



# Avocet Talks

Sign up for email delivery of the newsletter: just send an email with your house address to [bod@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:bod@avocet-hoa.org)

**Note:** Issues are now being posted on the website and in the next few months, we will start delivering them also by email (for those who sign up), to save printing costs & time. Let us know if you'd like an emailed copy.

**Avocet Homeowner's Association**

## Clubhouse Update

The work on the clubhouse is almost complete! The drywall is up and is being painted. The last step will be installing the carpeting and that should be completed by the end of the first week in May!



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## Community Garage Sale — was a success!

A community-wide garage sale was held on April 22nd and 23rd; from 9 am to 4 pm each day. Over 2 dozen homes participated. The rainy weather departed by noon on Saturday! The event was held at no cost to participants or the community. Another garage sale is planned for August or September.



## Welcome Your New Neighbors!

Almost every month, we have new homeowners in our neighborhood. Please reach out and make them feel welcomed and at home. To join Avocet Yahoo Group, go to <http://www.avocet-hoa.org>. Contact your board members for an invitation to join. And let us know so we can organize a welcome!

Editor: Blake Slemmer,  
email:  
[vicepresident@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:vicepresident@avocet-hoa.org)

## Finance Report

The Finance Committee delivered their report to the BOD at the April meeting. The news is not good. Coming INTO the current financial year, the community inherited a negative balance sheet. Last year's drainage work (\$29,000) and the previous year's swimming pool project drained all surpluses and left us with a net negative forecast of \$20,000 for 2006. And this does not even account for building reserves for future maintenance on communal amenities, such as the tennis courts, parking lot, swimming pool, etc. The tennis courts will need more than resurfacing as the foundations are disintegrating. Resurfacing over a bad foundation won't solve the problem.

The current BOD has been working very hard to avoid any and all expenses that aren't absolutely necessary, and have cancelled or cut back projects, or solicited neighborhood volunteers to complete work (such as the excellent work on the lower drainage that Jack Theall did for the community in the cold winter months).

Even so, we can not cut our way out of this deficit, so as a community we need to discuss what can be done. The option list so far is:

1. Fund raisers, changes to non-resident fees and other ways to bring in cash.
2. Raise dues by \$10/month per household.
3. A one-time special assessment.

The BOD will NOT take any action until the community has had a chance to understand, discuss the issues and provide feedback and suggestions! Please come to the monthly BOD meetings at the clubhouse!

## Lawn And Garden in May

Georgia's climate quickly goes from cool and wet to hot and dry, so it is imperative to do most of your planting in May. Many young plants can not survive transplanting in the blistering heat of summer, so get out in the dirt now.

**Vegetables:** With all likelihood of frost behind us, and the soil temperatures up, you can now safely plant even the tender plants like basil, peppers, eggplants, tomatoes, melons, pumpkins and squash! Do it now! If you are starting a new garden, be sure to add 1 40 lb bag of compost or manure per 4 square feet; Georgia's hard red clay won't support much without it!!

**Flowers:** It is also safe to plant tender annual flowers like Impatiens and Lan-

tana. Both of those do very well in Georgia summers and will bloom until frost. Perennials like Peonies, Begonias, Lilies, Cannas, Nicotinia can also be planted and do very well here.

**Lawns:** If you haven't fertilized yet, now would be a good time to get your lawn green and weed free. There are several good fertilizers available. One example suitable for this time of year is Scott's Turf Builder Plus2 Weed Control. The 14.29 lb bag covers 5,000 sq ft, plenty for most Avocet lawns and costs about \$12 at Lowes, Home depot or Wal-Mart. You



should be mowing now, as weeds are most definitely up and will quickly go to seed and spread. You may only need to mow every other week until it gets a bit warmer.



## Ways to Save Energy and Reduce Your Utility Bills

As oil, heating gas and electricity prices continue to rise, saving energy becomes more than just altruism. Here are some proven ways to substantially reduce your utility bills.

**Electricity:** Replace incandescent light bulbs with the mini-fluorescent bulbs. They last 10 times longer and use less than 1/4 as much energy!

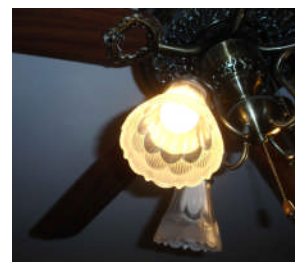
Each 100 watt incandescent bulb can be replaced with a 13 watt mini-fluorescent! They're available for about \$11 per 4-pack of 23watt (100watt equivalents) at Sam's, Costco or BJ's; and a greater selection of specialty bulbs is available at Fry's and Home depot. They DO cost more but that is less than the 40 regular bulbs they replace over their life AND it cuts the energy use by 74%! The now come in all shapes and brightnesses, including special bulbs for ceiling fans, mini-candle lights, round globe soft lights and full-spectrum (natural sunlight) bulbs.

If you are about to replace your clothes washer or dishwasher, be sure to look for the energy star logo and the yellow energy consumption rating. The front loading clothes washers use one-fourth as much water and, with higher spin speeds, wring the clothes drier, meaning it



takes less energy to dry them.

Newer model dishwashers also use less water and less electricity, and as an added bonus, have a hard food disposer built in, time delay start, and are much quieter!



## Maintenance Tips: Cleaning Your Clothes Drier Duct

If you have been living in the same house for 2 or 3 years or more, you may have noticed that it seems to take longer for your clothes dryer to dry your laundry.

Even though you clean the lint screen before each load, smaller lint particles pass through the screen and collect inside the duct that leads to the outside vent. This collected lint obstructs the flow of air and presents a fire risk.

Several local stores (Bed Bath and Beyond and sometimes Home Depot) now carry a dryer duct cleaning kit for \$19.99 (\$5 less at Bed Bath and Beyond with one of their coupons that arrives by mail).

I tried the kit and was impressed. It contains 3 different items: a 10 ft duct cleaning brush, a 3 ft brush for cleaning the ducts inside the dryer and for sweeping under the dryer; and a 3 ft attachment for your vacuum cleaner that will suck any remaining loosened lint from all places.

It is easy to use and works very well! The hardest part of the whole operation is moving your dryer to access the duct in the wall.

After cleaning, the dryer took 25% less time to dry the



clothes, and ought to use 25% less energy (electricity and gas in my case) to dry loads. The kit is well built and ought to last the life of several dryers.

### Progress report

- Clubhouse renovation is nearing completion!
- Garage sale was held



### Clubhouse Rental Fee

The Clubhouse rental fee has been increased from \$25 to \$50. The revised clubhouse rules will be attached to June's newsletter.

### Water Leak!

The BOD wants to thank each of you who called to notify us of the water leak by the upper tennis courts curb area.

And thanks to all for being patient during the repairs!

### South Old Peachtree Update



The contractor has almost completed paving and finishing concrete and dressing. The new lanes should be painted soon. The completion is likely to be Mid-May.. as always weather permitting.



## Standard Notices



### Monthly reminder: Dues

Please remember that if you pay monthly, rather than annually or semiannually, the monthly amount (\$40) for the homeowner's association dues must be received by our management company, Heritage Properties by the 1st of the month. Payments received after the 10th day of the month are \$50. Questions? Call Robin with Heri-

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### Monthly BOD Meeting

Everyone's welcome to the monthly BOD meetings:

It's a chance to hear firsthand what the issues are, provide ideas or help solve a problem. Of course, if you can't make it, and want to reach any of the Board, just email at the addresses above, or call Robin to pass on a message!

**The BOD wants and needs your input about the issues ahead, such as the finances, the inspection process and ACC (Architecture process). These issues affect you directly, so regardless of your perspective, show up and let your voice be heard! We need to hear from you, about what you like as well as dislike, so that we can accurately represent everyone and implement the wishes of the majority of the community.**

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### Board Member Contact List

Our subdivision is managed by Heritage Property Management Company.

**The manager is** Robin Steinkritz, 770-200-8256; Email: [rsteinkritz@heritageproperty.com](mailto:rsteinkritz@heritageproperty.com).

Our board members are:

**President:** Karen Finol, Email: [president@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:president@avocet-hoa.org)

**Vice President:** Blake Slemmer, Email: [vicepresident@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:vicepresident@avocet-hoa.org)

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Eugene Yu, Email: [secretary@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:secretary@avocet-hoa.org)

**Board of Directors:** [bod@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:bod@avocet-hoa.org)

If you don't have email or internet access you can leave a written message for the BOD in the ACC mailbox (at the corner of Clubhouse drive), or call Robin at 770-200-8256.

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### Committees

There's no secret process to being on a committee: just tell someone on the committee or a BOD member that you'd like to help!

1. **Finance Committee**, [finance@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:finance@avocet-hoa.org)
2. **Kid's Group** - [bod@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:bod@avocet-hoa.org)
3. **Architecture**, [architecture@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:architecture@avocet-hoa.org)

4. **Information**, [info@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:info@avocet-hoa.org)
5. **Landscape**, [landscape@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:landscape@avocet-hoa.org)
6. **Pool**, [pool@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:pool@avocet-hoa.org)
7. **COPS**, [security@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:security@avocet-hoa.org)
8. **Social**, [social@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:social@avocet-hoa.org)
9. **Sports**, [sports@avocet-hoa.org](mailto:sports@avocet-hoa.org)

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### Inspection Report

Heritage (Robin Steinkritz) will conduct the next Inspection on May 1st. (after this newsletter was printed) . We're told the April results from Heritage will be available then.

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