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A change in the weather is sufficient to
recreate the world and ourselves.

Marcel Proust

Emerald News

News for the Emerald Lakes Community

37th Year, 3rd Issue

www.elainc.org

April 2010

Board Recommends \$200 Dues Increase To Hold Town Meeting on Reasons, Details

by **Lola Lauri**

At their work session on May 16 the Emerald Lakes Board of Directors decided, unanimously, to recommend a \$200 dues increase for the fiscal year 2010/2011. The decision came after much debate over the last several months and after General Manager Gil Werner produced two budgets. The first of these showed services continuing at their current level and included much needed long-term maintenance. But at current dues level of \$800 per improved property it would result in a shortfall estimated to be over \$200,000. The second budget was balanced and shows serious cutbacks in services, but it would still have a shortfall of approximately \$100,000. Because of federal law, only a small percentage of billed dues may be shown to be uncollectable, while a much

more substantial amount of non-compliance – approaching 20% - is expected. Hence a so-called 'balanced' budget typically overestimates income.

The Board, in conjunction with the Finance and Planning Committee, will conduct a workshop on Saturday, May 15 at 10am in the Community Center. It is expected to take about 3 hours, depending on questions and discussion after the presentation. It will be repeated Sunday, May 16 at 1pm for those unable to attend the Saturday session. On the following weekend, Saturday, May 22 and Sunday, May 23 we will hold a "virtual meeting." What this means is that there will be polls open at the Community Center from 10am to 8pm each day. Board President Buz Whelan states, "We hope to maximize convenience to our members this way. They will not



The Emerald Lakes Board of Directors discuss the recommended dues increase at the March 24th Open Meeting at the Community Center.

have to travel far to vote, and they will have enough choice among the hours that it will be easy to fit into busy schedules. I have contacted our attorney and been assured that this is a

legitimate way to hold a vote. As long as 50 members vote, we can declare that a quorum was achieved. And we save the inconvenience and expense of an off-site meeting and vote."

The presentations will be divided into four parts. The first part will be about roads and equipment. The second part will be about our physical plant, i.e., buildings, pools, beaches and so forth. The third part will be about operations, programs and administration.

The fourth and final part will be about finances: how we spend our money, how we collect revenue, why reserves are important and what choices must be made. Each part is expected to run 30 minutes followed by a Q&A session.

Asked why, after a \$100 dues increase was turned down last year, the Board was now recommending \$200 Board President Buz Whelan said, "Because this is what we honestly believe is needed. We're going to do our best to explain precisely why to the membership. We're aware some will reject any

increase, no matter how justified. But we have a responsibility to be honest with our members. We cannot continue as we have been if we do not get the increase. The character of the community will change severely. Within three years the roads will be barely drivable, we will have to close the Community Center and the outdoor pool, and we will not have enough

continued on page 9

Town Hall Meetings

Saturday, May 15 @ 10 a.m. & Sunday, May 16 @ 1 p.m.

Vote on the Dues Increase

Saturday, May 22 and Sunday, May 23

10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

All meetings and voting will be at the Community Center

Deadlines

Issue

May 2010

Deadline

April 23

On Stands

May 14

All articles, pictures, schedules, etc must be submitted to
emeraldnews@yahoo.com

Board of Directors '10

President, Buz Whelan
 Secretary, Paul Capozzoli
 Director, Joseph Miller
 Director, Joe Miller

Vice President, George Haab
 Treasurer, Al Leslie
 Director, Joe Olall
 Director, Bob Lauri

Board Meetings are held the 4th Saturday of each month 9:30am
 at the community center unless otherwise announced

Committees/Clubs

<p><u>RULES, REGULATIONS & ARC COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Millie Bishop Meeting: 3rd Wednesday of the month Time: 9:30am - Admin. office Recommend to the Board of Directors actions by which the affairs of the Association shall be regulated. Recommend to the Board of Dirs. Actions relative to architecture & environmental issues within Emerald Lakes and assure maintenance of the character of the community.</p>
<p><u>MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Bob Lauri Meeting: 3rd Thursday of the month Time: 9:30am Admin. Office To assess the maintenance needs of Emerald Lakes and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.</p>
<p><u>REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Carmen Brodnax Meeting: 2nd Sat. of month Bi-monthly Time: 9:30am - Community Ctr. To act confidentially and recommend to the Board of Directors courses of action relative to the acquisition of real property and its retention for future use or its disposition to generate income or other benefits for the furtherment of the community's best interest.</p>
<p><u>LONG RANGE PLANNING & FINANCE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: David Pope Meeting: To be announced Time: To be announced Study/evaluate trends in the Association and surrounding communities to assist Board setting goals for the Community. Recommend to the Board actions to efficiently control the community financial operations. Including preparation of annual budget.</p>
<p><u>POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Joe Olall Liaison: To be announced Meeting: To be announced Time: To be announced</p>
<p><u>COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Co-chairs: Denise L. Wilson Eileen Avrich Meeting: As needed Time: To be announced Advise/assist Board of Directors in informing members about purpose/function of the Association and its activities through Association newspaper and website www.elainc.org</p>
<p><u>SECURITY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Paul Capozzoli Meeting: As needed Time: To be announced To assess the security needs of Emerald Lakes and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. Sub-committee</p>
<p><u>NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Paul Capozzoli Meeting: 3rd Sat. of month - as needed Time: 9:30am - Community Ctr. A watch group to empower people to prevent crime, forge bonds between law enforcement and the community, and build a foundation for broader community improvement, and provide back up at scheduled events.</p>
<p><u>COMMUNITY CENTER EVENTS COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Dolores V. Sainfil Secretary: Edie DeVito Public Relations: Stefania Buono Meeting: 2nd Saturday of Month Time: 11:00 am - Comm. Ctr.</p> <p>To work hand in hand with the Community Center Coordinator, Recreation Director, 50 Plus Club, and the Women's Club to bring events to the Community Center which will include all of Emerald Lakes Families.</p>
<p><u>FIFTY PLUS CLUB</u></p> <p>Co-Chairs: Edie DeVito Lee Hollingsworth</p> <p>Meeting: 1st Tues. of month Time: 12:00pm - 3:00pm - Comm. Ctr.</p> <p>Promote the health, safety & welfare of the members and develop and maintain a spirit of camaraderie & good fellowship among its members through an organized program of social, recreational, fraternal, educational, cultural and informational activities.</p>
<p><u>WOMEN'S CLUB</u></p> <p>Chairperson: Millie Bishop Meeting: 3rd Thurs. of month Time: 7:00pm @ the community center</p> <p>To develop the educational, civic and social interest of the Association's members.</p>

The President's Message

by Buz Whelan



"Pedantry and mastery are opposite attitudes toward rules. To apply a rule to the letter, rigidly, unquestioningly, in cases where it fits and in cases where it does not fit, is pedantry. To apply a rule with natural ease, with judgment, noticing the cases where it fits, and without ever letting the words of the rule obscure the purpose of the action or the opportunities of the situation, is mastery."
 -George Polya, professor of mathematics (1887-1985)

There are those who will tell you 'the rules are the rules.' Any interpretation other than a literal one is not permitted. That's one way of thinking. But others might say that the most important thing is to understand the spirit of a rule and then to apply that understanding in ways that best fit a particular situation. It's a pragmatic approach, and I admit to being in that second group.

Our by-laws set out guidelines for quorum in various situations. In order for the Board of Directors to proceed with validly transacting business four of the seven directors must be present. In order for decisions reserved for the membership at large to be valid fifty properties must be represented, and all must be in good standing. An additional requirement of quorum is that while a minimum number must be present, all potential participants must have been given adequate notice. The purpose of quorum is to prevent a small, unrepresentative group from setting policy or making important decisions.

We have scheduled a Town Hall meeting for May 15, to be repeated on May 16, whose purpose is to explain in some detail why the directors are recommending a \$200 increase in the annual dues. We have scheduled a vote to take place at the Community Center Saturday and Sunday, May 22 and 23, with polls open from 10am to 8pm. We will precede these events with a first-class mailing

to all members alerting them to the date, time and purpose of the meeting and vote. That will fulfill the second part of the quorum requirement. The first part is trickier. I believe that we can fulfill the numerical requirement of quorum by the number of votes cast. A majority of the directors are with me on this, but, more importantly, we have received legal advice from our attorney that this action will not violate our by-laws. And most important of all, we are fulfilling the spirit of the by-law quorum: this format will allow more members than ever to participate in this most crucial decision.

Since I have been a member of the association, the most votes cast at any Annual Meeting - and therefore, the most properties represented - was 266 in 2005. Last year we had 178 votes cast in the initial ballot for directors and dues increase. Again and again members have given me reasons why they could not attend the meeting. There were weddings, christenings, bar mitzvahs and reunions. There were those who had to work or were vacationing outside the community. And all of those people were disenfranchised, effectively denied the opportunity to vote. With a central location and long hours to choose from, we hope that this arrangement will allow more members than ever to have their voices heard.

The Issue

The character of our community is the main issue. We can have a first-class community or

we can have low dues. We cannot have both. We can keep the amenities and roads in good repair or we can cut back on all but the most critical operations - trash and snow removal - while leaving our buildings to slowly fall into disrepair and eventual abandonment and our roads to survive with the most minimal maintenance. We can eliminate the youth recreation programs, the Community Center events and ongoing activities and the organizations and clubs that draw our members together and give us a sense of community. That is the choice; that is what is at stake. It is not just my claim; it is evidenced by our budget, our cash flow and the engineering reports on our infrastructure. We will give you the details at the Town hall meeting and then you will decide.

But Money is Tight

We are aware that many of our families are on tight budgets and have little extra cash to disburse. Should the dues increase be approved, we are offering some slight remediation. In the first place, the additional increase of \$200 would not be due until November 1. Next year's dues would be payable in 4 increments of \$250 each. The first would be May 1, the second August 1, the third November 1 and the fourth on February 1. Those members who chose this payment method would remain in good standing throughout the year and would be eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting, or any other duly-called meeting.

Copies of the
 Proposed 2010/2011
 association budget
 are available at the
 Administration
 Office.

General Manager's Message

by Gil Werner



The ELA budget will be approved in May 2010 for the fiscal year 2010/2011. The preliminary budget, initially presented to the F&P Committee and the Board of Directors, had a deficit of \$82,889.00. This was not acceptable because the Association cannot operate without a balanced budget.

After many additional hours of toiling over the expenses of the Association, I was able to compile a balanced budget. This was accomplished by drastically reducing services which the Association provides to the membership. These measures must be taken to ensure that the Association does not fail financially. The Association has fallen into a dangerous position partly because past Boards of Directors have increased services by using the money in Reserves, so now our Reserves accounts are dangerously low.

Another issue that has added to our dilemma is that for the past few years all of our expenses have continued to increase while our income (dues from the membership) has remained the same \$800.00. This ongoing yearly shortfall or lack of cost-of-living adjustments has meant that we could buy less and less each year.

The Association started to defer maintenance issues, and increased services (such as establishing an "in house" Public Safety Dept.).

This new department was so over budget that a previous board utilized Reserve monies to pay the bills that were incurred by this new and expanded service. So not only was our operating budget adversely by their actions, our reserves were diminished as well.

Recently, the current board and I have taken a number of cost saving measures. We have changed the work force by reducing the number of staff members and rewriting job descriptions; we have made it more efficient and extremely productive. We have reduced many costs in the daily operations by paying attention to the smallest of details. We have asked staff members for their input to get tasks done more cost-effectively. All of these actions have resulted in a very, very efficiently run organiza-

tion. However, all of these actions are fruitless if the association does not have the money to pay the daily operations expenses. That is where we are now.

The association cannot continue to provide the present level of services without having the funds to pay for them. Therefore, the balanced budget that I have presented to the Board and the F&P committee reflects an abundant reduction of services. They start with the summer programs – reducing the days of operations of the outdoor pool, opening only one beach for the duration of the summer, reducing the days of the Community Center and severely curtailing the activities. Although all of these actions are required to ensure we will have a balanced operating budget, our reserves ac-

count will not go unscathed. We will be required to reduce the \$60.00 from each member's dues deposited to the reserves account down to \$55.00. Therefore, this year the Reserves account will not be funded in the amount that the Board felt was needed.

Another problem is delinquent dues, more serious than just the lack of projected reserves, is the "delinquent dues". The association's collection of dues is approximately 80%. This means that for every \$800 billed, we receive only \$640, which results in a cash shortage. This is not to say that we will not get the money, but because of the current state of the economy, there are many members making monthly payments. Unlike some of our members,

the association cannot make payments towards our bills. We need to have the money available to pay our bills as we incur them. This cash shortage has been ongoing and has always been a concern of the board and management. The association has and does take the appropriate legal actions to ensure all the dues are collected that are due to us. However, these actions only ensure that we eventually get our money and these delinquent accounts add to the budget dilemma.

Again, please let me assure you that we have no alternative but to reduce our spending by reducing the services we are providing to the membership. Thank you for your support and understanding in this most difficult matter.

Fireworks Fund Proposed

by Buz Whelan

We received several letters in response to last month's article on the possibility of a summer fireworks display. Most intriguing was the letter from Raul and Joanne Pino (see Letters to the Editor, page 11). The Pinos propose that we establish a voluntary fund to collect enough money for the fireworks so that association funds will not be used. There was included in the suggestion an offer that Raul and Joanne would put their money where their typing was, i.e., they pledged the first \$50 for the fund. When this was announced at the March 7 Board of Directors meet-

ing, 6 of the 7 directors (Cappozzoli, Haab, Lauri, Leslie, Miller and Whelan) volunteered to match the Pinos' generosity. Later Millie Bishop also made known her intent to contribute.

The Board decided to attempt to reach a goal of \$5,160, the amount spent on both pyrotechnics and insurance last summer. The fireworks company has already offered to put on a show of equal quality to 2009 for the exact same fee.

We will establish two thermometer-style posters of the type used by churches and civic groups to chart the progress toward our goal.

One will be posted near the main entrance, another at the compactor. Donations of any amount can be dropped off at the Administration Building or the Community Center.

If you are in the fortunate position of being able to donate to the fund, your contribution would be appreciated by your neighbors, ELA management, but most of all, by the children and grandchildren of Emerald Lakers. To thank our most generous donors we will establish

special viewing areas, reserved for \$50 and \$25 contributors, two seats for each. We will also publish a special list in the Emerald News, to thank donors excepting where anonymity is requested.

At the meeting, a question was posed as to what would happen if an insufficient amount was collected. Should that occur we will donate the funds to our own youth recreation program, so that children of Emerald Lakes would still be served.

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(For Fire, Police and Ambulance)

Monroe County Police

Non-Emergency Number 570-992-9911

ELA Office 570-646-2622

ELA Public Safety 570-643-3385

ELA Community Center 570-646-8118

PA Game Commission 570-420-3754

Monroe County Dog Warden 570-629-1099

ASPCA 570-421-6761

Are you ready to get involved/make a difference in the Community?

We are looking for a few good people in the community who are interested in becoming members of the ELA Board of Directors.

We have two (2) three (3) year positions that are up for renewal this year.

If you are interested and feel that you want to make a difference, please stop by the ELA Office and complete an Intent to Run form.

Intent to Run Form: Board of Directors Nominee

Name: _____ Lot No. _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

E-MAIL Address: _____

I hereby submit my name as a nominee for the election to the Board of Directors. I verify that I am 21 years of age or older, *a citizen of the United States, and intend to remain in good standing with The Emerald Lakes Association. If elected, I will serve on the Board of Directors and fulfill all duties of a Board member

Signed _____ Date _____

*Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board regulations require that all board members be US Citizens. Intent to run applications and candidate questionnaires are due in the Administration Office on June 1, 2010

You will be asked to provide the following information;

1. A brief biography (150 words or less).
2. Why do you want to become a Board member?
3. What experiences have you had in Emerald Lakes support and governance?
4. What contributions have you made to the Emerald Lakes Community?
- 5a. (New Members) What particular contribution(s) do you think you can make, if elected?
- 5b. (Board Member) What particular contribution(s) have you made to the Board and/or community?
6. What event or change were you directly instrumental in bringing about in your life experience that you are most proud of?
Briefly describe the role you played in this event.
7. What is the most pressing problem facing Emerald Lakes today?
What contribution would you make to solve this problem?
8. What long range goals do you have for Emerald Lakes, and how would you assist in accomplishing them?
9. What would you like to say in support of your candidacy? (150 words or less)

Code Enforcement Status Report

As of: 30 March 2010

Building Permits:	2009	2010
1. Total Permits issued	63	7
2. House Permits:	24	6
3. Additions Permits:	3	0
4. Garage Permits:	4	0
5. Shed Permits:	17	1
6. Other Permits:	15	0

1. Total Permits in process:	1
2. House Permits in process:	1

	2009	2010
Total Requests:	92	10
Approved:	66	9

Unsightly Property or other Violations		
	2009	2010
Observed or reported:	175*	33
Warnings & Fines initially issued:	165*	33
Follow-ups:	81	22
Fines Issued:	103	7
Backlog:	10	0
Closed:	147	0
Sent to Attorney:	7	0
Appealed:	20	0
Hold	1	0

Total known or assumed foreclosures: 121 - 27 - sold = 94



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONROE COUNTY

presents a free public program on

Reforming Harrisburg— Is a Constitution Convention the Solution?

Despite promises of reform, PA holds several dubious distinctions:

#2 most gerrymandered state

2009-2010 Budget was 101 days late—latest budget in US History

State with the highest percentage of its budget spent on legislature

Saturday
April 24, 2010
10:00am - noon
(doors open at 9:30am)

Stroudsburg Junior High School
Chipperfield Drive

Panelists:

TIMOTHY POTTS
Democracy Rising PA

SENATOR DAYLIN LEACH
Opposes a Constitution Convention

REP JOHN BEAR
Supports a Constitution Convention

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL 570-595-7146, lww.monroe.pa@gmail.com

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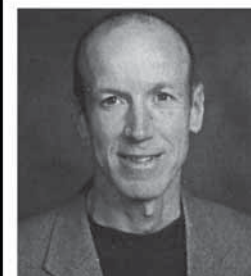
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Your American Cancer Society is here for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call 1-800-ACS-2345 and enroll with the American Cancer Society. Find out which services are best for you. If you are just looking for information, you will have it at your fingertips either by calling or visiting www.cancer.org. No one should have to face cancer alone. Call the American Cancer Society, and we will help you through your cancer journey.

Breakfast with the Bunny

Good ole Peter Cotton tail surprised us all at the center by helping with the day's craft, showering the kids with candies and delicious chocolates and even brought along a bright and sun filled day!



Community Center Corner



Ryan Culverson,
Community Center Coordinator
Recreation Director, Don Alvarez

Phone Number: 570-646-8118

Recreation Program Number:

570-643-3395

Visit us on line at www.elainc.org

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Wednesday: 6 – 10 p.m.

Thursday – 6 – 10 p.m. (Adults Only)

Friday – 5 p.m. – 12 a.m.

Saturday – 1 p.m. – 12 a.m.

Sunday – 1 – 7 p.m.

Indoor Pool:

Monday – Wednesday: 7 – 9:45 p.m.

Thursday: 6:30 – 9:45 p.m.

(Adults Only)

Friday: 5 – 9:45 p.m.

Saturday: 1 – 9:45 p.m.

Sunday: 1 – 6:45 p.m.

Outdoor Pool & Hours:

Closed for Season

Computer Lab Hours

Mon. - Fri. 9 - 11 a.m.

and 6 - 9:45 p.m.

Saturday 1 - 9:45 p.m.

Sunday 1 - 7 p.m.

Emerald Grill:

Wednesday 6 - 11 p.m.

Friday 5 - 10 p.m.

Bar 5 - 12 a.m.

Saturday 5 - 10 p.m.

Bar 5 - 12 a.m.

Sunday 3 - 8 p.m.

Bar 3 - 9 p.m.

TAKE OUT AVAILABLE WHEN THE GRILL IS OPEN!

Recreation Program Activities:

Before & After School Program

Sept. to June - 7 a.m. – Bus Pick Up

Dismissal – 6 p.m.

Teen Focus Group

Tuesday & Thursday- Dismissal 5:30 p.m.

Mommy & Me- Monday 11 a.m.

Swim Team Practice:

Monday – Thursday 5 p.m. -

Adult Water Aerobics

High Impact: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Low Impact: Tuesday & Thursday 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Bingo

Most Saturday Evenings 7:30 p.m.

Every Friday Night from 9 p.m. – Close

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT CURFEW FOR THOSE UNDER 18 IS 10 P.m.!!!

by Ryan Culverson



It's been nearly 2 months since we last communicated, and I must say I missed ya! Or, maybe it was the platform to be heard...either way, April is here, have no fear; I am knocking at your door! Why you ask, to get YOU (all members) to join us at the center! I ask you to join us for

dinner, a libation of your liking from the bar, or an evening of BINGO with talented, Bingo Host, Alex Leslie. Why not try attending one of our upcoming events, take a dip in the indoor pool, or simply get out of your homes for a friendly and entertaining atmosphere at the Emerald Lakes Community Center? The staff and I invite you all!

Within this issue are many things I would like to mention. First I do think it necessary to comment on the extreme weather conditions that we all have endured within the last 2 months. The lovely Mount Pocono has reached temperatures as high as 65 and then dropping right back down to the 30's! To say the least the weather has been extremely unpredictable. So much that I thought of pulling out my flip flops, but quickly thought better! (Toe slingers may not be necessary at the moment) The weather may have kept us guessing, but it hasn't stopped your Community Center Staff from working like busy bees, planning and preparing for all of our upcoming events for the spring/summer season.

In mentioning of our upcoming events I encourage you to take notice of the article titled, "Community Center Events Committee," by Stefania Buono, as she mentions each of these events. It is through hard work and cooperation that the committee, staff, and I push to create these events, with the common goal of an inviting ambiance, and friendly customer service. In addition to Stefania's mentions, don't forget that we now have an evening Water Aerobics Class on both Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 6 to 7 p.m. All "good standing" members, with a valid ID badge are encouraged to get involved. Recreation Director, Don Alvarez, brought back the evening classes for those that have busy working

schedules and cannot attend the morning classes. So there's no excuse! Please keep in mind that this is a "high" impact class. Low impact is offered on Tuesday and Thursday Mornings. (And for a \$5 an hour fee, the Recreation Program is available to occupy children on Tuesday and Thursday nights only – please contact Don Alvarez in advance, if interested)

On May 4, the Fifty Plus Club, Don and I will be taking on travels to Washington, D.C. Yes, this is a bus trip that you don't want to miss! To sign up please contact the Community Center. The cost is \$79 per person and includes a professionally guided tour of the Air & Space Museum (Smithsonian), Lincoln & Jefferson & FDR Memorial, Native American Museum, US Capital White House (observe from outside only), the Supreme Court and the FBI Building. The cost also includes a buffet luncheon at Old Country Buffet. Don't miss out, make sure to sign up today!

As you all know, the Community Center has a computer lab, with lap tops donated from the Mount Pocono School District. The Computer Lab was designed for all "good standing" residents to use as needed (i.e., homework, internet, communication). Being that we are a highly media driven society this is an asset to our community. We are now offering FREE computer classes! Yes, I said FREE! We will provide quality, innovative online learning opportunities to anyone who wants to improve technology, literacy, and math skills to be successful in both work and life. We want to offer the freedom in the ability to learn what you want, when you want, regardless of your circumstances. The online tool that we will use is called, GCF LearnFree.org. Please join us on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to noon. For more information contact the center at 570-646-8118.

In addition to free on line computer courses, Recreation is also beginning its annual basketball camp from 4/10/10 to 5/29/10. The camp is targeted to various levels – Elementary School Level from 9 – 10 a.m., Middle School Level from 10 – 11 a.m., High School Level and Up from 11 a.m. – noon. Registration cost is \$40. The camp will take place at Clear Run Intermediate Center. We encourage you to get your kids involved! It is a fun, focused and kid driven camp.

Lastly, I would like to mention the Youth Focused Community Cook Out! The cook out will take place on Saturday, July 17th from 1 – 5 p.m. This event has been planned to bring together the youth of our community. Though it is youth focused we are encouraging the involvement of all members. We are extending a day of free food, music and fun! This event is being sponsored by your very own Emerald Lakes Crime Watch Committee. So Emerald Lakers, ITS FREE! There is no excuse to not enjoy a day of free food, music and fun activities! My staff and I look forward to the many days to come and do hope to see you all. Until next time...be particular.

Youth Focused Community Cookout!

Saturday, July 17

Community Center Parking Lot

FREE FOR ALL AGES!!! 1 – 5 p.m.

*This event is sponsored by
Emerald Lakes Crime Watch!*

Join us for free food, music and fun!

Community Center Events Committee

by Stefania Buono,
Chairperson



Hello ELA Community Members! Well, it's been an exciting couple months. If you missed the Festivities

thus far, you will not want to miss what's ahead. We promise to continue the momentum. We have one request though, if you are planning to attend an event, please make sure you sign up in advance at the community center to help us plan better for those attending. A special thank you goes out to Don Alvarez and the children that made the Black History Night event special. Also, special thanks go out to The Gallagher School of Dance, whose students performed their Irish Dance routines for the second year in a row at our St.

Patty's Day Festivities. The girls looked wonderful and the clubhouse was filled with members who enjoyed the wonderful Irish style meal. Members couldn't say enough about the Shepherd's Pie. Now check out our upcoming events and our Save the Date!. Looking forward to seeing you all at the upcoming events and our Bar & Grill.

Motown Night is Saturday, April 17 at 7:30 p.m...it's back.....our DJ will be spinning the night away with Motown favorites! Classics and current-day tunes, all played for your listening and dancing pleasure. Do not miss this night!

Cinco De Mayo Celebration is Wednesday, May 5 at 7 p.m. Why go anywhere else? Come enjoy great music, a Taco Bar, and fun with your fellow neighbors. Put your sombreros on, break out your Mexican attire, and dance!

Mother's Day Dinner is

Saturday, May 8 at 7 p.m. Emerald Lakes Grill will be serving a special dinner to acknowledge and thank all of our Moms! Bring Mom out because she definitely deserves it! Memorial Day Cook Off/Lot Sale is Saturday, May 2 running from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Ok members here it is: the day you can use your community center parking lot as your garage/yard for a sale. Come to the community center to reserve a spot for \$10. Or bring your grills and compete in this years' Memorial Day Cook-Off. Cook-Off starts at noon. Who's the master this year? Sign up today at the community center! Details will be available at the community center so come on over!

See below for our future events, and don't forget, reservations in advance are needed to help us serve YOU better. Look out for our flyers, too.



50 Plus Basketball (I did not get the story for this Ryan?)

COMMUNITY CENTER EVENTS SAVE THE DATE!		
DATE	EVENT	TIME
JUNE		
Saturday the 19 th	Father's Day Dinner	7pm
JULY		
Saturday the 3rd	4th of July Luau @ Pinetree Beach	TBD

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 Wednesday, May 5th - 7pm
 Emerald Lakes Bar & Grill

Come and enjoy an evening of music and a Taco Bar



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When: Tuesday's & Thursday's
 Time: 11am-12pm

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Registration & For More Info Contact:

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MEMORIAL DAY LOT SALE & COOK OFF

When: Saturday, May 22nd 10am - 5pm
 Where: Community Center Parking Lot

Looking to sell some personal things?
 How about some crafts or baked goods?
 Sell it in your Community Center Parking Lot!

Sign up & reserve a space today
 Fee: \$10

Think you have what it takes to be the Grill Master of Emerald Lakes?

Cook off Begins at NOON

BRING IT, FIRE IT UP AND PROVE IT!

Sign up **TODAY** at the Community Center Front Desk



Household Hints

by Eileen Avrich

Cleaning for a Reason: If you know of any woman currently undergoing chemo, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides FREE housecleaning - 1 time per month for 4 months while she is in treatment. All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. 'Cleaning for a Reason' will have a participating maid service in her zip-code area arrange for the service. Please pass this information on to people who know of any women going through any type of cancer treatment. This organization serves the entire USA and currently has 547 partners to help these women... So pass the word and let them know that there

are people out there who care. www.cleaningforareason.org
Old Car Mats:

During this past snow storm my husband got his car stuck in our driveway. After cleaning out around the car, we still had the wheels spinning and were unable to push the car out. After trying the usual methods (cardboard under the tires, etc.), I got a bright idea. We had old rubber car mats in the garage (that I had been nagging my husband about keeping). They worked wonders! The wheels grabbed and the car was free.

I had to apologize, but it was worth it. Now he keeps them in the trunk, just in case. Smoke detectors:

When you change your clocks twice a year, it's important to replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon detectors. I can't stress this enough since we've had several devastating fires in our community recently.

Emergency advice: In his monthly newsletter, the Governor made reference to emergency supplies. Whether it is a power outage or a snow/ice storm, it's not a bad idea to think ahead and be prepared. The following are items that he felt were necessary for an emergency (in addition, I'd add books/magazines, board games, and playing cards):

- Battery-operated flashlight and radio, with extra batteries
- One gallon of water per person per day
- Essential medication and copies of prescriptions
- Diapers, formula and other essential baby and toddler supplies
- First-aid kit
- Non-perishable food
- Manual can opener
- Cash, credit cards and important legal documents
- Food, water, leashes and toys for pets

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Board Recommendations continued from front

money to operate the beaches. I'm not trying to scare people, but those are the facts. And as a result, property values will decrease substantially." When I asked what the Board would do if the increase were turned down, Whelan smiled sadly and shook his head. "I don't know. I guess I'll have to step down. Most of the other current directors will as well. Few of us want to preside over the deterioration of the community. It will be a sad time."

Longtime resident Bill Henry echoed much of Whelan's sentiments and added his own. "We're doomed by our by-laws," said Henry. "We have people voting on revenue who have absolutely no understanding of our finances. Accord-

ing to the Kipcon engineering study of 1997 we should have about \$2.5 million in reserves. By the end of this year we'll have barely \$100,000. And I think Buz is underestimating the shortfall. I think it could run near \$300,000." Henry has thoughts about how we got here. "In the mid-'90s, Flo Mauri's Fresh Start initiative put us in good shape. Then subsequent boards squandered away the reserves by using them for new paving and other operations. They had people believing they could get everything they wanted and not have to pay for it. I know this board is trying to bring us back to where we were, but the membership is spoiled. They just don't want to pay for what they demand."

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Hosting a free seminar for all members of Emerald Lakes on:

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Seminar will be held on:

Date: Saturday April 10 **Time:** 10 a.m.

Location: ELA Community Center

This seminar will be conducted by the:
Pocono Mountain Regional Police Department

Instructed by:

Detective Daniel Jones

Crime Prevention Unit/Community Policing.

?continuewhirledgnus? Olall Suggests Censorship

At the March 9 meeting of the ELA Board of Directors Joe Olall stated that the “general consensus of the membership” was that the feature “Whirled Gnus” was inappropriate and offensive, and that the space allotted to it would better serve as a page of financial information. When pressed he remained vague on what specific information he had in mind. He followed his statements with a motion that the community be polled as to whether they wished the feature to be continued. The motion was seconded and carried.

As the board’s president – and coincidentally the writer of this article and Whirled Gnus – I chide myself for being asleep at the wheel. This motion puts us in direct conflict with our own resolution of September 27, 2008 which grants sole editorial control to the Emerald News editor-in-chief. The spirit of this resolution was to guarantee that the board could not control the flow of information

to the association members and that free and open discussion of issues would be a factor of community life. Now that guarantee is tested.

The measure of a free press is not how much desirable material is published; it is rather how much unpopular opinions and articles are possible. And when a governing body decides what is acceptable and what is not a condition of censorship can be said to exist.

Mr. Olall would simplify the question to “Do you think Whirled Gnus should be printed in the Emerald News?” Sounds reasonable. Let the people decide. But is that the way it should be? Should those who don’t read a particular article or page be given the right to deny that article or page to others? Ask yourself this: out of every 100 subscribers to the Pocono Record, how many do the crossword puzzle? Is it 5, or even 10? Well, then, if 9 out of 10 subscribers don’t want the feature, should it be dropped?

Or should it be kept for the few who do enjoy it? You can do the same thought experiment with the horoscope, or the comic “Funky Winkerbean” or even the sports section. Supposing half of those polled said they never read the sports section. Should there be no sports?

It takes me between 12 and 15 hours a month to prepare Whirled Gnus, and I do the labor gladly because some have told me they find it amusing and entertaining. Never once has any article of importance or interest to the community been omitted because of a lack of space. The argument about Whirled Gnus crowding out other information is a false one.

Having written all this, I’ll still ask the question: do you want me to continue? Freedom of the press aside, I don’t want to attend a party where I’m not welcome. So let me or the editor know what you think.

Full disclosure: Joe Olall was asked to write his side of this question. He declined.

Buz Whelan



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Buz Whelan, **Editorial Staff**

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Bill Henry, **Cartoonist**

Eileen Avrich, Don Alvarez, Ryan Culverson, Gil Werner, Anthony Cruz,

Contributing Columnists

The Emerald News serves the property owners and residents of Emerald Lakes. It is published twelve times annually by Journal Newspapers, Inc. for the Emerald Lakes Association, under the directorship of the Communications Committee.

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Guidelines for Submissions

News and Feature:

Submissions of news and feature reporting will be judged by normal journalistic standards. We reserve the right to edit for content, quality and length. Any community activity or news occurrence may be covered.

All pictures must be accompanied by caption information. This information must tell the viewer more than s/he can see by merely observing the picture. Persons who are central figures must be identified by name and by title where appropriate.

Emerald News Policy/ Mission Statement

As a community newspaper the need to inform and entertain is the Emerald News’ reason for being. Our mission is to provide the best and most comprehensive coverage of community news events as our resources allow. We are also charged with publicizing social and athletic events and reporting on these events after the fact. We serve as a conduit for

information between community management and members. We provide a “Letters to the Editor” section so that a forum exists for the interchange of ideas and for feedback from members on management decisions and actions, and further, for the informal reporting of observed events by members. Lastly, we hope to amuse and entertain our readers.

All letters must be typed and limited to 300 words. They may be emailed to emeraldnews@yahoo.com or dropped off at the admin office or community center. Address envelope “Editor, Emerald News” We reserve the right to refuse publication of libelous material, inappropriate language or repetitious material.

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Letters to the Editor

Very merry un Fourth of July celebration.

Thought the event was wonderful and should be repeated. My only concern was the traffic and parking and the impossibility of emergency vehicle flow. Think Cedar should be closed to all except residents, after parking on one side is filled. Spectators can drive around on other roads or come early! Security near the homes in the area near the beach entrance/parking lot should be upgraded for this event as well.

Keep up the good work!
Gilda Spiotta

Fireworks Support

I support your effort to provide the fireworks. Good luck. Larry Kemmerer, Chairman-ELA fish committee.

Larry Kemmerer
 Chairperson, Fishing Club Committee

Hello Buz and GM,

We read your article on fireworks. In these tough times we can see why some people may be upset about funds being used on fireworks, while some folks don't mind at all, like us.

But also in your article, you mention about your time being young and seeing fireworks. It brought back our own childhood memories. As kids, we had no idea where the money came from, just that there were fireworks every year, either legal or illegal. As we all know here in EML, plenty of people shoot off their own fireworks, and they spend lots of money on those fireworks, as well as risking losing a hand or finger or face. That being said, we propose a 'fireworks fund drive', with a thermometer-style progress gauge of what has been collected (just like church and schools use). Last year the total cost was \$5180. This year, with a 3% cost of living increase, the new total cost will probably be around \$5,500. We would give \$50 to see the show happen. We saw the show from our yard last year and were impressed on how good it was, as it was better than Camelback's (when they used to do a show). So, at \$50 a family, only 110 families need to contribute to reach the 'fireworks fund drive' goal. 275 families are needed if just \$20 is given. At the fireworks store, \$20 buys 1 or 2 blowups, and \$50 gets you a small box of a few items, but by far is no 'show'. If the 'fund' is reached and exceeded, then the extra money can be put towards next year's show or another EML event. If the goal is not reached, EML should pick up the balance and at least it will not be the full cost, like last year. The show is what we want and the show is what we would pay towards seeing, in the comfort of our own yard. To us, it is worth \$50!

Thanks and good luck,
Raul and Joanne Pino Larry Kemmerer

St. Patty's Day

The room was full of Irish cheer; an Irish buffet menu, and entertainment by the Gallagher School of Dance. The 2nd Annual performance was a wonderful way to celebrate and pay tribute to the Irish culture



Motown Night
 Friday, April 17th - 7:30pm
 \$3 cover

Emerald Lakes Community Center
 Come join us once again for our most popular night of music!
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WHIRLED GNUS



Former Governor Sarah Palin mugs for camera

Palin Named *Mrs TEA Party*

FAR RIGHT, Wyoming (FNS) Former governor and former vice presidential candidate and former Miss Congeniality, Alaska Sarah Palin has won the crown of "Mrs. TEA Party" at the recent nationwide convention held here this week. The title of "Mr. TEA Party" was captured by Liz Cheney, scion of former Vice President Dick Cheney.

Palin won the title by placing first in the swimsuit and marksmanship categories. Those two wins more than made up for her dismal performance in the general information and knowledge of government areas. She reportedly also did exceedingly well in the "meaningless but snappy sound bite" category. "I'm totally thrilled, you betcha," crowed the new champ, "Now those socialist commies who wanta take over health care will know just who

they're dealin' with." Many attending the event agreed. Salvage tug deckhand Ryan Soder enthused, "She ain't just pretty, she's pretty smart, if you ask me. She knows about lots of stuff. Most people don't know that." Event organizer and budget-priced mattress salesman Lou Stung told reporters, "You guys should tell the truth about Sarah Palin," adding, "Stop Katie Couricin' her," apparently referring to the now-infamous interview. "She knows we need more guns and less gova-mint in the doctor's office."

Over on the masculine side Liz Cheney showed why she deserved the win. "I hate these wimps that whine about water-boarding and such. We need to be iron strong in defending our nation. Torture in defense of liberty is no vice, and weak-kneed, whiney, read-'em-their-rights talk is no virtue. We need to be more creative in dealing with terrorists, I can tell you. We've hardly touched the possibilities of electroshock in obtaining vital, needed intelligence. And we need intelligence a lot." Who could argue?

CBS to Present Comedy Version of "Gilligan's Island"

HOLLYWOOD, California (FNS) In a startling scheduling move, CBS-TV announced today that they are planning to bring '60s favorite "Gilligan's Island" back to the airwaves, this time as a comedy. Jude Law has been mentioned as a cast replacement for the late Bob Denver in the title role. The role of the professor is expected to be played by Daniel Day-Lewis, and Jeff Bridges has been cast as the captain. Meryl Streep and Scarlett Johansen are also expected to star.

Rumors of the popular series returning as a comedy have been circulating around Hollywood for years, but one scriptwriter after another has failed to produce a viable pilot episode. As one insider put it, "It's difficult enough

to convince savvy viewers that a central cast of players could remain marooned on a remote island while guest stars came and went weekly, but then to make that funny? It would seem impossible." Apparently not. CBS spokesman Al Koholik, who spoke on condition of anonymity, reports that they have the right formula. "The trick is to make the audience think that if they don't get the joke, they're stupid. You know how people who don't get humor typically brand it as stupid or dumb. Well, we're twisting that so that the people themselves feel dumb for not getting what are essentially awful jokes. Trust me. We've been doing this for years."

"Miraculous" Image Seen on Statue

DRY CREEK, New Mexico (FNS) Thousands of believers are flocking to the home of Maria Elena Antonia de la Montoya in this sleepy, sparsely populated New Mexico hamlet to view a mysterious image that has appeared in the folds of an outdoor religious statue. Many swear they can clearly make out the unmistakable form and coloring of a piece of French toast. "I seen it with my own eyes," says Al Zymer of nearby Shimmering Heat, "It's a message from God. Breakfast is the most important meal. Make sure you eat it."

The statue is located in the front yard and apparently was stained by water overflowing from the drainpipe above. A small, squarish, mottled yellow and brown stain has been imprinted on the folds of the statue's gown. Religious zealots,

breakfast lovers and nutritionists crowd around daily, many feeling validated by the event. "I've been telling people to eat a good breakfast for over 20 years," says nutritionist Vera Blande-Dyatt, "Now I feel like someone above is telling everyone I was right."

The question remains, though, is this really an image of French toast or just a randomly-patterned water stain. Skeptics are in full throat on this. Danish phenomenologist Dr. Hedden der Klowlow poses the question this

way: "Do you want it to be French toast? Then it is. Do you only see a stain? Then for you there is no breakfast depicted. Believers see; cynics doubt. That's the way of the world. You see what you want to see. Ever see Tiera del Fuego? Ever see the inside of a septic tank? No? That's my point. You see what you want to see." Of course, this clears nothing up. Decide for yourself. View the picture on page 13 and make up your own mind.

Whirled Gnus Disclaimer

The contents of this page are the creation of Buz Whelan. They reflect this sense of humor. They are in no way to be construed as an opinion of the Executive Board or the Emerald Lakes Association, nor are they approved by the Board.

Okay, Chris Soboleski is a little responsible. But not that much. So leave her alone. All comments, hostile or otherwise, should be sent directly to Buz Whelan @ buzfromjersey@aol.com or via a letter to the editor.

Dear Editor,

I haven't written in a long time, but now I'm really upset. I hear that someone wants to stop Whirled Gnus from being printed. Where will I get my faux news? Will we all have to only read true stuff? That's mostly bad and upsetting. I like to laugh sometimes. Maybe this person doesn't get the joke, you think? So then, they don't want anybody else to get it either. I bet they say it's stupid. People who don't get the joke always say that. Please don't let them censor my favorite part. Isn't it bad if you stop stuff you don't like from being printed? Isn't that un-American? I think it is, and I'm not kidding.

Allison von der Landa

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