

# OLDE IVY VINE



The Olde Ivy newsletter has been redesigned! We've moved from a two-column format to a single column for easier reading on smaller devices. Let us know what you think ([communications@oldeivy.org](mailto:communications@oldeivy.org)).

## Neighborhood Association

[NeighborhoodBOD@oldeivy.org](mailto:NeighborhoodBOD@oldeivy.org)

*Keiffer Phillips (President), Joe Winland (from The Manor), Carol Palmer (from The Manor), Lynne Schultz (from The Manor), Miriam Lancaster, Secretary (from the Condos)*

## Water Management

After three years of outsourcing Olde Ivy neighborhood water management to Heritage Property Management, we are now bringing water management back in-house. From now on, please direct all questions, comments, concerns about water to [Water@OldeIvy.org](mailto:Water@OldeIvy.org).

This is an important issue at Olde Ivy, as those of you who attended the Annual Neighborhood informational meeting found out. In a perfect world, collections from our water rebiller (NWP Services) would equal the cost of water, as billed by Cobb County. Unfortunately, this is not the case at present. This year, there was a \$25,000 shortfall in NWP billing and collection from residents, as against our bills from Cobb County. There are numerous possible reasons for this, but determining the root causes will involve a considerable detective effort. We hope that bringing this investigation in-house, where it can be the focus of a dedicated resident with insight into the issues, will allow us to narrow the collections gap. You can be part of this effort. If you see significant water running down the curb as the result of irrigation or other possible leaks, please email [Water@OldeIvy.org](mailto:Water@OldeIvy.org) with the details immediately. Thanks for your help and cooperation.

## Financial Statements

Copies of the Neighborhood, Manor and Townhomes [Balance Sheets and Income Statements](#) are available on the Neighborhood website.

## Sub Associations

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The following boards govern the sub-associations for the three types of residential units.

### Condos

[CondosBOD@oldeivy.org](mailto:CondosBOD@oldeivy.org)

*Miriam Lancaster (President), Judy Moore*

No report.

### Condos Financial Report

Not available.

### The Manor

[ManorBOD@oldeivy.org](mailto:ManorBOD@oldeivy.org)

*Joe Winland (President), Karin Baldzer (Vice President), Frank Watkins (Treasurer), Lynne Schultz (Secretary), Carol Palmer (Member at Large)*

The Manor Board set a special assessment and determined a set of objectives for 2012.

### Special Assessment

At the Annual Meeting in November, 2011 the Manor Board again discussed the need to collect by special assessment \$800 per unit and a ballot initiative was commenced. This motion, in accordance with the Manor Declaration, required an affirmative vote by a majority (more than 50%) of The Manor owners. **More than 50% of the owners did not vote.**

At the December 2011 Board of Directors meeting, a motion was passed to assess \$200 per unit for 2011. **Payment of this Special Assessment is due March 1, 2012.**

### The Manor Board Objectives for 2012

The Manor Board established the following set of objectives for the coming year:

- Gain a full understanding of the capital reserve requirements for the Manor in the coming years and provide a detailed accounting of the findings to all of the Manor owners. In 2009, Neighborhood Board of Directors contracted with a specialist company to determine the cost of major repairs that would be needed for common areas throughout the Neighborhood over the over the next 20 years (for example, roof replacement, common area heating and air conditioning unit replacement, driveway repair and replacement, painting, clubhouse and pool repair and or replacement, gate and garage door replacement, elevator repair and replacement, major plumbing work, etc.). This study included capital reserve requirements required to cover these repairs. The Manor Board of Directors will revisit this study to determine specific capital reserve requirements for the Manor. We will communicate this information to Manor owners, and explain the importance of building the capital reserves at specific levels year over year.

NOTE: A discussion of the Neighborhood Reserve Plan is located in the Reserve Committee report on page 9. It is reprinted from an earlier Newsletter.

- Complete a more in-depth study of Manor recurring expenses and determine if any cost saving initiatives are possible.

- Develop a building interior refresh plan to include what should and could be accomplished under what time frame. The findings of the capital reserve study will be a deciding factor.
- Paint and repair the exterior of 4955, and consider painting 4950. The findings of the capital reserve study will be a deciding factor as to whether or not the exterior painting plan can be caught up in 2012.
- Continue negotiations with John Wieland Homes and bring the lawsuit regarding building flaws such as the design and construction of the fire sprinkler systems to a successful conclusion.
- Develop a common area cleaning plan. The sidewalks, primarily the brick sidewalk entrances to the Manor buildings, need power washing to remove mold and dirt. In addition, building interiors require a scheduled cleaning program for areas such as stairwells, hall carpeting, garages, etc.
- Meet with the Manor Building Representatives quarterly to assist in determining roles and responsibilities that are beneficial to improving the quality of the community and the well being of the owners.

### Leasing

The Manor is now at the maximum number of allowable leases, so no new leases can be granted at this time. The Manor Declaration has strict rules on leasing units. Owners must obtain a leasing permit from the Association. Contact Rosemary Riccio at Community Management Associates (CMA), if you are considering leasing your unit.

### Manor Financial Summary

The cash balances for year end 2011 were \$164,932, as compared to the third quarter 2011 balances of \$166,401. There was a net operating income loss of \$4,522 for 2011. The operating income plan for 2011 was \$67,300. Non-recurring sprinkler repair costs and legal fees were the key contributors to the operating income plan negative variance.

Annual insurance premiums have been reduced by approximately \$6,000 for 2012 due to the work done to repair the sprinkler systems.

### Manor Financial Report

Copies of the Manor Balance [Sheet and Income Statement for 2011](#) are available on the Neighborhood website.

### Townhomes

[TownhomesBOD@oldeivy.org](mailto:TownhomesBOD@oldeivy.org)

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*Charlie Ryan (President), Jerry Crow (Treasurer), Keiffer Philips, Nancy Sample (Secretary)*

As you certainly have noticed, the monthly Association dues for Townhomes were increased by \$5.00 in 2012 to a total of \$270.00 per month. There was a discussion on this at the annual meeting in November and overwhelming sentiment *for* the increase to keep us on excellent financial footing for future capital expenditure and repairs.

A the same meeting, Keiffer Philips was re-elected to a new two-year term on the Association Board. The remaining members, Charlie Ryan (President) and Nancy Sample (Secretary) are now in the second year of their terms. Jerry Crow remains the Board Treasurer.

In 2012, we will complete the current rotation of exterior painting of the Townhomes. In this phase, five buildings, which include 25 units, will be painted at an estimated cost of \$100,000. All other buildings were painted in 2010 and 2011, in a schedule based upon their year of construction.

### **Insurance Deductible**

The Townhome Association was recently alerted to the fact that USSA Insurance is no longer offering policies for the \$20,000 deductible that is required before the Association's insurance kicks in. Please be sure to check with your insurance agent to confirm that insurance to pay for your deductible is still in force. Also, ask your agent to clarify whether your policy includes "loss assessment" as well as "building property." Loss assessment coverage may protect you if some catastrophic event in the neighborhood requires a large special assessment.

### **Avoiding Water Damage**

Please be sure that potential sources of water leaks, including worn-out water heaters, as well as hoses connecting refrigerators, clothes washing machines and dishwashers are checked by professionals. Failure of these items can result in serious water damage. Please consider shutting off the water to your home when you are going to be out of town for an extended period, especially in freezing weather. Additional water recommendations are available at [www.oldeivy.org/2011/10/avoiding-water-damage-in-your-home](http://www.oldeivy.org/2011/10/avoiding-water-damage-in-your-home).

### **Reporting Concerns**

Owners and renters in the Townhomes are reminded again to report concerns about safety, needed repairs, gate access problems, or pool and clubhouse issues to Jerry O'Meara, our representative at Heritage Property Management Services. Of course, emergency safety calls should go to 911, but Jerry should also be alerted to ongoing potential safety issues, so preventive action can be taken.

You can reach Jerry at [jomeara@heritageproperty.com](mailto:jomeara@heritageproperty.com) or 770-200-8274.

### **Financial Summary**

2011 was a very good year financially for the Townhomes. Revenues were up \$24,000 over last year. Expenses were up \$36,000 due to an increase of \$21,000 in the Neighborhood charge and an increase of \$16,000 in insurance cost. All other categories were basically the same. Operating Income was \$107,818 and Net Income was (\$21,880.)

Our Reserve fund stands at \$295,413. Our reserve expenses were \$155,478. This was for painting seven buildings (38 units) and treating all 120 decks and patios. Significant repairs were made to our decks.

Our delinquencies are at an all time low of \$2,107, with the largest at \$1,088. We have been very fortunate in this area this year.

There were four townhomes sales. Twelve units are rented.

### **Townhomes Financial Report**

Copies of the Townhomes [Balance Sheet and Income Statement](#) are available on the Neighborhood website.

## Committees

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The committees that do the hands-on work of making Olde Ivy a wonderful place to live welcome new members. To join a committee or learn more about what it does, email the committee. Active committee membership gives you a great chance to learn about and contribute to Olde Ivy.

### Clubhouse

[clubhouse@oldeivy.org](mailto:clubhouse@oldeivy.org)

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*Nancy Sample (Chair), Tricia Buce, Gay Gunter*

The Olde Ivy Clubhouse has been filled with activity over the past several months! We have seen bridal showers, baby showers, large family parties, and a wonderful Holiday party.

Many thanks to the Holiday Committee for planning a fun and festive event for all our neighbors.

Here are a few reminders if you plan on renting the clubhouse for an event. To use our Clubhouse for any party or event, you *must* be in attendance. You cannot rent the facility for a friend.

There are only 11 guest parking spaces around the Clubhouse. Many of those spaces are being used by neighbors. Therefore, please have your guests park outside of our neighborhood gates and use the box at the gate to enter. It isn't fair for your guests to take the parking spaces of our friends in the Condos (Lofts). Any vehicle not parked in a guest spot will be towed. Please remember that you need to remove all trash from the Clubhouse after your event. Trash receptacles are located outside of the entrance to the Fitness Center.

Thanks for your cooperation in keeping our Clubhouse in good shape for all of us!

### Communications

[communications@oldeivy.org](mailto:communications@oldeivy.org)

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*Charlie Ryan (Chair), John Bennison, Leslie Maddock, Mike Zeck*

The new neighborhood website, [www.oldeivy.org](http://www.oldeivy.org), which was rolled out this past fall, has more than 100 pages of content, including everything from screen door policy to pictures of the Holiday Party. We culled relevant content from the old site, and added a great deal of new and updated information. The response from the community has been very positive, with lots of encouragement and several helpful corrections. We are monitoring usage, which has been steadily growing. If you haven't seen the site, please check it out.

Generally, the website is open to all viewers, but any pages that contain sensitive information require registration and login. Once you register, you can see everything on the site. Registration, available at [www.oldeivy.org/register](http://www.oldeivy.org/register), is a two-step process with a confirming email and an online form.

### New Resident Directory

In early January, we added a Resident Directory at [www.oldeivy.org/resident-directory](http://www.oldeivy.org/resident-directory). The information was assembled from several different sources of information and is as accurate as we could make it. We know that there may well be incorrect or incomplete entries, however, so we urge you to check out your entry and update the information. You must be a registered user to do this.

## Resident Directory Search Function

You can now browse resident names (both owners and renters) alphabetically or search for residents by name or address. Addresses for rental units can list both residents and owners, and house-mates can maintain separate directory entries.

Our plan is to retire the old site, [www.oldeivyAtVinings.com](http://www.oldeivyAtVinings.com), and redirect its domain name to the new site. If you still use the old site for any reason, or have bookmarks to it in your web browser, please update them to the new website. (Your bookmark for the new site will show a green ivy leaf.) In the very near future, the old site will go “off the air.”

If you have suggestions for improving the site, or interest in participating, please contact us at [website@oldeivy.org](mailto:website@oldeivy.org). We're always on the lookout for news and notes, so if you're a board or committee member with an item of general interest for the neighborhood, please let us know. We'd love to add it to the website.

## Covenants

[covenants@oldeivy.org](mailto:covenants@oldeivy.org)

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*Susan Constantine (Chair), Jesse Liebman, Don Wagner*

The primary complaints of the residents continue to be pets and parking.

Please pick up after your dogs and use the doggie stations placed around the Neighborhood for waste disposal. Dogs must always be under your control. Many residents are uncomfortable when they see a dog off-leash, even if the dog responds to your voice commands.

It is against the Covenants to use your garage for storage if it results in your vehicle occupying a community parking space. Your guests may not park in marked spaces that are reserved for residents.

Volunteers are always welcome. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [covenants@oldeivy.org](mailto:covenants@oldeivy.org).

## Infrastructure

[infrastructure@oldeivy.org](mailto:infrastructure@oldeivy.org)

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*Patricia Brown (Chair), John Bennison (for the Reserve Committee), Joe Thome (Gates), Tom Constantine (Safety), Dan Gonsalves (Pool), Kevin Humphrey*

## Entry Gates

NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS! We have had a relatively quiet couple of months at the Log Cabin entry gates. We are optimistic that the addition of the vehicle-sensing loop in the asphalt will continue to help prevent vehicles from hitting the gates.

That being said, please remember that the vehicle-sensing loops are no substitute for using your gate activator (black fob) or the keypad entry code.

- You must use your gate activator each time you pass through the gates, even when the gates are open.
- If you are expecting guests, ask them to stop at the keypad and call you to gain entrance through the gates.
- If you are expecting a large delivery truck, make sure that the driver has been notified that he is to call you and wait outside the gates until you can come to the entrance to help them get through the gates.
- If you are having difficulties with the keypad entry system, notify the Infrastructure Committee ([gates@oldeivy.org](mailto:gates@oldeivy.org)) as soon as possible, and let us know what problems you are experiencing.

- Be alert! If you witness a collision with the gates, take note of the license plate number along with the make and model of the vehicle. Report the collision to the Infrastructure Committee ([gates@oldeivy.org](mailto:gates@oldeivy.org)) or anyone serving on the Neighborhood Association.

### Spring Street Maintenance Project

During the fall, members of the Infrastructure Committee walked the community with four different asphalt-paving contractors, measuring and evaluating the condition of our street surfaces. We received proposals from each of these contractors for crack-filling, seal-coating, line marking and painting the curbs, and stenciling the fire lanes.

The seal-coating of our streets will take place over the next two years. We will complete one half of the community this spring and the remaining half in the spring of 2013.

The Infrastructure Committee will send out a community-wide email to explain how we can best cooperate with the paving contractor as they work their way through the community. Details to follow.

### Fitness Center

[fitness@oldeivy.org](mailto:fitness@oldeivy.org)

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*Scott Schuck (Chair), Julie Rascoe, Buddy & Victoria Fowlkes*

Our new elliptical machine was delivered in late December – just in time for our 2012 New Year’s Resolutions!

Now, the older treadmill (in the back) is on its final miles. As a result, the Fitness Center Committee is evaluating options for a new treadmill. If you are interested in helping us evaluate new treadmill options, please contact a Fitness Committee member directly:

- Julie Rascoe: [julie.rascoe@gmail.com](mailto:julie.rascoe@gmail.com)
- Buddy & Victoria Fowlkes (678-217-4499)
- Scott Schuck: [swschuck@earthlink.net](mailto:swschuck@earthlink.net)

Lastly, just a friendly reminder to be courteous to your fellow residents in the Fitness Center. Please return your weights to the rack; wipe down equipment after use; turn off the TVs, lights and fans if you are the last one to leave (both entrance way lights should remain on for safety); take cell phone conversations outside; compromise on TV programming selection; and limit use of frequently used equipment to 20 minutes during busy times. Children under 16 years of age are not allowed in the Olde Ivy Fitness Center without adult supervision.

### Landscape

[landscape@oldeivy.org](mailto:landscape@oldeivy.org)

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*Karin Baldzer and Sandra Zelly (Co-Chairs), Sara Cline, Valerie Jacob, Leslie Maddock, Melinda McDonald, Charles Moon, Al Morrison, Sandy Nelson, Cecily Sapp, Pat Stuart, Gay Watson*

Even during the mostly dormant winter season, the Landscape Committee has been busy planning and overseeing ongoing work on our Neighborhood plantings. We continue to work closely with our landscape contractor, Valley Crest.

Valley Crest has begun the extensive trimming process, which goes on throughout the growing season, and is an enormous, never-ending job. The large number of plants and shrubs are an important reason our neighborhood is so attractive, but they require a lot of upkeep.

Weed control is another important maintenance issue. This process begins early with pre-emergent weed killer and fertilizer administered to the grass before it turns green. Weeds will also be addressed at the time pine straw is installed.

We hope everyone has enjoyed the additional seasonal color beds that were installed this fall. More seasonal flowers will be planted in early May. In addition, a lot of shrubs were planted in the fall, and we are very pleased that we have not lost a single one so far.

Here are some of our plans for upcoming work:

- Trimming of lirioppe and grasses before installing pine straw the last week of January. We don't want to wait any later on the pine straw, as much of it has been depleted since the last application.
- Trimming of roses, crepe myrtles, and shrubs later in the quarter.
- Replacement of the elm tree at the Condos island that was damaged in last year's big storm in late January. Following advice from Valley Crest, the sod around the tree will be replaced later in spring. This means we can enjoy the pansies for a bit longer.
- Addition of more ground cover to the tree island near the Condos. The verbena on both ends of the island did nicely over the summer, but the vinca was not planted thickly enough. It is coming back up, but we need to add to it.
- Replacement of the four diseased cherry trees in front of 4725-4733 Ivy Ridge Drive with four crepe myrtles. Crepe myrtles are more drought tolerant than cherry trees and their dramatic blooms last much longer.
- Installation of lirioppe and pine straw in some areas behind 4611-4633 Ivy Gate Circle, as part of this year's erosion project. The sod has not been doing well here, so we are converting the area to ground cover instead (lirioppe/pine straw). We plan to add more shrubs to this area this fall.
- Installation of an additional doggie station on Ivy Ridge Drive, close to Ivy Gate Circle (hopefully in February). This should provide some relief to the Beech Haven station, which gets really heavy use.

Our committee continues to work diligently toward maintaining the appearance of our neighborhood and keeping up our property values. We welcome your feedback and assistance, especially reporting irrigation leaks once the system is turned on. If you have questions and concerns, please email one of the committee chairs, as follows:

- Townhomes north of the clubhouse: Sandra Zellely at [long-zellely@mindspring.com](mailto:long-zellely@mindspring.com)
- Townhomes south of the clubhouse, Manor or Condos: Karin Baldzer at [daphne2@earthlink.net](mailto:daphne2@earthlink.net)

## Reserve

[reserve@oldeivy.org](mailto:reserve@oldeivy.org)

*John Bennison (Chair), Jerry Crow, Valerie Jacob*

The Reserve Committee maintains the Neighborhood Reserve Plan, updating cost estimates of projected maintenance projects with information from the Infrastructure Committee and adjusting funding to reflect operating budgets. Although no scheduled maintenance projects were completed in 2011, there were unscheduled repairs to several items that resulted in minor changes to the maintenance schedule and revisions in the cost projections (for example, replacement of pump motors for the pool and the clubhouse).

The financial model of the Reserve Plan was used by the Neighborhood Board in preparing the operating budget for 2012. Projections showed a significant shortfall in future years unless the contribution to the Reserve Fund was increased. With this in mind, the Neighborhood Board approved the 2012 budget with provision for an increased monthly Reserve contribution.

This was the second consecutive year we saw an increase in Reserve contributions. But for the first time in recent years, the funding level is believed to be adequate to pay for scheduled maintenance going forward. (However, small increases to keep pace with inflation are to be expected. For example, for 2013, a contribution increase to offset a 3% inflation rate would be \$0.48, and subject to Board approval).

As mentioned in the Infrastructure report, planned significant maintenance projects in 2012 include the first phases of seal-coating the roadways. This important project is intended to extend the life of the neighborhood road surfaces. (Road maintenance is the single largest cost item in the Reserve Plan.)

If you have questions about the Reserve Plan, suggestions, or wish to become more involved, please email [Reserve@oldeivy.org](mailto:Reserve@oldeivy.org).

The following information is repeated from the Spring 2011 newsletter. We're including it here to help residents understand issues referred to in the Infrastructure and Manor reports.

### **What is a Reserve Plan?**

A Reserve Plan combines an engineer's maintenance schedule with a financial model to budget for repairs. The engineering schedule includes a list of needed maintenance projects, a proposed schedule for required maintenance projects, and a professional estimate of how much this work will cost. Note: The maintenance inventory for the Neighborhood includes about 100 separate items.

The financial model projects the Reserve Fund balance into the future (typically 20 years ahead). It balances projected maintenance costs (after inflation) against the accumulation of regular contributions and fund earnings.

### **Why is a Reserve Plan important?**

Some potential maintenance expenses are large; for example, road resurfacing alone will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Without advance planning, a homeowners association can suddenly find that it has huge unfunded expenses. With an appropriate reserve plan, those major expenses would be amortized over decades through small, regular Homeowner Association contributions. A good reserve plan results in proper maintenance funding with the lowest possible cost.

Without reserve planning, the Homeowner Association is likely to experience budget deficits, sudden special assessments, and soaring Homeowner Association dues. In addition, a well-funded reserve fund will make it easier to sell your home. Prospective buyers are reluctant to buy into a situation that has had or may require special assessments for major repairs. Some lenders will not finance the purchase of condominium homes where the Homeowner Association does not have adequate reserves.

### **Olde Ivy Neighborhood Reserve Committee**

The committee was appointed in 2009 with Valerie Jacob, Jerry Crow, and John Bennison as members. The group reviewed the old Reserve Plan our neighborhood had received from the builder, and recommended to the Board that the Neighborhood obtain a more current and complete engineering section of the study from a different vendor.

In early 2010, the Board engaged a firm to perform a new engineering study and create a new financial model. The committee worked closely with the engineer throughout the survey process and reviewed multiple drafts and versions of the report.

In early 2011, the current Board received a presentation on the Reserve Plan.

Engineering findings included identification of the following:

- Safety issues
- Maintenance opportunities to avert potential damage
- Maintenance opportunities to protect investments
- Maintenance activities that are due or overdue

Among the financial findings were:

- Financial shortfalls predicted within a decade, with large and growing shortfalls thereafter
- Opportunities to avoid waste in the maintenance schedule
- Recommendations to improve the accuracy of the Plan
- Alternative contribution schedules including some with lower increases

The Reserve Committee stands ready to support the Infrastructure Committee as they manage maintenance and the Neighborhood Board as they budget for maintenance expenses.

## Social

[events@oldeivy.org](mailto:events@oldeivy.org)

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The Social Committee is re-forming with a substantial group of interested volunteers, but needs a new Chair. We will hold an organizing meeting in the Clubhouse at 7:00 on February 7. Please join us if you would like to help to build on the successful Holiday Party and continue to expand the Neighborhood social life. If you have any questions, please contact [events@oldeivy.org](mailto:events@oldeivy.org).