ARNELL CREEK NEWS

SUMMER 2022

"Pool Crew" Lends a Helping Hand and Gives a Friendly Smile

They say that many hands make light work, and that is true for the daily operation of the Arnell Creek swimming pool. Each evening, one or two members of the Pool Crew do a walk-through of the pool area. They make sure that things are secured or put away. They report any repairs that might need to be made. They also make sure lights are turned off and the gate is locked. On rare occasions, the Pool Crew acts

as bouncers, clearing the area of any stragglers trying to squeeze in a bit more Pool Time after dark. (Don't forget, the pool closes at dusk each day.)

"Overall, things are working out really well," says Pool Crew Captain Terri Bald. "We have a great group of volunteers who stepped up to help." Members of the Pool Crew, who take turns being on duty one evening each week, includes Linda and Stu Bruce, Betty Eisenman, Nancy Fulton, Chris Leslie, Scott Pierce, Ronnie Rakos, and Michele Wadsworth. When needed, Barbara Lancour, Maryellen McNerney and Joy Murray have stepped in to cover a shift. Terri also expressed her appreciation of Jeanne Fox, who did much of this work in previous years. "It took an entire team of people to do what Jeanne used to do singlehandedly," Terri added with a smile.



When you see any of these wonderful volunteers around the neighborhood, be sure to share a word of appreciation with them. You can also make their work a bit easier by cleaning up your area after you use the pool, putting any trash in the appropriate receptacles and returning any cushions to the rack by the picnic tables. Thanks!

9 Arnell Drive is Now Officially Ours (and Tax-Free!)

At the Annual Meeting in May, HOA President Glen Pruitt gestured around him and asked, "Who owns all this? The swimming pool? The tennis courts? The playground?" The crowd quickly answered that it belongs to all of the homeowners in the community, through the Homeowners Association. To that, Pruitt shrugged his shoulders and responded, "Well, yes... and no."

Last fall, the Board started working earnestly with the Delaware Electric Cooperative to convert the street lamps in the community to LED bulbs. As part of that work, it was discovered that two of the community's electric accounts were in the name of the HOA. However, a third account, the one for the Pool House, was in the name of the Arnell Creek Maintenance Corporation. "The Maintenance Corporation was the for-profit entity involved in developing the Arnell Creek community some thirty years ago," explains Pruitt. The Pool House (and all the property it sits on at 9 Arnell Drive) was originally deeded to the Maintenance Corporation. In the mid 1990's, the Maintenance Corporation legally changed its name to the Arnell Creek Homeowners Association. Unfortunately, the deed to the property was not updated at that time.

The Board sought bids from several reputable real estate attorneys in the area. They choose the Law Office of Bonnie Benson to review the situation and to file the appropriate paperwork that would clearly name the Arnell Creek HOA as the owner of 9 Arnell Drive. Pruitt met with Benson on June 9, 2022 to sign off on the documents. Benson's office filed the paperwork with the Sussex County Recorder of Deeds two weeks later, on June 23, 2022. The total cost of document preparation and filing fees was \$362.50.

As soon as the property was clearly in the name of the HOA, Pat Manhard and Glen Pruitt filed an Application for Exemption from Property Taxes with Sussex County. As a non-profit entity, the HOA could be excused from paying taxes on the property going forward. On June 28, 2022, the HOA received its official approval letter from the county. "While we had to pay a couple of hundred dollars for attorney's fees, it was well worth it," added Pruitt. "We will not have to pay the thousand dollar invoice for taxes for 2022, so already we are coming out ahead!"

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Twenty-six months. For twenty-six months, I took all the precautions. I wore a face mask. I washed my hands frequently. I maintained a safe distance from people. I got vaccinated. Yet on the morning of May 5, I took a home test and got a positive test result. I had COVID-19. Now I must admit that I was not completely surprised. My partner tested positive the week before. We quarantined from each other as much as we could after that, and I began testing myself once a day. The first five mornings, I got a negative test result. The sixth morning, I was not so lucky.

And so I began my journey with COVID-19. I am like many other residents of Arnell Creek who have received a COVID diagnosis. However, I do not know anyone else who got sick ten days before the Annual Membership Meeting of the Arnell Creek Homeowners Association, a meeting that they would be expected to facilitate as the HOA President! There were frequent emails between the members of the HOA Board, as we made contingency plans in case of bad weather (which we used) and in case I was not cleared medically to participate in the meeting. Fortunately, I tested COVID-negative on the morning of May 15, just in time for the meeting that afternoon. I want to thank all of the Board members and volunteers that day who were ready to "pivot" and fill in for me, if needed. You all are great!

Not Getting the HOA E-Mails?
Keep in the loop with time-sensitive
announcements

Sign up for the Arnell Creek HOA Email Distribution List!

Simply send

your name, home address and email address to <u>ArnellCreek@gmail.com</u>.

We will take care of the rest!

The meeting turned out well. Sure, there were a couple of glitches. The bathrooms in the Pool House were not available for use (sorry!), and we were missing an essential cord for the sound system. However, we had a great turnout of people. We had some candid conversations about the successes and the challenges of the HOA. We shared a lot of information. That is obvious from the

minutes of the meeting, which fill SEVEN pages. Copies of the minutes are being distributed to homeowners at the same time this newsletter is being published.

We had a robust time for Questions and Answers during the Annual Meeting. However, I think there is an unspoken guestion that underlies many of the issues that were raised during the Open Forum. That question is this: "Why isn't Arnell Creek more like the other communities in the area?" For instance, I sense that question when people suggest we take out the trees at the entrance to Arnell Creek and replace them with rows of wax begonias artfully arranged in alternating colors. That would be fine, I suppose, but that is what everyone does. I think part of Arnell Creek's charm comes from the fact that we do NOT look like all the other communities. We have a wide variety of style of homes on spacious lots. Our residents ran the gamut from young families to young-at-heart retirees. There is nothing "cookie cutter" about Arnell Creek. We do not look like a "planned community". We look like a real neighborhood, filled with people who act like neighbors with one another. That can be challenging at times, but most of the time that is a very good thing. I am grateful for that, and I am grateful for YOU!



ARNELL CREEK HOA BOARD of DIRECTORS 2022 – 2023

Glen C. Pruitt
President

Margaret Colvin
Vice-President

Maureen Meloche Secretary

Patricia Manhard
Treasurer

Terri Bald Stu Bruce Rosemarie Cialini At Large

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Or by Regular Mail at
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Take care and stay well, Glen

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Board Selects Officers and Committee Leadership for the Coming Year

The community elects persons to serve on the Arnell Creek Homeowners Association Board of Directors. The elections are conducted at the Annual Membership Meeting held in May each year. Persons are elected to serve a two-year term. The terms are staggered: three Board positions come up for a vote one year, and then four positions are available the following year. Additional positions may be added to the ballot if a Director left the Board mid-year and the Board decided not to fill the position by Board appointment.

At the Annual Membership Meeting held on May 15, 2022, there were four Board positions that needed to be filled. Re-elected to the Board was Margaret Colvin. Newcomers elected for Board service included Terri Bald, Stu Bruce, and Maureen Meloche.

While the community selects who serves on the Board, it is the Board itself that selects its leadership. Those elections took place on Wednesday, June 8, 2022. Three officers were re-elected to their current positions: Glen Pruitt as President, Margaret Colvin as Vice-President, and Pat Manhard as Treasurer. New Board member Maureen Meloche was elected to assume the role of Secretary for the Board.

There are many opportunities for leadership in the Arnell Creek HOA, in addition to the Officer positions. Fortunately we have talented people who are stepping forward to serve:

- Margaret Colvin was chosen to serve as the new Chair of the Architectural Review Committee, working with fellow Board member Rosemarie Cialini. Community member Matt Patton recently joined this committee.
- Pat Manhard continues to chair the Finance Committee. She is joined by HOA President Glen Pruitt
 and community members Mark Diehl and Doug Murray (who served last year) and Michael Incitti (who
 recently joined the committee.)
- Stu Bruce will be acting as Board Liaison to the newly-formed Facilities Management Committee. Greg Manhard and Ralph McCutcheon will be taking care of simple repairs and other projects at the Recreation Complex at 9 Arnell Drive.
- As highlighted on the front page of this newsletter, Terri Bald coordinates the "Pool Crew" who deal
 with daily operations at the pool.
- Mike Fehrenbach continues to lend his hand (and his green thumb) to the Landscaping Committee.
- Last (and certainly not least!), Rosemarie Cialini also heads up the very active Recreation and Hospitality Committees.

Process Begins to Revise Community Restrictions

Probably the most important document that governs our community is the *Declaration of Restrictions*. This document details the rules that the homeowners have agreed upon for the good of the community. It covers everything from limitations on vehicles and pets, construction or demolition on a property, as well as fences, landscaping, and the commercial use of property in the community. It appears that the last time the *Declaration of Restrictions* was revised was in 2005.

Earlier this year the HOA Board requested written comments about the document, and several homeowners shared their thoughts. The next step is for the HOA to host a Virtual Town Hall Meeting. This meeting will be used to gather additional information and to get a sense of what kind of changes Arnell Creek homeowners might like to see.

DATE: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 7:00 PM Web Address: www.zoom.us Meeting ID: 816 0545 2584 Passcode: 661359

A direct link to the Zoom Meeting Room is included in the Calendar of Events on the HOA website. Any homeowner in Arnell Creek is welcome to participate in the meeting.

Participants are encouraged to review the *Declaration of Restrictions* document prior to the meeting. The document can be found on the "Forms" page at www.arnellcreekhoa.com.

In September, a small group of volunteers will review the comments shared in writing and during the Town Hall. They will then draft suggested changes to the document and finalize the process by which voting will take place. The recommendations will then be reviewed by the HOA Board before being presented to Arnell Creek homeowners for a vote. At this time, the consent of fifty one percent (51%) of the lot owners is required to modify the restrictions.

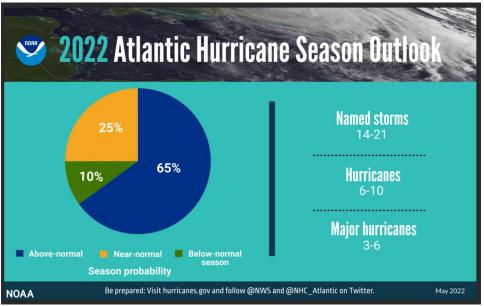
"Hurry" Up and Make Your Hurri-cane Preparations

Sussex County's beaches, boardwalks, and backyards are the backdrop for seasons of summer fun. However, as you ready your Summer '22 checklists, one item that should be right there with sunscreen, sandals, and shorts might be the most forgotten: a storm kit. It is the one must-have, though, that could save your life.

The Atlantic hurricane season is six months long, running from June 1 through November 30 each year. The Sussex County Emergency Operations Center reminds the public to be ready for the forecast by taking various preparedness steps now – including creating a disaster kit – to limit damage and avoid loss of life, whatever the scenario. "From health emergencies to hurricanes, a disaster can come from any direction at any time," Sussex County EOC Director Joseph L. Thomas said. "While we can't stop them, we can plan for them. So, take the time now, before the storm, to be ready. That ounce of prevention will be worth far more than a pound of cure later on."

Like other coastal communities from the Caribbean to Canada, Sussex County is susceptible to the effects of tropical weather, from flooding to high winds. Sussex County had only one significant brush with tropical weather during the 2021 season, as Tropical Storm Elsa moved through the region in early July with some heavy rains and gusty winds, but little else in the way of damage-inducing severe weather. However last year was the third-most active ever on record in the Atlantic basin, with 21 named storms during the season, including seven hurricanes, four of which were major and caused billions of dollars in damage.

For the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is predicting an above average season, with 14 to 21 named systems possible. Of those, six to 10 could become hurricanes, with three to six possibly reaching Category 3 strength or higher, according to NOAA's May 24 forecast. Forecasters again expect warmer-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic and a persistent La Niña weather pattern – the cooling of waters in the Pacific Ocean off South America – to shape the 2022 season.



Counter to La Niña is the

weather pattern known as El Niño, when the equatorial Pacific waters are warmer, often resulting in wind shearing in the Caribbean and Atlantic. That can thwart the development of tropical systems in the Atlantic basin. However, without an El Niño expected this year, and with warmer sea-surface temperatures in the eastern Atlantic, the ingredients are there for enhanced tropical development this season, forecasters said.

An average Atlantic hurricane season sees 14 named storms, including seven hurricanes, with three classified as major, based on NOAA's 30-year average.

One step residents can take ahead of hurricane season is to create a Safety Profile for their household with the free Smart911™ service to provide potentially critical, life-saving information up front to first responders. Profiles can contain as much or as little information as users want, including details about their properties, special medical conditions and family contacts.

To help make the storm season safer for everyone, there are several steps you can take to make your home and family ready for hurricane season:

If you live in a flood-prone or other vulnerable area, be prepared to evacuate. Plan your evacuation route now. Emergency managers will notify the public, via the media, of what areas should evacuate and when. In the event you evacuate, take a storm kit. Take valuable and/or important papers. Secure your house by locking the windows and doors. Turn off all utilities (gas, water, electric, etc.). Notify a family member or someone close to you outside the evacuation area of your destination.

- Secure all outdoor items. Property owners also will need to secure their boats. Area residents should clear rainspouts and gutters and trim any trees that may pose a problem during high winds.
- Have a family disaster kit. This kit should include the following items:
 - A three-day supply of water. This should include at least one gallon of water per person per day;
 - Non-perishable foods and a manual can opener;
 - A change of clothes and shoes for each person;
 - Prescription medicines;
 - A blanket or sleeping bag and pillow for each person;
 - Personal hygiene items;
 - A flashlight and extra batteries for each person;
 - Special needs items, such as formula and diapers for infants, as well as items needed for elderly or disabled family members;
 - A portable radio with extra batteries;
 - Money. During power outages, ATMs will not work;
 - Fuel. Gas pumps are also affected by power outages, so it is a good idea to have fuel in advance.
- In the event of an approaching storm, travel during daylight hours. Do not wait until the last minute to make plans or to purchase gasoline and supplies. When a storm watch is issued, you should monitor the storm on the radio and television. An evacuation could take 24 to 36 hours prior to a storm's onset.
- If ordered to evacuate and seek shelter elsewhere, follow the instructions of local emergency managers on where to go and when. Authorities will announce shelter locations in advance of their opening, which could include multiple sites to accommodate larger populations. Make provisions for your pets, as many shelters will not accept animals.
- If not ordered to evacuate and you decide to take shelter in your home, have your disaster kit ready. Keep your important papers with you or store them in the highest, safest place in your home, and in a waterproof container. Even if you seek shelter in place, you need to secure your home by locking the doors and windows. Turn off all utilities (gas, water, electric, etc.). Monitor the storm by portable radio to keep up with the latest information. Stay indoors. Try to stay in an inside room away from doors and windows.
- Use your phone sparingly. Make only essential calls and keep the calls brief. Report emergencies to 911. When reporting emergencies, identify yourself and your location, making sure to speak clearly and calmly. If you have a mobile telephone, make sure it is charged and ready to use at all times. Remember, however, that cell service may be interrupted during and after the storm.

Hurricanes and tropical storms can have devastating effects. In the event a hurricane affects our area, expect polluted water, limited communications, no electricity, overflowing or backed-up sewers, undermined foundations, beach erosion and heavy damage to homes and roadways.

Do not re-enter the area until recommended to do so by local authorities. As you re-enter the area, be aware of possible hazards such as downed trees and power lines. Be aware of debris and water on roadways. Upon re-entry, have identification and important legal papers ready to show officials proof of residency. Continue to use your emergency water supply or boil water until notified that the drinking water is safe. Take precautions to prevent fires.

For more information on preparing for hurricane season, including evacuation maps and preparedness brochures, visit Sussex County's hurricane homepage at www.sussexcountyde.gov/hurricane-information, or the NOAA Weather Ready Nation homepage at www.weather.gov/wrn/.





Food Bank Appreciates Arnell Creek Deposit

Once again this year, the Arnell Creek HOA collected non-perishable items to be donated to the Food Bank of Delaware. The Food Drive was held in conjunction with the Annual Membership Meeting held on May 15, 2022. We are happy to report that the Arnell Creek homeowners were as generous as ever! We collected ten bags of items that include canned meats, beans, vegetables, boxes of pasta and macaroni and cheese, and a highly prized container of baby formula. More than that, residents also gave \$400 in cash donations to the

Food Bank. Thank you to all who participated and demonstrated what being a good neighbor is all about!

POOL SEASON is extended by 2-weeks

During its meeting on July 20, the HOA Board voted to extend the pool season for an additional two weeks. Originally scheduled to close on September 18, the pool will now remain open for the enjoyment of homeowners and their guests through September 30, 2022. Enjoy the extra weeks of aquatic fun!

Scotch and Water do not mix in Arnell Creek

Actually, that applies equally to any hard liquor, or even beer, when it is being enjoyed the same time as the water in the Arnell Creek Pool. Please do not drink alcoholic beverages when using the pool or the Pool House. Enjoy your libations at home, and then stay there. We don't want you drinking and driving, OR drinking and diving!

TENNIS COURTS WILL BE CLOSED for several days for repairs

The surface of our tennis courts have some serious cracks in them, and the entire playing surface needs some attention. The HOA will be making those repairs, which will require the tennis courts to be closed when we have the materials and the volunteers ready, and when we have several consecutive days of warm weather with no chance of rain. We expect the work to be done sometime in August. We will give as much advance notice as we can, but our plans are weather-dependent. Notice of the court closure will be posted on the gates of the tennis courts and the pool, as well as on the Arnell Creek HOA website. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE updates process and forms

Your home is one of the biggest investments you make in your life. It is natural for you to want your home to be the best that it can be. Just remember that any improvements of your home, particularly ones that change the footprint of your home or alter the appearance of its exterior, must be approved by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). The ARC has updated the application form and created a set of guidelines for homeowners considering these kinds of projects. The application and the guidelines can be found on the HOA website (www.ArnellCreekHOA.com) under the "Forms" tab.

Parking Spaces are precious, no matter where they are

The parking lot by the Pool House is intended for use by persons using the pool, tennis courts or playground. In the off-season, there generally is not a problem with people using the lot for auxiliary parking for a few hours. However, during the summer, the demand for parking spaces by pool users increases dramatically. No matter what time of year it is, the parking lot should not be used to park vehicles for extended periods of time.

Wellesley Workers continue to disrupt sleep

Here's a tongue twister for you: "What's wrong with the wristwatches of Wellesley workers?" Construction hours in Wellesley, the new community being built just west of Arnell Creek, are supposed to be limited. Those hours are 7:30 AM – 7:00 PM Monday through Friday, and 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays. In their rush to get homes built there, some construction workers appear to swinging hammers and running electric saws during non-approved hours. If you are bothered by the construction noise, please feel free to voice your displeasure by phoning the Constable's Office at (302) 855-7819. We just ask that you be polite, reasonable and specific. Good information will help them take the best actions to resolve the issue. Thanks!

Opportunities to Get Out There and Meet Your Neighbors

The Recreation Committee has made some additions and changes to the schedule of social events in the coming months. Be sure to update your calendar so you don't miss out on any of the fun!

Screening of "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial" at the Arnell Creek Outdoor Movie Theatre: Wednesday, August 3, 2022.

Who doesn't love this 1982 film by Steven Spielberg? It tells the story of Elliott, a boy who befriends an extraterrestrial, dubbed E.T., who is stranded on Earth. Along with his friends and family, Elliott must find a way to help E.T. return home while avoiding the government. Don't avoid us! Join us in the parking lot by the Pool House after 8:30 PM. Movie starts at 9:00 PM. Bring your own chair and snacks (Hint, E.T. loved Reese's Pieces!) Rain Date, if needed, is Thursday, August 4.

Craft Day at the Pool: Wednesday, August 17, 2022, 2:00 – 4:00 PM.

For kids and kids-at-heart! Participants will be painting seashells and kindness rocks. We supply the materials, you supply the creativity. Feel free to wear your swimsuit and take a dip in the pool when you are done!

Potluck BBQ at the Pool: Saturday, September 17, 2022, 5:00 – 7:00 PM.

We will be grilling up the hamburgers and hot dogs. We will rely on you to bring a favorite side dish to share. RSVP to Rosemarie Cialini by September 10 by calling 302-727-5623, texting 610-675-9896, or emailing ro56mickey2@gmail.com. (NOTE: This event takes the place of the Potluck Picnic at the Pool originally scheduled for August.)

Trunk or Treating, Sunday, October 30, 2022 has been canceled.

Let's stick with tradition and do our trick-or-treating at our homes on Monday evening, October 31, 5:00 – 8:00 PM. Be sure to get lots of candy to hand out to the ghouls and goblins that will be prowling our neighborhood that night!



Osprey Point Community May Add Commercial Space to Current Plan

It is common knowledge that the former golf course at the southern end of Old Landing Road is been developing into a new housing community called Osprey Point. Fewer people are aware, however, that the developers wish to include commercial spaces in the planned community's layout.

The Osprey Point developers have already filed an application with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) to build a commercial dock and kayak launch marina. The general public was given the opportunity to comment on that application during the month of July 2022. The project calls for the building of a 25-slip dock that crosses over tidal wetlands at the southern end of the site (the location of the old golf course clubhouse.) The water there is very shallow, less than two feet deep. There are no plans to dredge the area to allow for bigger boats, so the dock would be used primarily by jet skis, jon boats, and flat bottom boats. Since there is no real boat launch at the site, developers do not expect to cause an influx of boats being hauled in or out Old Landing Road. Several agencies must weigh in on the application, which may include the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the Sussex Conservation District (Stormwater Management.)

That is not all, however! According to the Old Landing Road Coalition, the developers will be seeking approval for an additional commercial space, once plans for the marina are finalized. The second project calls for the building of a restaurant and tiki bar, featuring an endless pool. The restaurant and bar would be open until 11:00 PM and include amplified music (such as live bands.) The restaurant space would tie into the marina and kayak launch. All the businesses there would share the use of a parking lot with 82 parking spaces.

The inclusion of a restaurant and bar in the Osprey Point community would certainly increase traffic on Old Landing Road. The developers are expected to appear before the Sussex County Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Office on August 11, 2022. Arnell Creek residents are encouraged to share their comments with P&Z officials as part of that process.

HOA DUES:

Past Present and Future

The HOA Board wishes to thank the many homeowners who paid their annual HOA fees in such a timely manner. The dues, which were due May 31, covers the HOA's next fiscal year, which runs from June 1 of this year to May 31 of next year. Last year, nearly 80% of our homeowners had paid their dues as of August 1. This year, we are already up to 92%.

If you have NOT paid your dues yet, no problem! The Invoice can be found on the Arnell Creek website (www.arnellcreekhoa.com). Just click on the "Forms" tab, print out the invoice, and write your check. To ensure the proper crediting of your payment, please complete and send out the bottom portion of the invoice.

In related news, the HOA continues to reconcile its records of HOA payments from previous years. Three months ago, HOA Treasurer Pat Manhard sent out letters to a number of homeowners, asking for their help in "filling in the gaps" of the ledgers of fee payments. Many of them responded to the letter. Some homeowners were able to supply check numbers and dates for previous payments. A couple of homeowners discovered that they had, indeed, forgotten to pay their fees in full! The HOA Board appreciates everyone's patience as we work to improve the records of the HOA.

New Directory is Now Available

The 2022 Arnell Creek Homeowners Directory is now available to homeowners in our community. This publication contains telephone numbers and mailing addresses for nearly all of the homeowners in the community. It also includes email addresses for a growing number of persons. It can be a valuable resource in the event of an emergency, while also helping neighbors get to know one another.

"I encourage you to direct your thanks for the directories to Bruce and Giancarla Churchman", say HOA President Glen Pruitt. "Bruce took care of incorporating all of the changes to the listings, and this year we had quite a few of them!" The new directory includes contact information for persons who bought property in Arnell Creek through July 15, 2022. It also reflects changes in phone numbers and email addresses, and it corrects several errors carried forward into last year's directory. "Errors do happen, despite the best of intentions," adds Pruitt. Any additions or corrections to the new directory should be emailed to **ArnellCreek@qmail.com**.

Our thanks to the Churchmans should not stop with their editing work. Bruce and Giancarla also take care of the printing of the directories, at no cost to the HOA. The directories have been gifted by the Churchmans to our community for many years now. What a gift THEY are to Arnell Creek!