

# Over The Fence - April 2011 [www.countrywalk.org](http://www.countrywalk.org)

## From the HOA President

Country Walk HOA will hold the annual meeting and election of officers on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM in the community room. Please plan to stop by, drop off your ballot and meet the board members and nominees. Remember, your HOA dues must be paid in full in order to have your vote count.

Over the past year the board of directors has worked well together and accomplished a good deal. The 2009 – 2010 board of directors spent a great deal of time interviewing, reviewing proposals and checking references on Pool Management companies. The contract was awarded to a company that was going to come in and change our pool over to a salt water system. When this system failed, your current board of directors stepped in quickly, had the system removed, terminated the company and brought in ProGuard Pool Management to take over. In spite of all of the initial problems, Country Walk residents enjoyed a wonderful pool season.

The current economy has had a major effect on everyone, the HOA included. With large numbers of homeowners struggling to pay their dues, houses being foreclosed, and the cost of operation going up, the current board has been working at cutting the budget everywhere possible. Many projects were put off last year, but will need to be completed this year. Currently, we are looking at replacing the street signs, replacing the carpet in the community room, replacing the parking lot lights, repairing the fence, and adding gutters around the community room. In addition, we are looking at our options on getting the restrooms redone.

The ACC Committee worked very hard last fall to get the new paint color schemes put in place. We have stepped up the inspections and are looking at ways to continue to improve the appearance of the neighborhood. If you look around the neighborhood, you will see a number of homes that have been recently painted with the new colors. We are receiving a lot of positive feedback on these new color schemes.

We truly appreciate everyone who paid their HOA dues. As a reminder, if you did not make payment or contact the NMS office to make payment arrangements, your account is now past due. REMINDER: If you have not paid the HOA dues, your amenity privileges have been suspended.

The warm weather has arrived and with, we have noticed a big increase in the number of people using our amenities area. **Please mark your calendar**, Denise Haney will be set up in the community room on April 9<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 PM until 5:00 PM and on April 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM and from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM with the 2011 HOA ID cards. If you have paid your dues in full, stop by the community room and pick up your new ID card (s). Please remember, once the 2011 cards are distributed the 2010 cards are no longer valid.



Annual HOA Meeting of Country Walk Homeowners Association, to be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of April 2011 at 3:00 p.m.

## FYI Blurbs



THERE HAVE BEEN COYOTES SPOTTED IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND IN SURROUNDING AREAS. PLEASE KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE BY OBEYING THE LEASH LAWS AND KEEPING THEM INDOORS AT NIGHT.



The Country Store will be offering dry cleaning drop off/pick up service starting March 1st..

### **Breakfast with the Mayor and City Council**

On Saturday, April 9, 2011 and continuing on the 2nd Saturday of each month, Mayor Pat Vaughn and Council invite citizens to join them at Bailey's Diner, 4093 Marietta Street, at 9:00 a.m



## Board Q/A

Email your questions to the board at [boardmember@countrywalk.org](mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org). Look for your answers in the next newsletter.

**Q: How do I reserve the community room?**

**A:** Phyllis Britt handles the reservations for the Community Room. Email Phyllis at [keylargo4evr@yahoo.com](mailto:keylargo4evr@yahoo.com) or call her at 770-439-2975. Please remember your HOA dues must be current to reserve the room. Please keep in mind that Phyllis is a volunteer and works full time when trying to contact her.

**Q: How do I reserve the pavilion for a party?**

**A:** Denise Haney handles the reservations for the Pavilion. Email Denise at [dhaney123@comcast.net](mailto:dhaney123@comcast.net) or call her at 770-485-9349.

**Q: What do I do about the stray dog or cat that keeps coming around?**

**A:** Cobb County and the City of Powder Springs both have ordinances regarding pets. All pets must be kept on a leash when outdoors and owners must clean up after their pets. Please contact Cobb County Animal Control regarding animals that are running loose. If you know who the animal belongs to, you may contact Neighborhood Management Services, they will be happy to send a notice out to the owner.

**Q: What can be done about homeowners that park on the street making it difficult to navigate throughout the neighborhood?**

**A:** This issue is handled by the Powder Springs Police Department. Please contact them to report any driving hazard that you notice.

**Q: When will I receive my 2011 ID card (s)?**

**A:** Denise Haney will begin distributing the new ID cards on April 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 5:00 PM and April 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 - 3:00 PM and 5:00 – 7:00 PM in the community room. Watch the newsletter, website and email for additional dates and times to pick up your ID cards. Please remember your dues must be paid in full before you will be able to pick up your IDs.

**Q: What types of things do I need to submit a modification form and receive approval from the ACC Committee before doing?**

**A:** You must submit a modification form and receive approval from the ACC Committee before doing any of the following to your property:

- **Installing** a new fence
- **Replacing** an existing fence with a new fence of a different style
- **Replacing** an existing fence with the same type of fence, but changing the foot print of it.
- **Before** changing the landscape plan for your lot. You may however, remove dead bushes and add seasonal color without getting approval.
- **Before** adding any type of edging or retaining walls.
- **Repainting** any part of the exterior of your home. You must choose your colors from the approved color book and submit the form for approval before painting. Note: This includes repainting your front door, shutters, trim or any portion of your home that is visible from the street.
- **Before** adding any type of play equipment to your yard. Note: play equipment will only be approved for addition to a back yard

## Board Q.A

- **Before** replacing your roof. When submitting the application you must be specific as to the type and color of the material that will be used.
- **Before** doing any type of structural modification. This includes replacing your front porch, adding a sidewalk, adding a shed, enclosing a deck, replacing your garage doors or windows with a different style window or door, etc.
- **Before** removing any large trees. When removing trees, you must receive approval from the City of Powder Springs Arborist before submitting the application to the ACC Committee. Include a copy of the approval letter from the City with your application.
- If there is any question regarding the need to have approval from the ACC Committee, submit a modification form.

**Q: What if I have a dead or dangerous tree, do I have to get approval to remove it?**

**A:** If a tree is dead or is a danger to anyone, please remove it immediately and submit of the documentation from the tree service regarding the condition of the tree along with the modification form for our records..  
If a tree has already fallen, you do not need approval to clean it up! Just clean it up ASAP.

**Q: Where do I get the approved paint colors from?**

**A:** Call Neighborhood Management Services at 770-222-2000 and make arrangements to check out a copy of the paint color book. You will need to stop by the NMS office to pick up the book. A \$50.00 deposit is required and will be returned to you when the book is returned to the NMS office.

**Q: If I submit a modification form, how long will it take to get a response from the ACC Committee?**

The ACC Committee does the best they can to respond promptly – usually within a week to 10 days. However, the covenants give the committee up to 45 days to respond. It is rare that it will take this long.

## **ACC News**

The warmer weather has arrived and it is the ideal time to get outside and clean up after a long winter and to improve the appearance of your yard and house. These are the most common ACC violations noticed:

- Most planting areas / island areas are bare and in need to have the mulch refreshed.
- Debris in yard and island areas. Debris consists of leaves, sticks, pine cones, sweet gum balls, etc.
- Curb areas are full of debris.
- Gutters are full or overflowing with debris from trees.
- Roofs are covered with debris from the trees.
- Mailboxes are broken, rusty, falling over, etc.
- Trash cans left in the driveway or where they are visible from the street
- Lawn ornaments, bird houses & feeders, large numbers of planters, children's toys, rain barrels, etc. in the front yard.
- Edging that is visible. Black plastic edging must be buried in the ground so it is not seen from the street, all block edging must be approved by the ACC Committee before it is installed. Wire fence type edging, above ground plastic edging, etc. is not approved for use.

Please remember the time to submit an application for modification and receive approval of your planned project is before the work begins. Please remember all changes to the exterior of your home need to be approved.

## Notice of Annual Meeting

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Dear Country Walk Homeowner,

This notice is to remind you of the annual meeting of the members of Country Walk Homeowners Association, to be **held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of April 2011 at 3:00 p.m.** in the Country Walk Community Room. The purpose of the meeting is to elect five members to the Board of Directors to serve for a term of two (2) years, and to conduct such other business as may come before the meeting. Following the membership meeting, the Board of Directors will hold a short meeting to elect officers and appoint committees.

The bios for all nominees are enclosed for your review. In addition to an election ballot for the five (5) Board of Directors' positions is enclosed. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting your ballot should be mailed to the above address. If you plan on attending the meeting, please turn your ballot in at the door and sign in. Please remember to do the following to ensure your vote is counted:

**Do not separate your ballot – ballot will be discarded if it is separated before the homeowner status is verified.**

Do not give your ballot to your neighbors or board members to turn in.

Ballots may be dropped off at the HOA office: 4485 N. Town Sq., Suite 220, Powder Springs. If no one is in the office, please drop the ballot in the mail slot.

Mailed ballots must be received in the HOA office on or before April 8, 2011. The PO Box will be checked before the meeting on Sunday, April 10 for any ballots that are mailed late.

HOA dues must be paid in full before your vote can be counted or you can serve on the Board of Directors.

We look forward to seeing you on April 10, 2011.

Sincerely,

Country Walk Board of Directors

## Bios

### **Tom Canzano – 3229 Country Walk Dr.**

Hello. My name is Tom Canzano. My wife and I have lived in Country Walk for the past 10 years and the first time we drove through this neighborhood we knew that we wanted to live here. We wanted a place to establish our 'roots' and were in amazement of the natural beauty and the "Pleasantville" atmosphere we felt, when driving through here for the first time. We certainly felt right at home. I enjoy all of our amenities, and it is a great feeling knowing that my wife and I don't have to travel out of our neighborhood to have access to such amazing features. Whether it's going to the pool and relaxing or taking a stroll through the neighborhood streets, we certainly enjoy having that luxury and appreciate the ease that comes with it.

For the last nine years, I have been on the management team for a company that sells building materials and during this time, I have developed a strong sense of 'teamwork' and have a chance to develop my leadership skills, always treating people with respect. I have also learned a lot about making wise financial decisions and being fiscally sound. I hope to bring some of these skills to our home owner's board and strive to ensure that our neighborhood continues to grow and develop in a manner that is both financially secure and one which I still love to come home to.

### **What is the best thing about Country Walk?**

In my opinion, the best thing about CW is that when you pull into our neighborhood you feel like you are at "home". The neighbors are friendly and welcoming and there is a great sense of pride and community with our neighborhood.

### **What is the worst thing about Country Walk?**

I believe the worst thing about Country Walk is having neighbors that just don't keep up with their personal property.

### **What would you like to do to change the worst thing?**

I know the last thing people want to do after a long week of work is do more work around the house. Our weekends are precious and we certainly enjoy being able to relax, spend time with family, etc. But, we owe it to ourselves and our neighbors to keep up with our own personal property. Regular routine maintenance, cutting grass, and raking leaves, etc are an essential key to maintaining and increasing our overall property values. With the bigger, more costly projects (ie: painting, tree removal, etc.) we as the board can make suggestions or recommend trusted contractors to help with these projects.

### **What do you suggest to help maintain or improve the property values?**

I believe the things we are talking about today are a great foundation for maintaining property values: leasing agreements, ACC enforcement, and our amenities. I also believe that everybody needs to have a personal responsibility for their own property to help maintain or improve property value. One thing that we can do, relative to everyone playing their own part, is to use our newsletter to a bigger advantage. I know there are tips about yard work etc., already included, but maybe our neighbors can have a forum/column where they can recommend contractors or provide tips on easy 'DIY' projects. This, collectively, will help us maintain our surroundings and might allow some of us to meet a new neighbor.

### **Where do you stand on the major issues in the neighborhood?**

**Leasing Amendment** - I know with the recent downturn of the economy, everybody is frustrated. (Myself included). We need to keep rentals to a minimum in our great neighborhood to ensure that everybody's property value increases instead of decreasing. Let's face it.....if you are connected to something larger, then you would typically care more and work harder for the greater good.

**ACC Enforcement** - I feel the enforcement of the ACC is imperative to our community and we need to continue adhering to the highest standards. This will keep our neighborhood beautiful, inviting, and warm and certainly assist with keeping our property values up.

### **Maintenance & Repairs**

Maintenance and Repairs are probably the most expensive line items on our budget every year. I believe that we should continue to make proactive and sound decisions to maintain our amenities, keeping them available for the present and future use by our neighbors. If we have great and well maintained amenities it will only add to everyone's property value, but we will all certainly take advantage of having them available.

## Bios

### **Paige Chadwick – 3239 Country Walk Dr.**

My name is Paige Chadwick and I have lived in Country Walk for 7 years. Having grown up in Powder Springs, and attended McEachern High School, Country Walk was on my short list of subdivisions to consider when I was ready to buy a home. I love the variety in the homes, the trees, hills and the wonderful amenities that Country Walk offers. I have a lot of pride in my home and want my neighborhood to continue to be a place that I'm proud to call home.

I am troubled by the effect that the economy has taken on property value and want to do everything possible to keep the property value in our neighborhood as high as possible. In order to do that, I believe that we must keep the amenities that are a requirement for many buyers in good condition, and encourage homeowners to abide by the ACC guidelines so our neighborhood will look beautiful and cared for. We must be innovative in problem solving, and in finding ways to increase the number of homeowners who pay their dues each year so we have the financial resources to do necessary maintenance and repairs. We must continue to keep renting and leasing out of our neighborhood. Lastly, and possibly most importantly, we must look around at the wealth of resources that exists in our neighborhood and tap into those resources to help make our neighborhood the best it can be.

### **Mandy Cross – 4804 Hunters Trace**

Country Walk has long held the reputation as one of Powder Springs' best neighborhoods in which to raise a family. It's time that Country Walk takes the necessary steps toward recapturing some of that allure within the community. My name is Mandy Cross, and I have been nominated to serve on the Country Walk board.

Ten years ago my husband and I moved to Powder Springs, specifically to Country Walk, for the opportunity the school system provides and also because of the curb appeal the homes projected. We have three children – Jeremy, a sophomore at McEachern; Peyton, a seventh-grader at Tapp; and Reily, who started Kindergarten at Varner – who have grown up with Country Walk as part of their daily lives. The friendships we enjoy within Country Walk are a large part of why I am accepting the nomination in hopes of being part of the board, to help shape the near future and long-term goals of the neighborhood.

Country Walk, like any other neighborhood, is a reflection of the people. The board should mirror that – from making decisions based on discussions with the residents, not just from board meetings where a handful of residents choose to voice their opinions – to fiscally responsible long-range planning that will positively affect residents.

Seemingly too often there are short-sighted decisions implemented with little or no explanation that affect residents, most specifically in their wallets. When challenged on budget decisions, the standard reply from the board is a defensive "We get no respect" for its efforts. Granted, board meetings are one night a month but many residents have become blasé in respect to wanting to be a part of the process because they feel concerns fall on deaf ears.

Instead, the board should be proactive in seeking opinions – specifically via a web-based forum on the neighborhood website where residents can openly share their thoughts with other residents and the board members. Residents also should be encouraged to voice their opinions, extending the dialogue from just what goes on within the Community Room during meetings. At the same time, the board should be transparent and welcome all opinions, in the desire to achieve the most reasonable solution to an issue.

Maintenance of the pool, tennis courts and street signs are hot topics – and had been a large part of the budget the past several years. Instead of a lump-sum mentality, a progressive approach would have been more prudent: repair A, B and C this year, X, Y and Z next year. Additional police patrols – a \$21,000 budget line – also have raised eyebrows. The reasons for the additional patrols are debatable – especially if crime is so rampant in Country Walk. However, the board does not delve into this issue at its monthly meeting. For a \$1,750 monthly expenditure, the least the board can do is provide residents an update on what these patrols are doing. Bottom line: The budget is residents' money and should be accounted for as such.

Property values within the neighborhood have fallen, like much of the rest of the city, county, state and country. However, there is no excuse for home maintenance to suffer. Each home owner has the responsibility in regards to upkeep, whether they live in the neighborhood or lease their home. It's the board's responsibility to hold these homeowners and lease-residents accountable. An active, readily accessible ACC committee would be a step forward, again relying on residents' input for helping homeowners meet the community standards – or potential changes to community standards.

Obviously each of us have an affinity for the neighborhood – people who grew up in Powder Springs, people who moved to the neighborhood from in or out of the state. Either way, we all want Country Walk to be the home that we envisioned – a month ago, a year ago, 10 years ago or more. This is our neighborhood – and I want to represent your voice on the board. Together we can bring Country Walk to where each of us believe it can and should be: a home for everyone who desires a safe, well-maintained, say-hello-to-your-neighbor neighborhood. Thanks for your consideration.

**Bios**

**Melissa Dye – 3381 Hickory Lane**

I have lived in Country Walk with my husband since 2006. I have worked seasonally with Cobb County Elections and volunteer at various places in the community. We fell in love with the neighborhood when we first saw it. We liked that the homes had similar architecture but each had a little of their own personality.

We liked that there is a sense of community and a little of something for everyone to feel included. I like that we have rules against renting. We lived in a neighborhood in another part of the state that allowed renting. It was hard to get the owners or renters to keep up their yards. I like that the ACC makes sure that people are taking care of their yards and do allow owners time to raise money for any needed house repairs. The latter being very important in tough economic times. I would like to see the ACC move away from a strict 11 color scheme approval process so that owners would be allowed to repaint their house the color it currently is.

I think the ACC can use common sense to keep out colors that would devalue homes. I have decided to run for the board because I love our neighborhood. I don't want to see it change and would like to help find ways for increasing our values now that they are so much lower from the economy.

**Carole Ellis – 3234 Country Walk Dr.**

My name is Carole Ellis and I have lived in Country Walk for nearly 3 years. I am a freelance writer/reporter focusing in the areas of real estate and medicine and work from home. I am stepmother to two lovely girls (10 & 13) and I have been married for almost 4 years. I am chair of CW's Social Committee. My husband and I decided to buy in Country Walk because of its proximity to our children's other home and because of its many positive similarities to the neighborhood where I grew up, including the now-defunct swim team but also because of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and other neighborhood functions and cohesive community environment.

**What is the best thing about Country Walk?**

The people in the neighborhood. We have a friendly, active community that is welcoming and instinctively pleasant.

**what is the worst thing about Country Walk?**

The combative relationship between the Homeowners and the HOA.

**What would you like to do to change the worst thing?**

We need a different way of relating these two groups. Calls for action need to be specific and results-oriented and there is a greater need for both transparency in the decision-making process and the perception of transparency therein.

**What do you suggest to help maintain or improve the property values?**

Rentals should continue to be limited. The pool and tennis courts need to be updated and repaired. I'd like to institute a community upkeep/social events schedule. Our neighborhood responds well to direct, personal requests for assistance and this can be leveraged in a positive, action-oriented manner. I believe that homeowners will like seeing results and feeling like they have a greater degree of control over their own community outside of the boundaries of their own yard.

**Where do you stand on the major issues in the neighborhood?**

**Leasing amendment** - I agree that rentals must be limited. However, there needs to be some way to deal – or allow for the possibility of dealing – with lease-purchase options and other flexible financing options in which purchase or at least long-term, vested ownership is likely. Our real estate market and our economy are not going to allow us to continue to refuse all options other than conventional financing if we want to keep occupancy high.

**ACC Enforcement** - Our neighborhood, particularly the main street, is lovely. The letters that go out, however, start out highly unpleasant and escalate from there. I think we might get better results with different wording, and I also think that there might be a place for the social committee to help in this arena also.

**Maintenance and repair of the amenities** - Clearly our amenities are currently suffering. The most obvious things should be repaired in as short order as possible, even if this requires soliciting neighborhood help and contributions. Things like painting (e.g. mailboxes/signs/etc) could possibly be undertaken on large scale once a year. A big concern is the pool and the water bills from last summer. We need a workable plan of action in place ahead of time to deal with issues like these. I realize that the board cannot plan for everything, but having a more clearly defined M.O. for maintenance issues might help abbreviate the costs to the neighborhood.



## Bios

### **Cheryl League – 4736 Bradford Lane**

Hi. My name is Cheryl League. My husband, Don, and I have lived in Country Walk for 14 years. We enjoy the natural beauty of the area. The tree-filled lots hooked us right from the beginning. I enjoy the pool very much. And, although I am not a tennis player, I love that we have such great amenities. I am a former Cobb County teacher (22 years) and, for the past 15 years, I have worked at Presbyterian Village. I have previously been on the board, for a total of 4 years. I love our neighborhood and want to make sure that it stays safe and beautiful. Being on the board is one way that I can ensure that your ideas and mine are heard.

#### **What is the best thing about Country Walk?**

The best things about CW are the “ natural, wooded” look & the amenities.

#### **What is the worst thing about Country Walk?**

The worst thing about CW is having neighbors who don't pay their maintenance fees & don't even try to make payment arrangements.

#### **What would you like to do to change the worst thing?**

I think we are already doing everything that we can in that regard. It's up to the homeowners to take more responsibility.

#### **What do you suggest to help maintain or improve the property values?**

Everyone needs to take pride in the appearance of their house & yard.

#### **Where do you stand on the major issues in the neighborhood?**

**Leasing Amendment** - I was on the board when we passed the leasing amendment. I even went door to door to make sure that people voted. We need to keep the amendment in place to ensure that our property values do not decrease, but increase.

**ACC Enforcement** - We need to enforce the ACC standards because, unfortunately, some people would just let their properties go. This, in turn, would hurt everyone's property values.

**Maintenance and repair of the amenities** - We have great amenities. Our subdivision is getting older & repairs will always need to be made. Our amenities rival many subdivisions, even those newer than ours. We need to maintain them & keep them up to standards, so they can be enjoyed by all of our CW neighbors

### **Amy McCauley – 4734 Bradford Lane**

My name is Amy McCauley. I have been a homeowner in Country Walk for the past 4 years. I have also been a pool monitor each summer since moving to Country Walk in 2007. Prior to the purchase of my current home, I resided in a condo community where I gained experience with my first Home Owners Association. During my condo ownership, I served as the HOA Secretary for two years and the President for one year. I feel that it is time for me to offer my service to the current Home Owner's Association.

During the past 4 years, I have come to the conclusion that the best thing about the Country Walk community is the people. I am blessed with some of the best neighbors I could request, and am honored to share yard space and time with them. The worst thing about the Country Walk community is the overall lack of community feeling. We are a large neighborhood. How many of us can really say they know their neighbors? Next door? 2 houses down? 4 houses down? Someone on another street? Having a sense of community is important to this neighborhood. It is a sense of community that prevents crime, makes us feel safe walking on our sidewalks, feel safe letting our children play outside, or feel safe walking back into our homes after time away. It is a sense of community that builds pride in home ownership and maintenance. It is a sense of community that makes people want to continue to live in Country Walk when other housing options are available.

Having a community in which people want to live also comes with responsibility. First and foremost on this list is the maintenance of property values. "Property value is determined by several characteristics including the condition and location of the property. Several economic factors can also help determine the value of property..."<sup>1</sup>While we cannot do much to affect the economic forecast, nor the number of foreclosed homes in Country Walk, there are property value factors that can be affected by each of us. We can each properly maintain our home and yard to the specifications of the ACC Committee. These standards were initiated to preserve the intended look of the neighborhood. Proper maintenance of the neighborhood amenities is also an important. As we are all members of the HOA, we are all responsible for preserving the property the HOA owns and maintains. Proper maintenance reduces overall repair costs, and potential hazardous situations. Finally, tenant/homeowner ratios can also affect property values. Though dated, studies from the 1980s show mortgages company standards indicate they are unlikely to grant mortgages for properties located in areas where less than 75%-80% of the properties are considered owner occupied.<sup>2</sup>This is one of many reasons rental restrictions are required.

If elected to the Board of Directors of Country Walk's HOA, it is my intention to support actions which will contribute to the betterment of the Country Walk Community.



## **Bios**

### **Shelia Marshall – 4738 Bradford Lane**

Hello! My name is Shelia Marshall. My husband Chris and I have lived in Country Walk for over 17 years and raised our boys here. I have served on the HOA Board for the past three years. My professional background is real estate and I current serve on the Cobb Board Association of Realtors as well as a member of the Planning and Zoning Board in the City of Powder Springs.

#### **What is the best thing about Country Walk?**

Without a doubt the residents of Country Walk make our neighborhood a desirable place to live.

#### **What is the worst thing about Country Walk?**

I think the worst thing about Country Walk at this time is more “unfortunate” than worst. It is unfortunate the economy and aging of Country Walk are taking a toll on our neighborhood at the same time. These issues combined with the large number of homeowners that have not paid their dues, have unfortunately put a financial stress on the homeowners which passes on to the HOA at a time when maintenance and upkeep is critical to upkeep our aging community.

#### **What would you like to do to change the worst thing?**

First, I would challenge the HOA and the residents of our neighborhood to unite as a community. Second, it is critical that prioritization is given to areas of the neighborhood suffering the most i.e. pool, tennis, and basketball courts. As a neighborhood we have got to unite in protecting our home values and continue to make this a place to which we want to call home. I would like to see a “Community Care” program put in place; our residents have a broad range of experience and expertise in many areas that could unite to help homeowners that are struggling, sick, unemployed or just need that extra “helping hand”.

#### **What do you suggest to help maintain or improve the property values?**

The real estate market has brought foreclosures and short sales to our doorsteps and looks to continue over the next few years. It is times like these that it is even more important for homeowners to maintain their properties in order to retain even the now current values. There are many low costs ways to maintain the appearance of our neighborhood which in turn shows perspective homebuyers that Country Walk homeowners care about their homes. This improves the perceived value of living in Country Walk. I would also like to see the “Yard of the Month” program reinstated giving recognition to those who work hard to maintain their yards.

#### **Where do you stand on the major issues in the neighborhood?**

**Leasing amendment** – Country Walk was developed to be a homeowner community with covenants and restrictions intended to maintain the value of our homes. Homeowners tend to maintain and improve their homes resulting in a positive improvement of the overall neighborhood. Although I support the leasing amendment, there are situations that hardship leasing requests should be reviewed and considered.

**ACC Enforcement** – One of the reasons we bought a home in Country Walk 17 years ago was the beauty of the neighborhood. Arvida developed a beautiful community establishing covenants and restrictions that we agreed to follow when we purchased our homes in Country Walk. Compliance with ACC Standards can maintain that beauty.

**Maintenance and repair of the amenities** – Country Walk is still a great place to call home but is in need of maintenance and repairs especially in the amenities areas. Maintenance and repair items along with vandalism mean large expenditures for Country Walk. Taking into account the large number of home owners who have not paid their dues this year plus those still delinquent from prior years, we are challenged to find ways to pay for the items needed to repair. With the help of security patrol, the vandalism is slowing down ( the Neighborhood Watch program might be an area to help further deter vandalism). Our neighborhood did not age overnight so we need to plan to prioritize immediate, short term and long term areas as well as continued budget cuts.

I love living in Country Walk and would like to see our homeowners unite in taking an interest in maintaining and protecting our home values.

## Bios

### **Ann Taylor - 4803 Winding Lane**

I have lived in Cobb County for over thirty five years and have live in Country Walk for almost seven years. We were familiar with the area as our son and his family had been residents here for seven years. It was while my husband Jim was recovering from an accident and staying at our son Michael's home here in Country Walk, that we discovered our lovely ranch home. We love the neighborhood because it is so family friendly regardless of one's age. I retired from Cobb County Schools in June 2008 after 33 years to spend more time with our three sons, their wives and our seven grandchildren and to travel with my husband. I love gardening and can be found playing in the dirt most days.

As a board member the past two years, I have tried to make decisions that benefited every Country Walk homeowner and if elected again I will continue to do so. I have learned so much in this short period and no realize the arduous task of being a board member. There is still much to be done. I would like to be part of making a difference.

### **What is the best thing about Country Walk?**

The best thing about Country Walk is when one drives into the subdivision you have the atmosphere of family life and being at home.

### **What is the worst thing about Country Walk?**

The worst thing about Country Walk is lack of pride and care by some of the residents in the upkeep of their property.

### **What would you like to do to change the worst thing?**

I would encourage neighborhood pride. I would like to help start a garden club that would promote and provide ways for improvement which would benefit both aesthetically and socially.

### **What do you suggest to help maintain or improve the property values?**

I believe that encouraging communications between the board and the residents and keeping residents well informed will create a sense of belonging in the community. I will also set an example by taking pride in the way I maintain my own home.

### **What do you suggest to help maintain or improve the property values?**

I would like to make sure both entrances are attractive and catch your eye because that is ones first impression of the neighborhood. I believe keeping the common areas clean, neat and attractive so that when residents use them they will appreciate having the amenities available, thereby taking care to leave them as found. The board and residents need to work together to pursue activities that will keep our children and teens involved.

### **Where do you stand on the major issues in the neighborhood?**

**Leasing Amendment** -Country Walk is an owner occupied neighborhood. It was established for that purpose and I feel it should remain so.

**ACC Enforcement** - The ACC is an effective tool in that it calls attention to the maintenance needs or problems with a property that may have been overlooked by the owner. The ACC and the homeowner need to work hand in hand towards a solution to any problems. I believe if we work together to create a more beautiful neighborhood it would result in better property values.

**Maintenance and repair of the amenities** - Country Walk is twenty-five years old and the amenities naturally are in need of repair. For instance, the pool deck needs to be replaced. Realizing that everything cannot be done at once, I feel we need to prioritize the needs and start from there. With the plan that is in place, and with the neighbors volunteering their talents and time, working together we can get the job done step by step.

Country Walk Ballot

**April 10, 2011**

**BALLOT FOR ELECTION  
FIVE DIRECTORS TO BE ELECTED TO A TWO YEAR TERM**

**Please vote for five (5) candidates:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Canzano, Tom

\_\_\_\_\_ Chadwick, Paige

\_\_\_\_\_ Cross, Mandy

\_\_\_\_\_ Dye, Melissa

\_\_\_\_\_ Ellis, Carole

\_\_\_\_\_ League, Cheryl

\_\_\_\_\_ Marshall, Shelia

\_\_\_\_\_ McCauley, Amy

\_\_\_\_\_ Taylor, Ann

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Do not separate. Ballot is **VOID** if separated before verification of HOA status.

Homeowner name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



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**CRCT Remediation and Retesting**

All CRCT remediation and retesting will take place during the school year. No summer program or additional testing will be offered for Cobb or non-Cobb students.

Local schools will notify parents of students who need to be retested on state-mandated CRCT retesting after state scores are returned in mid-May. All students will have access to a complete individual score report. Schools will communicate when these become available.

Cobb students in grades 3, 5, and 8 who do not pass the April CRCT administration in the required grades and courses will be provided additional remediation and will be retested during the final week of school. The state mandates a retest opportunity for third grade reading, fifth grade mathematics and reading, and eighth grade mathematics and reading.

**May 20 Reading Retest**  
**May 23 Mathematics Retest**  
**May 24 Make-up**

**[http://www.cobbk12.org/centraloffice/communications/news/2011/20110301\\_SummerSchool.aspx](http://www.cobbk12.org/centraloffice/communications/news/2011/20110301_SummerSchool.aspx)**

## Social Committee and Upcoming Events

### **Social Committee**

We hope that you are all enjoying the balmy weather in Country Walk. Let's hope it continues after "Winter Break" is over!

We have a lot coming up this Spring, so please check out our plans below:

=====

### **Garage Sale:**



### **Country Walk Neighborhood Garage Sale**

**(Rain Date)-Sat  
April 2nd @  
8:30-3:00**

Please email  
**[cwspring-  
garagesale2011@g  
mail.com](mailto:cwspring-garagesale2011@gmail.com)** if you plan  
to participate.



*Happy Easter*



## City of Powder Springs Events

<http://www.cityofpowdersprings.org/>

**Breakfast with the Mayor and City Council** On Saturday, April 9, 2011 and continuing on the 2nd Saturday of each month, Mayor Pat Vaughn and Council invite citizens to join them at Bailey's Diner, 4093 Marietta Street, at 9:00 a.m

**Outdoor Burning From May 1 through September 30**, you may not burn leaves, tree limbs, or other yard waste, forest land, or use air curtain destructors for land clearing. Burning is allowed from October 1 to April 30 under certain conditions

**Powder Springs Farmers Market 2011** Vendor applications are now being accepted. Opening day is scheduled for Thursday, June 2, 2011. The Market will be open every Thursday from June through September from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m



**The Powder Springs Farmers Market** is operated through a combined effort of the City of Powder Springs, the Historic Downtown Merchants Association of Powder Springs, and the Powder Springs Farmers Market Advisory Committee.

**Mission:** To support and promote local farmers, home growers and purveyors of foods prepared with local products, by providing a community-based market where they can sell their goods directly to consumers, to encourage area residents to buy local, buy healthy and buy smart and to provide consumers with an alternative fresh produce shopping venue and an opportunity to connect with neighbors and the community in beautiful downtown Powder Springs.

# Cobb County School District 2011 Commencement Schedule

The Cobb County School District is increasing its use of the county's largest venue for high school graduations, providing substantially more opportunities for parents, grandparents, siblings and other relatives and guests to attend the ceremonies.

In May 2011, the number of the district's largest high schools conducting graduation ceremonies at the Convocation Center at Kennesaw State University will increase from five to 10. The KSU Convocation Center has a seating capacity of 4,400, which means an additional 9,000 guests will be able to attend ceremonies in 2011, compared to 2010 when five schools conducted ceremonies at smaller venues. The increased capacity should result in logistical improvements, greater efficiency, and a reduction in counterfeit tickets that have become prevalent at graduation ceremonies in recent years.

"Graduating from high school is a meaningful milestone for our students that they wish to share with as many family members as possible," said district graduation coordinator John Stafford. "By maximizing the use of the largest available venues, we are providing our students and their families greater access to these once-in-a-lifetime events."

To fully utilize the KSU Convocation Center, the district will conduct one ceremony on Wednesday May 25th, and three ceremonies per day on Thursday May 26th, Friday May 27th and Saturday May 28th. Four other high schools will conduct graduation ceremonies at The Cathedral of Turner Chapel AME Church in Marietta, which has a seating capacity of 3,000, on May 26, 27 & 28. Two Cobb County high schools – Allatoona and McEachern – will hold graduation ceremonies on their school campuses on May 26. (See accompanying schedule)

The district anticipates more than 7,500 students will graduate from the district's 16 high schools in 2011, and more than 50,000 guests are expected to attend the four days of ceremonies.

## Kennesaw State University Convocation Center

Ceremony Date & Time		School	On-site Rehearsal Date & Time	
Wednesday, May 25, 2011	7:00 p.m.	Walton	Wednesday, May 25	5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.
Thursday, May 26, 2011	10:00 a.m.	North Cobb	Thursday, May 26	8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.
Thursday, May 26, 2011	2:30 p.m.	Pope	Monday, May 23	2:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Thursday, May 26, 2011	7:00 p.m.	Lassiter	Tuesday, May 24	9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
Friday, May 27, 2011	10:00 a.m.	Harrison	Friday, May 27	8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.
Friday, May 27, 2011	2:30 p.m.	Hillgrove	Tuesday, May 24	12:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.
Friday, May 27, 2011	7:00 p.m.	Wheeler	Tuesday, May 24	2:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Saturday, May 28, 2011	10:00 a.m.	Kennesaw Mountain	Saturday, May 28	8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.
Saturday, May 28, 2011	2:30 p.m.	Kell	Wednesday, May 25	9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
Saturday, May 28, 2011	7:00 p.m.	Campbell	Wednesday, May 25	11:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

## Allatoona High School Gym

Ceremony Date & Time		School	On-site Rehearsal Date & Time
Thursday, May 26, 2011	7:00 p.m.	Allatoona	School Decision

## Cantrell Stadium (McEachern High School)

Ceremony Date & Time		School	On-site Rehearsal Date & Time
Thursday, May 26, 2011	7:00 p.m.	McEachern	School Decision

## Board of Directors/Committee Chairs

<u>BOARD POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
President	Shirley Paxon	<a href="mailto:president@countrywalk.org">president@countrywalk.org</a>
Vice-President	TBA	
Treasurer	Jim Galluzzo	<a href="mailto:treasurer@countrywalk.org">treasurer@countrywalk.org</a>
Secretary	Ann Taylor	<a href="mailto:secretary@countrywalk.org">secretary@countrywalk.org</a>
Board Member	Phyllis Britt	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Board Member	Cindy Campbell	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Board Member	Shelia Marshall	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Board Member	Linda Patterson	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Board Member	Billie "BJ" Williams	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
ACC	Linda Patterson/ Ann Taylor/ BJ Williams	<a href="mailto:acc@countrywalk.org">acc@countrywalk.org</a>
Community Room	Phyllis Britt	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Landscape	Jim Galluzzo	<a href="mailto:treasurer@countrywalk.org">treasurer@countrywalk.org</a>
Neighborhood Watch	TBA	
Newsletter	TBA	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Pool	TBA	
Social	Carole Ellis	<a href="mailto:carole.j.ellis@gmail.com">carole.j.ellis@gmail.com</a>
Tennis	Bob Johnson	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>
Welcome	Shelia Marshall	<a href="mailto:boardmember@countrywalk.org">boardmember@countrywalk.org</a>

### **Do you have an amenity question?**

Denise and Scott Haney are the amenity managers. Please call them if you have any questions at 770.485.9349 or email [pool@countrywalk.org](mailto:pool@countrywalk.org)

# **Marietta/Cobb** **drivers** **EDUCATION**

## **2011 SUMMER SCHEDULE**

**\$350.00**

❖ **Classes are Monday through Thursday  
From 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM**

❖ **Register On-line at [www.mariettacommunityschool.com](http://www.mariettacommunityschool.com)**

### **Dodgen Middle School - Marietta High School Kell High School – Harrison High School**

1. June 6 - 9
2. June 13 - 16
3. June 20 - 23
4. June 27 – 30
5. July 11 – 14
6. July 18 – 21

### **North Cobb High School and McEachern High School**

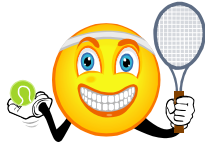
1. June 6 - 9
2. June 13 - 16
3. June 20 - 23
4. June 27 – 30

Marietta Community School  
1171 Whitlock Avenue  
Marietta, Georgia 30064

[www.mariettacommunityschool.com](http://www.mariettacommunityschool.com)

Phone: 770-429-3170  
770-429-3171  
FAX: 770-429-3178

## Courtside at Countrywalk



The exciting news from last month's newsletter was that both Country Walk mixed ALTA teams were headed into playoff rounds. The B-8 level team advanced through 3 rounds of playoffs to compete in the City Final's held on March 12 at Blackburn Tennis Center in Atlanta. Although County Walk's team was not the "winner" of the match that day, they are still proud of their accomplishments as a Division Winner and City Finalist, a pretty high recognition out of 84 teams in their division. Below is a picture of the team with their winning plate.

Spring seasons are underway with one men's ALTA team playing out of Country Walk on Saturday mornings, and two women's ALTA teams playing on Sunday afternoons. Country Walk is also a home court for a mixed USTA team with matches being played on Friday evenings.

Summer registration is currently underway for ALTA mixed, ALTA senior's (45 & up), and USTA summer leagues. Any questions can be directed to Shelia Marshall, a member of our Board of Directors.

No better time than Spring Time to pick up a racquet and hit some balls. See you on the courts.



## Gardening Tips



Well, spring has sprung, and it's time to play in the dirt to create a beautiful yard for the summer of 2011. Hopefully by now you have removed all the old debris left from winter. Let's get started!

There is still time to plant trees and shrubs. However, by mid-month it will be a little late to transplant large trees or shrubs, so do them now. March, April and May are ideal for pruning evergreens. If you have a Juniper, Cypress or conifer that needs shearing or pruning this is a good time to accomplish this task. Remove all dead, diseased, and undesirable wood. Do not prune back into the bare wood part of the plant. Prune Forsythia after it finishes flowering. Broadleaf and needle leaf evergreens need a bit of high nitrogen fertilizer around their bases.

Now is the time for planting summer flowering bulbs like dahlias, gladiolas and lilies. Mix bulb fertilizers and peat moss into the soil. Tuberous Begonias, and Canna should not be set outdoors until all danger of frost has passed, so wait until next month. Plant annual seeds of asters, cosmos, marigolds, zinnias in the garden now. You should deadhead spring flowering bulbs after blooming. Trim them back, feed, and water them well. Divide Daylilies, Delphiniums, iris, chrysanthemums, Daisies, and Phlox. The additional plants you create can be traded, given to friends or planted in another spot. Lastly, Hybrid Tea Roses should be fertilized prior to buds beginning to bloom by using a systemic fertilizer it will help prevent insect infestation later in the summer.

Spring is also a good time to thatch and over seed the lawn. Build-up can smother your lawn and provide the cause for diseases. Remove thatch by a brisk raking, or with a de-thatching machine. Over seeding will help fill-in the lawn and deter the re-growth of moss and weeds. Apply a light compost or soil over the seed to keep it moist and in place. Use a garden fork to punch holes and aerate the lawn. Make sure your blade on the mower is sharp to prevent tearing the grass tips. To avoid scalping set the blade to cut the grass at 2 ½ inches. Don't forget to apply a spring type lawn fertilizer with a moss-killer included to perk up your lawn's appearance and color.

Don't forget your houseplants. Rotate them so that each side gets sunlight for even growth. Spring-cleaning will keep them beautiful and help avoid diseases. Remove spent flowers, dead leaves or branches, or yellow leaves. Rinse the dust from the leaves with a sprayer so they can BREATHE!

Remember to plant a tree for Arbor Day. Keep all transplants well watered during dry spells. Check container plants and those under the eaves of the house and under tall evergreens to see that they are getting enough water. And most of all enjoy your time playing in the dirt!

Ann

## Roxanne Kirkland

### Local Entrepreneur/Inventor Reaches Out to Kemp

In an effort to connect the Target curriculum to real life, Mrs. Groenveld organized a time for a local entrepreneur to come and talk with her class about the process in developing a solution to our everyday problems. Fortunately, Kemp Elementary has one of those local entrepreneurs on staff! Mrs. Roxanne Kirkland, inventor of the Coupon Organizer, shared with 5th grade students the process in inventing a product, patenting the product and marketing the product. After hearing about the process Mrs. Kirkland went through to develop the Coupon Organizer, students were motivated to brainstorm their own solutions to everyday problems and become an entrepreneur like Mrs. Kirkland. You can learn more about the Coupon Organizer by visiting Mrs. Kirkland's website at [www.couponcontrol.net](http://www.couponcontrol.net)



