

FOREST GARDENS ESTATE NEWS



A COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER
FOR
FOREST GARDENS ESTATE
OWNERS & RESIDENTS

SEPTEMBER 2008

Dear Resident,

Welcome to the September edition of the Forest Gardens Estate Newsletter. In this edition we will update you on the Gardening Contract, the legal challenge to the Ballot for a Contractor to take over from Daymist. Plus our latest Puzzle and a Recipe corner. We could do with some ideas from residents on what you would like to see in the next edition. Please don't hesitate to make some suggestions..

Did you know? *Licence plates have been stolen from a motor vehicle parked outside a residence in Enfield Place. The Police advise this is becoming more common as petrol prices increase. The stolen plates are being used for drive-throughs at petrol stations. This can be prevented by replacing the screws in your number plate with self tappers!*

Notice Board: It's about time - the noticeboard is up in the BBQ shelter on the Reserve in Heathcote Drive. It is ready and waiting for your contributions.

Gardening report:

Ornamental Pears in nature strips on Lyell Walk have been pruned to prevent any injury to pedestrians from overhanging branches. All Crepe Myrtles on common property have been pruned.

A number of Lawn areas have been top dressed, reseeded and roped off to prevent further damage to lawns from vehicles.

The bollard at the McKenna Road entrance to the Estate has been repaired. Someone has tried extremely hard to damage this!

Rubbish Bins - Please remember to put them away as soon as they are emptied. They get in the way of the lawnmower.

Security:- Once again the BBQ shelter near the maintenance shed was the target of vandals and drug users. This time sadly a resident witnessed and overheard threats of damage being touted and failed to notify either the authorities or Committee members. A resident from the top end of the estate worked to make the area safe at risk to themselves and additional costs were involved in removal of the graffiti.

Those residents living close to all the BBQ areas are advised to call the local Police immediately anyone is discovered or overheard behaving badly to prevent risk to others or further unnecessary damage to property.

Please Call 000 or Nunawading Police on 9871 4111.

Note: Not wanting to get involved could one day see serious damage being done.

Interim Gardening Contract

As advised in previous newsletters an Interim Contract for the maintenance of the Common Gardens and Lawns is in place. Rick Waterman is carrying out gardening on the estate until the 31st October 2008. The Grey Army will commence the work after that.

External Painting

As promised previously, quotes are in for the painting of external areas on residences. **A. Alma Painting & Decorating** have been selected as the most reasonable and best value for money. The quotation for each type of residence is to be found on the notice board in the BBQ at the Reserve and will also be made available on the website. Each resident is responsible for organising his or her own job. Just mention you are on the Estate and these prices will be honoured. Details on styles of units are also available on the noticeboard and website along with the Colour information.

BODY CORPORATE FEES

You are most likely aware that with the reduction in the cost of the gardening contract will also come a reduction in Body Corporate fees. The invoices for the September to December quarter has been mailed out to you and hopefully you would have experienced a pleasant surprise. An interim budget has been completed and a reduction of \$100 per Lot per quarter has been calculated. In addition, as the budget was not finalised until after unbudgeted legal costs were accounted for and the July to September quarter invoice had already been issued, a credit of approximately \$99.00 for this period will also appear on the current invoice. Of course this reduction and credit will need to be ratified at the next Annual General meeting to be held later this year.

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(Answer available in the next edition)

Recipe Corner

Grandma's Lemon Meringue Pie

Ingredients

1 Can Condensed Milk
 2 Eggs, Separated
 4 Lemons - Juiced
 1 Sweet Piecrust
 ½ Cup Castor Sugar

Method: Cook Piecrust, Mix Condensed Milk, egg yolks and lemons in a bowl. Whisk egg whites until firm beating in sugar until dissolved. Put filling in cooked piecrust, arrange meringue and bake in a warm oven until peaks of meringue are lightly browned and set.
 Serve with cream or ice cream.

BODY CORPORATE FEES UPDATE

Unfortunately BCS accounts department sent an incorrect invoice, which caused a great deal of confusion. We hope that you have now received the correct account and the apology letter. If you have paid the incorrect invoice be sure to deduct that amount from your next payment.

Arrivals & Departures

We are pleased to announce the arrival of a beautiful baby girl to Simon and Kate of Heathcote Drive

If you are aware of any new arrivals or sad departures that other residents might like to know about – Contact a Committee member.

VCAT HEARING UPDATE

- The Committee was required to defend itself against the VCAT application, which contained numerous issues in the affidavit
- The ballot was resolved and counted as agreed by all parties on the same day.
- The VCAT application was withdrawn
- VCAT awarded substantial costs against the applicants. The outcome may be finalised at the end of September.

General Maintenance Corner

A new PVC Coated Chainwire fence is being erected at the Forest Chase entrance to the Estate. In addition the shrubbery will be pruned back. With both strategies in place security of the area should be improved. Let us know if other areas around the estate concern you. The committee is investigating a solar light fitting to be erected at the area

Statewide Trees Services will be around the Estate in the next couple of weeks removing the trees previously selected for removal.

Hedges over 2 metres will be trimmed also over the next two weeks by GVP Arbor Service. This is normally included in our works programme.

Mulching of the Estate will be carried out over the next few weeks

Action Line marking will also be on the Estate shortly to refresh markings on Speed Humps, Pedestrian Bars, Kerb markers, Turn arrows and “Watch for Cars”.

BCS have been given a list of Telstra pits requiring attention. Hopefully by the next edition of this newsletter we will be reporting on the completion of their works.

PLEASE be aware of workmen around the Estate and take care when driving through to adhere to necessary diversions and directions.

GREY ARMY NEWS

The Grey Army have signed the Gardening and Maintenance Contract to commence 1st November 2008.

A flyer will be circulated two weeks prior to this date showing pictures of the Gardeners responsible for keeping our Estate looking it's best. Also included will be some personal details about them so we can start to get to know them.

Two maintenance request/suggestion boxes will be erected, ONE at the maintenance shed and ONE in the BBQ area on the Reserve. Further details will follow in later editions.

A 'meet and greet' with a sausage sizzle will be held at the BBQ on the Reserve Saturday 8th November so you can have a chat and check them out.

INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

The Taxation Department have advised the Committee regarding costs associated with the maintenance of the gardens of investment properties on the Estate. Apparently amounts paid to the gardener for the upkeep of rental properties are tax deductible. Up until recently the Estate gardener at no additional cost was maintaining a number of rental properties. In order to ensure properties continue to be maintained to a minimum standard a basic service will be offered at a nominal charge. Notices from BCS will be sent shortly advising Investment owners of the offer.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Welcome to all new Owners that have moved into the Estate over the past couple of months.

WEBSITE

We are having a website constructed that you visit to read the latest and previous newsletters, see pictures of the estate, flotsam and jet sum. The website will be online very soon. You will also be able to send emails to the committee members. The email addresses will be notified in the next newsletter. The website will come online at <http://www.forestgardens.org.au>.

PETITIONS

The Macquarie Dictionary definition – ‘a formally drawn up request, signed by a large number of people, addressed to a person or a body of persons in authority or power, soliciting some favour, right, mercy or other benefit.

Petitions have their place in a democratic society but the Committee are asking that in the future should you be approached to sign a petition in regard to the Estate please follow the tips below:-

1. The petition should contain a statement saying what the petition is for. *Don't just sign because the lady seemed nice.*
2. The petition should indicate the outcome/result required. *Don't just sign because "someone" told you it is ok.*
3. The petition should indicate clearly the persons involved in circulating the petition.
4. The petition should be circulated through the daylight hours, not in the dark of night. *Tell them to come back in daylight.*
5. If you have signed a petition and realise later that you wished you hadn't Contact BCS and discuss your concerns and have your name removed.

PARKING

We also appeal to residents not to Park on the roadside outside their units, as it is not only dangerous, particularly at night, but is contrary to body corporate rules. It is the Committee's observation that most residents are now following the parking rules - thank you for your co-operation. However, where the parking rules are not being followed, further action on the part of the Committee will become necessary.

Parking and speeding is an ongoing problem in the Estate, and the Body Corporate Committee has received a number of complaints from residents. We would ask all residents to please refrain from parking on the lawns in the estate, even for a short period. Also, we would ask that you do not park your cars on the streets of the Estate overnight.

TRAFFIC

The speed limits in the estate have been set to ensure the safety and comfort of residents and drivers.

With narrow streets, pedestrians and children playing, it is necessary to ensure vehicles are driven at a sensible speed. Some residents are driving too fast on some streets, particularly Heathcote Drive.

Could you please remember to slow down, and let your friends and visitors know that we want to create a safe environment in the Estate.