorough job.

**Another concept for termite control** is to feed the termites a toxicant that will perhaps eliminate the colony or at least significantly reduce the populations of the termite colony. The use of baiting systems requires an understanding of the biology of the termites and

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*“I in 3 homes has had a termite problem... yet 60 percent of homeowners have never had a preventive termite treatment at their current homes”*

*“...customers who drive a hard bargain usually get the best prices, but not always the best job.”*

*(Continued from page 1)*

periodic monitoring of the baiting systems at appropriate intervals. Again, for most people, this is not a do-it-yourself project.

**Before signing a contract** with any pest control company, get treatment estimates from several different companies. Ask questions about termites, how

they will treat your house, cost of treatment, yearly inspection, types of guarantees etc. After you have narrowed your selection to two or three companies, contact the better business bureau for additional information on the companies.

The Better Business Bureau  
**1-800-492-2101**

## Choosing a Termite Control Company

### Bargain for a good price

Before you decide to drive a hard bargain on the cost of your termite job remember customers who drive a hard bargain usually get the best prices, but not always the best job. Driving too hard a bargain can be unfair to a Termite Company who in turn may be unfair to the customer by spending less on chemicals and time on the job. Companies that do not earn enough profit can find themselves in trouble. They might be forced to cut corners. The most obvious place to cut cost is to use less than the prescribed amount of chemical resulting in a treatment that does not properly protect the home and the homeowners investment. Some Termite Companies work short handed or lower their treatment standards to accommodate lower skilled technicians. A good bet would be to get a good medium priced Termite Company and ask enough questions until you understand what they are going to do and then check to see if they did it.

- If you don't have a trusted Pest Control Company, you should call 3 Companies for comparison bids.
- Most Termite Companies give free inspections with written estimates. In some

areas of the county there are charges, just make sure to ask if there is a charge when you phone them.

- Don't accept a bid written on a business card. You need detailed information on guarantees, treatment procedures, payment plans etc. Later you'll want to sit down and compare apples with apples and oranges with oranges. Not just prices.
- Don't be surprised at how much prices can differ from company to company. Some companies prices are high and offer very little difference in service or guarantee.

### Expectations

When you call a Termite Company out to your home, here is what to expect them to do:

- Make a thorough inspection.
- Make a scale drawing of your home describing what work will be done.
- Give a written price and payment terms for treatment. Explain your guarantee.
- Give a price for the annual renewal fee (to extend your guarantee).
- Answer all of your questions.

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## Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a serious concern this time of year. With more people spending time outside in the beautiful weather, we should be know more about Lyme disease; a bacteria spread through the bite of an infected tick.

Ann Arundel County and the State of Maryland are amongst those areas of the country prone to outbreaks of the disease. The ticks that carry the Lyme disease bacteria are commonly found in the woods and in the areas between lawns and woods. Ticks crawl onto animals or people as they brush against them; they cannot jump or fly.

Common symptoms of the disease include: fever, headache, fatigue and a characteristic "bull's-eye" like skin rash.

Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated suc-

cessfully with a few weeks of antibiotics.

You can help prevent Lyme disease by taking the following precautions:

- Avoid tick infested areas; stay in the center of trails when hiking.
- Use insect repellent containing 20 to 30 percent DEET for adults and 10 percent for children.
- Wear long pants and long sleeves in light colors to help keep ticks off the skin.
- Perform daily tick checks of people and animals after being outdoors.

For additional information, the Center for Disease Control has a comprehensive website dedicated to Lyme Disease which may be found at

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/lyme/>

## RFHOA Board Member Contact Information

### President

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### General question or comment

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### Webmaster

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### Our Front Entrance Has a New Look!

Thanks to the efforts of the Common Areas Committee and Personal Design Landscaping of Millersville, MD, our front entrance now sports a professionally landscaped look. To minimize cost while maximizing appeal, the front entrance design has been chosen to allow for a multi-year "upgrade" approach to a final front entrance landscape. Each year we will add to the current landscaping for two to three years until we achieve the final full look.

In addition to the new plants around

the front entrance, you may have also noticed that the woods on both sides of Ridge Forest Way have been cleaned out to a depth of 50 feet from the street. The long overdue underbrush cleanup was performed to reduce the risk of fire hazard as well as to provide a much needed trash cleanup in that stretch of common area. As with the front entrance landscaping, a multi-year approach will be used to do similar cleanups along other stretches of Association common area to minimize cost while maximizing results.

Check out our new front entrance landscaping.

*"This Administration is serious about environmental violations, and people who ignore the law will be punished"*  
- Anne Arundel County Executive John R. Leopold

### County Crackdown on Building Without Permits

Annapolis, MD (May 2, 2007) - Anne Arundel County Executive John R. Leopold today applauded the Office of Law for successfully litigating a civil case against a Glen Burnie woman who built a deck, gazebo and walkway illegally in the Critical Area buffer.

Elaine K. Lingis of 1004 Nabbs Creek Road pled not guilty to building and grading in the Critical Area without permits. District Court Judge Megan Johnson found Ms. Lingis guilty yesterday and fined her \$750 for building and grading without a permit.

"This Administration is serious about environmental violations, and people who ignore the law will be punished," Mr. Leopold said. "The Office of Law is working diligently to prosecute scores of cases each week investigated by the Department of Inspections and Permits, and this is just another example of the fruits of that labor."

Ms Lingis has 30 days to apply for the permits and must respond to comment letters within 10 days. If she fails to ap-

ply or is denied the permits, she must remove the structures.

A total of 83 cases of zoning, grading or building violations were forwarded to the Office of Law last month. Nearly 200 cases have been forwarded since Mr. Leopold took office, and a total of 322 cases are pending.

Two other notable cases concluded yesterday:

- Donald Sowers of 319 Johnson Farm Lane in Glen Burnie was sentenced to jail for criminal contempt and paid a fine of \$250 in a case of having unregistered vehicles and portable storage containers on his property. All but 15 days of his 120-day sentence was suspended. Mr. Sowers was ordered to abate all violations within 48 hours of his release from jail.
- James T. Cox III of 3912 Germantown Road in Edgewater pled guilty to building a retaining wall in the Critical Area and grading without permits. In exchange for his cooperation, he received a total of \$750 in fines after agreeing to fix the violations.

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### Questions you should ask

When the Company comes out to your home to give you an estimate or to do work, make sure you ask the following questions:

- What will your company do should termites return after treatment?
- If I have a repair guarantee, do I have to pay a deductible?
- All homes don't qualify for REPAIR guarantees, ask if your's does.
- After the initial one year guarantee period, how many extra years can I renew my contract?
- How much will my annual contract renewal cost be?
- When my contract period is over do I have to retreat my house again at my expense? Is there a discount for the next treatment?
- Ask for an insurance certificate. Companies who don't have any insurance are

counting on you not asking.

- If your getting a bait treatment, ask how often their inspections will be performed, and the distance apart the stations will be placed.

### Problems with your termite treatment?

If you suspect that the Termite Company you did business with did not do a good job or committed fraud in any way, contact:

- Maryland Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Regulation Section (410-841-5710, Mon-Fri 8am-5pm) For information on regulations, certification and licensing, report accidents, spills, and complaints concerning the possible misuse of pesticides.
- Maryland Office of the Attorney General, Consumer Protection Division (410-576-6550) For assistance in contractual related matters.
- The Better Business Bureau (1-800-492-2101) To file a complaint.

*"Pick your Termite Company with care, your relationship with them could be a long one; it is almost impossible to get a Termite Company to pick up a guarantee on the other Termite Company's work."*

### Can I Treat My Own Home for Termites?

**Treating a house for subterranean termites is a job best left to professionals.** Special equipment is required and Termiticides are much stronger chemicals than pesticides, and can be a danger to the environment and yourself if handled improperly.

guarantee they issue you. Termite Companies are required to carry insurance. It would be a shame to have a claim that your Termite Company could not pay. It happens.

Pick your Termite Company with care, your relationship with them could be a long one; it is almost impossible to get a Termite Company to pick up a guarantee on the other Termite Company's work. It is a good idea to pick a Termite Company that can afford to back up the

Some prices are high some are low. Each Termite Company charges what they think their services are worth. Some Termite Companies don't charge enough to do the job right and some Termite Companies charge too much. Find a good medium priced local company and check out their reputation.

### Curb Appeal

You're ready to put your house on the market or you are interested in having it appraised for a re-finance. Inside, it is beautifully decorated and sparkling clean. That bit of peeling paint on the porch and the bald spots in the garden won't bother prospective purchasers or inspectors, right?

Maybe not. And then again, they may drive by, see these flaws and take your house off the list of houses they plan to view or an inspector may immediately decide that your house requires more intensive scrutiny. First impressions count!

What real estate agents call "curb appeal" is the impact your house makes when seen from a car or the sidewalk. If the exterior of the house and the yard are tidy and well maintained, prospective purchasers walk in with a pleasant feeling of expectation that the interior will match up. If the lawn is shaggy, the windows are dirty and the doorbell doesn't work, they will be on guard for problems inside.

### Thank you!

Overall, we have a great community where the majority of our residents show pride of ownership. We wish to thank those of you who take pride in your homes and maintain them on a consistent basis. Your efforts help keep the Ridge Forest Community a first-class community.

*Thank you!*

The Architecture and Environment Review Committee (AERC) periodically walks through the community

Stand at the curb of your property and look the land from the perspective of your neighbors or a potential buyer. Get in the car and drive down your street and look at the way your property compares to your neighbors. If your neighborhood is well cared for but your property is not because the trees are overgrown and the weeds are hiding your front door, it is a clear indication that your home will stick out like a 'sore thumb'.

Neatness in landscaping is important. If a property looks tidy on the outside, you will give people the impression that the inside is neat and well cared for. Remove or trim down those trees and bushes that hide the beauty of your home. Trim the grass and if you have spotted, brown grass, invest in a bag of grass seed and water frequently to encourage growth. Weed your flowerbeds throughout the growing season. Even if you are not a neat person, make an effort to neaten up the exterior.

checking for violations of the association covenants that degrade the beauty of our community and affect the values of our homes. When a violation is noted, a notice is mailed to the homeowner explaining the violation and indicating what needs to be done to remedy the issue. Several homeowners have received these notices and have taken prompt action to address the issues. We'd like to thank those homeowners for their prompt action.

*"Stop thinking in terms of limitations and start thinking in terms of possibilities."  
-- Terry Josephson*

### Verizon FioS Installation

Over the past few weeks, you couldn't help but notice the work that was being done throughout the neighborhood. Subcontractors have been in our community installing Verizon's fiber infrastructure. Unfortunately, the contractors may not have been as diligent as they should have in ensuring that any damage done to property was repaired in a professional and timely manner.

If you have any issues with the quality of the work done in front of your home, please contact the Verizon Fiber Installation Project site manager, Paul Dillow at 410-726-3758 to file a complaint.

Sidewalk repairs are being monitored by the Verizon Underground supervisor,

Frank Kalokitis at 301-536-8314 (cell) and 301-395-4704 (office). Mr. Kalokitis indicates that the cement repair team is running approximately two weeks behind schedule and will hopefully be caught up with repairs in our neighborhood by the first week of June.

The Common Areas committee chairperson, Cathy Bracey-Tynes, has been working diligently to ensure that repairs to community common areas are performed to return sidewalks to the condition they were in before the contractor's arrived. If you have a question or concern about the common area repairs, please email us at [common-areas@ridgeforest.org](mailto:common-areas@ridgeforest.org)

### Summer Lawn Care Tips

- **Mow high:** Grass will grow thicker, and mowing low damages turf and makes it more susceptible to disease and insect damage. Never mow off more than 1/3 of the length to maintain your lawn at 2 inches tall, but never let the lawn grow taller than 3 inches tall. A lawn composed of a higher cut encourages grass plants to set down deeper roots and shades out annual weeds.
- **Water in the morning:** This allows water to soak in with less evaporation. Watering in the day or afternoon usually translates into high evaporation and the possibility that blowing winds may cause uneven water distribution. Evening waters can set lawn up for disease problems, according to ISU Extension Service. During drought periods, turf grass stops growing and turns brown, although crowns and roots are alive.

Turf grass can remain dormant for 4 to 6 weeks without damage. Any longer and the grass could die. Apply 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water in a single application to lawns dormant for more than 4 to 6 weeks. Water again about a week later.

- **Weed control:** Weed-and-feed products should be applied with a spreader when weed leaves are moist (usually in the morning before dew burns off). A liquid broadleaf weed killer should be applied to well-watered weeds that are actively growing. "Pre-emergent treatment in spring before weeds start growing is important to control annual weeds. There are different ways to handle broadleaf weeds, including simply digging them up. It depends on your philosophy of what to use on your lawn.

( Source: <http://www.redorbit.com> )

*"When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years."  
-- Mark Twain*