

## Sea Pines Homeowners Association Newsletter

August 21, 2010

Dear Neighbors,

It's been a warm, very dry summer thus far. Great for tourism, lyin' on the beach or by the pool, but not so good for grass, plants, trees and the water table. We sure could use some more frequent and steady rain. It's surprising to me that there less than 3 weeks left until Labor Day - the summer has been good at Sea Pines. Yet I look forward to this coming off-season. My wife retired in June after 35 years as a grades 6-12 choral music teacher and we now get to spend more time at Sea Pines off-season, which is sure to be a treat!

Kayak racks have been built in the dunes after Sea Pines finally got approval for them from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection after legal challenges to the racks by our abutter forced the decision to approve this far up the chain of command. A sign-up sheet is available in the Clubhouse along with identification tags which must be attached to the kayaks. Obviously, the racks are a huge change and using them is a learning experience. What doesn't work this year will be examined and discussed in the off-season so that, if possible, changes can be made next summer to make them easier to use. But, understand that it will never be as easy as it was in the past. Sea Pines has no choice in this matter except to make the best of it. We are limited by the Mass DEP to 4 racks which can only store kayaks, not sunfish.

The new playground equipment at the Hollow Lane playground has been installed. We hope the kids enjoy it! As with any change, it will take some time and tinkering to make it as good as it can be. There are elements of the new equipment which are designed for older kids, so be sure to always supervise your children while using the playground. The two swings are

designed for toddlers only. Swings for older kids were unable to be accommodated due to current federal safety regulations.

People often complain about outsiders using the pool or the beach or the tennis courts and say, "they don't do anything about it!" Of course, "they" is the FMB. Sorry folks, all sorts of attempts to stop such issues have been tried multiple times in the past, including hiring guards, with absolutely no success. The only noticeable impact was the money spent and the anger of many owners who were offended at being questioned or having their older children, family, guests or renters questioned.

After discussion at the 2006 Annual Meeting, the FMB bought and mailed to each unit owner two "Sea Pines decal stickers" for our cars and two guest car signs - a simple, efficient approach to address the periodic parking concerns. Yet less than 20% of owners used the stickers so we still could not tell which cars were "legal." The stickers were not reissued.

At the 2006 Annual Meeting, it was decided to try a random "beach path check-in station". Volunteers were requested to man the table but no one signed up. The tennis courts are supposed to be locked when not in use so that their use is limited to Sea Pines residents. Yet about half the time when I walk past an empty tennis court, it's unlocked. So I take a few moments and lock it (you are encouraged to do the same and please make sure your children and guests know to lock them.) Many owners seem to want the "outsider" problem addressed without them having to participate in or be slightly inconvenienced by the attempted solution.

Legal costs relating to the storage of kayaks, sunfish and boats on the dune, beach and in the water continue to mount, due to lawsuits raised by our abutter. Although every decision in these matters has, so far, been in Sea Pines' favor, our abutter continues to raise appeals through the court system, which we must defend and which is, understandably and most unfortunately, costly. Our budget for legal expenses for the year has already been exceeded and there are still 4 months left to this year.

We still have issues regarding fires on the beach. Especially around July 4, the number of fires really spikes which can have dramatic and dangerous impacts on the beach and dunes if not correctly handled. A set of specific rules and guidelines for beach fires will be created and distributed in the near future. Owners will be expected to review these rules and ensure that anyone using their unit also follows them.

With the approval and supervision of the Brewster Conservation Commission, several areas of the bluff are being stripped and replanted into heathlands. It is expected that this will reduce the yearly bluff pruning expenses, since heathlands are slower growing and only about 18 inches tall at maturity. The substantial cost for the creation of these heathlands is being paid for solely by the owners whose units overlook these heathlands but the improved views and lower maintenance costs can be enjoyed by all unit owners. The most easily seen new heathland is between 265 and 273 Sea Pines Drive.

There have been a lot of dead trees this year and many obvious examples remain. It's surprising to me how quickly a tree can go from green to dead. These trees will be removed as budgeting permits.

Please be aware that the Sea Pines FMB and the Bluff Committee has worked very hard for several years now to create a good working relationship with the Brewster Conservation Commission. If you have an issue which may require contact with the Conservation Commission, it is crucial that you instead first contact the Bluff Committee (Bob Wiesel or Steve Koppel) or an FMB member.

Feel free to contact me for ideas for future newsletters or the web site.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Sincerely,

Christopher Wroten  
19 Landing Lane