

# The Lakes Homeowners Association

1 Longvue Drive  
Mandeville, Louisiana 70448

September 29, 2004

Greetings Neighbors from your Board of Directors:

The Board has several items to bring to your attention. If you are new to our neighborhood and this letter was addressed to the prior owner, please take this opportunity to contact our treasurer, Dr. Sandra Loucks, so she can update our data files. The May 2004 blue cover sheet to the updated May 2004 directory has the wrong telephone number for Dr. Loucks. The correct number is 727-2167.

First and most important are the upcoming election of new officers. We need applicants who are willing to serve the required two year commitment. Three board members are rotating off this year, and two will remain for their final year. The good news, as explained below, is that a lot of the outstanding projects have or will be completed by the October election date, so the time required for the next Board will not be as demanding as it was for the last year.

A cover letter and a proxy are enclosed with this newsletter. Remaining on the board will be Dr. Sandra Loucks and Mrs. Debbie Blake. Rotating off the board will be Mr. Alan Holt, Mr. John Hodge and Mr. Tony Dyess.

Year 2003 was a productive year for the Board, including replacing the fountain, repairing the sprinkler system and significant landscaping improvements. 2004 was equally productive. We repaired the gatehouse for termite damage and water rot, and also repaired the gatehouse roof. We vented the area under the gatehouse to reduce moisture, and finished the new fountain which replaced the old one. Due to these repairs, it was necessary to paint the gatehouse, gates, fountain, stop sign posts, etc. We also completed numerous other tasks too small to mention.

We removed the old concrete light basins located around the gatehouse that were not functioning and were an eyesore. We repaired the parking pad to the right as you enter the gate, and added two more spaces on the other side. We moved some signs and widened the parking pad on the right to make it easier for moving trucks to exit since they have always had to use the entrance gate to exit our subdivision. We will soon have a sign installed that informs moving trucks to exit using the same gate that they used to enter. **PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS ONLY FOR 18-WHEELER MOVING TRUCKS. ALL OTHERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIT THROUGH THE NORMAL EXIT GATE.**

The worn, bent and scratched stop signs were replaced with new signs made of a high grade, reflective material. We added outdoor lighting and a trash receptacle at the west end of Longvue, and added signs there and elsewhere. We made an earnest attempt to stop trespassing, parking and inappropriate behavior at the end of Longvue, but will need your help to monitor this type of activity in the future.

We found that websites are relatively inexpensive to maintain so we reserved the name lakeshoa.com and are currently working on site content. It may or may not be a finished product by the end of October. If not, we will leave it in the capable hands of the next Board. We felt that a website would enhance neighborhood values, allow prospective buyers to learn more and hopefully pay more to be in our subdivision, and prove an effective communication tool amongst ourselves in the future. Importantly, the cost will be modest.

Currently we are having the major drainage ditch running from Walden Place north to Winners Circle excavated to enhance drainage.

We voted to limit garage sales to once a year, in October. This was a compromise. This year's garage sale will be from 8:00 to 12:00 on October 16<sup>th</sup>. Blocking off of streets will not be permitted. Anybody who plans to participate should contact Patty Sorenson or Lisa Green in advance. They will arrange for balloons to be placed on the mailboxes of participating homes.

We voted to continue the policy of prior boards to not allow any political, religious or nonsocial activities in the gatehouse. Anything questionable has to be approved in advance by the Board.

We tried hard to establish regular yet unpredictable security patrols by sheriff's deputies, but this proved unsuccessful for several reasons. We invite future Boards to revisit this issue.

We got involved in our share of dog, cat, parking violations, and other complaints and, to be honest, some of these we have not yet fully resolved. If we cannot complete all our projects before the change in Directors, we are glad that it is only these less significant issues that have yet to be resolved. See the second paragraph to this newsletter.

As everyone knows, every house in this subdivision is subject to Covenants and Deed Restrictions. We have made ourselves unpopular by striving to actively enforce one of the components of those Covenants, namely the one that requires gas lamps. We are currently pressing forward with a requirement that ALL residences comply with this matter and will do whatever is necessary to ensure that the Covenants are enforced. We have been advised that Covenants that are not enforced can eventually lose their enforceability in court. Therefore, it is imperative that the Board, once it knows of violations, enforce the Covenants. Prior Boards and our esteemed attorney, Mr. Al LeBlanc Jr., have done a good job of enforcing our covenants in prior years, and future Boards must do the same.

While we are on the subject of being unpopular, it has always been difficult for both prior and the current Board of Directors to get some drivers to comply with speed limits and stop signs. It is very frustrating to receive telephone calls from parents complaining about dangerous drivers, and then try to identify and get those drivers to act responsibly. We have seen this battle for years. Extra stop signs were added years ago, speed bumps were subsequently added, letters were sent imploring homeowners to ask all family and visitors to slow down, yet still an irresponsible minority makes it unnecessarily dangerous for everyone, especially our youth. Accordingly, the Board recently authorized the addition of four more speed bumps within the subdivision. It is a shame that all of us have to bear this burden, and it is not something we like doing. What really makes it awkward is that some of the worst offenders are our friends or people we know well.

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We have been asked to comment in this newsletter about the sensibilities of being a good neighbor. Some people have apparently forgotten to put themselves in their neighbor's shoes. Examples include pets barking at odd times and waking your neighbors, mowing your lawn too early, having a loud party, not picking up after your pet's nature call, etc. This may be common sense, but sometimes we forget and then the neighbor has to choose between two unpleasant solutions: call you or call the Board, neither one of which is desired.

Alan Holt has agreed to serve as a one-man landscaping committee to advise future Boards. We found that we spent a lot of time in 2003 learning about sprinkler systems, landscaping, getting quotes from lawn-care specialists, etc. We asked Alan to do this because it will make it much easier for future boards to operate by taking advantage of Alan's hard-earned knowledge about our needs.

We need a volunteer to be in charge of children's social activities. Please contact Debbie Blake if you are interested.

It has been an honor to work with my fellow board members, as their dedication to our neighborhood has been phenomenal. Every board member contributed significantly to the goals achieved. We owe them our appreciation because they have accomplished a lot this year.

Tony Dyess, President