President's Message

By John Beneke

So far this year, the winter has been somewhat mild. I say that as I sit looking out the window at 3-4" of snow (depending on where you are on the mountain) and a current temperature of 13°. Having said that, our Roads and Security staff continues to perform at the highest level by keeping us safe, particularly in bad weather.

In the last issue of the Top of the Bald I devoted much of this space to some of the issues surrounding the restructuring of the Roads and Security Board. One of the events that we were assured would happen was the transfer of the roads, green spaces and other small parcels of land from Bald Mountain Development Corporation (BMDC) to the Wolf Laurel Road Maintenance and Security Homeowners Association, Inc. (WLRMS). That has taken place; the deeds have been signed and recorded. So far, so good. We will continue to monitor events as they

unfold and keep you up to date. Gene Woolf and his committee have done a super job of putting together some great events in the Community Center. They have been well attended and enjoyed by all. Of particular note was the New Year's Eve party catered by Jack Keeran, the new chef at the country club. It was a wonderful way to meet him and sample his fare; we have some excellent food to look forward to. More than 80 people signed up. Thanks. Gene.

Our first year of owning and operating The Village and Amenities Program was a great success. That is not to say that we didn't face some significant challenges or that we will not face more challenges in the future. To everyone, particularly our staff of Cindy Tucker and Hassiekay Honeycutt, and the many volunteers who contributed their time and talents to make 2011 a success, a resounding, THANK YOU!! As I have said before, it is impossible to

thank everyone by name; you know who you are and you have made a difference in Wolf Laurel.

One of the most significant challenges we face is the need for additional members. It is essential that each member encourage your friends and neighbors to join us by becoming a member of the WLPOA and The Amenities Program. Your board is working on alternatives that will encourage others to join us. These will be announced in the near future. In addition, the Amenities Committee is working on new programs and offerings to our membership, and they welcome your input.

Your board and committees are hard at work over the winter months to ensure that we have another successful season and that the future of our Village and Amenities Programs are moving in the right direction. Thanks for your continued support.



NEW LISTING-686 Flame Azalea-\$449,000- Stunning log home with all the upgrades, 3 Bdr's, 3.5 Baths, wood floors, cath. ceilings, stone fplc, granite in gourmet kitchen, central A/C, 2780SQFT, wetbar on lower level, screened in deck with hot tub, .86 Acre, sit on deck and listen to stream below, paved driveway, furnishings neg. MLS#511479



199 OVERLOOK DRIVE-\$549,000-Inspiring mountain home with extreme mountain views, beautiful 3 Bdr's, 3.5 Baths, spacious floor plan, garage, paved frontage, 2 stone fplc, loft area, lots of windows makes this home light and airy, wetbar, 2 huge decks, granite and stainless in the kitchen. MLS#510262



246 PUNCHEON LANE-\$499,000-Hand hewn log home with mtn views on 1.67 Acre, garage, stone work, 3 Bdr's, 2 Baths w/loft area, 2 stone fplc, 2 decks, furnished, cath. ceilings, private location just off a paved road. MLS#459014



NEW LISTING-Lodge 103-\$139,500- Well maintained 1st floor condo with beautiful views, mostly furnished, 625SQFT, stone fplc w/gas logs, private balcony, gas heat. MLS#510953



430 OAKRIDGE LANE-\$200,000-Cedar Lindel home on the golf course with beautiful mtn views, 3 Bdr's, 2 Baths, 1537SQFT, storage area, flat driveway, furnished, 2 stone fplcs, 2 balconies to enjoy the views. MLS#461243



85 BEE TREE -\$495,900- Custom designed mountain home with every detail covered, 3 huge bedroom suites, garage, 2 stone fplc, gas heat, central air, 2624sqft, nicely landscaped .76 Acre, hot tub, 2 decks, paved driveway, Bald Mtn views, wood and tile floors throughout. MUST SEE!!! MLS#469037



998 McKinney Gap Road-\$375,000-Custom built family sized home fully furnished on paved road, high elevation w/beautiful mountain views, 4 Bdr's, 3.5 Baths, garage, large master suite w/sunroom, fplc, gas heat, new rock work, well maintained w/good investment potential. MLS#483929



EAGLES NEST VILLA 102-\$240,000- High elevation with western mtn views, easily maintained 1200SQFT, fully furnished, new carpet and vinyl, cath. ceilings, cvrd deck to enjoy the cool summer nights, stone fplc. MLS#421022



459 LOOKOUT DRIVE-\$399,000-Extreme eastern views form 2 decks, 2584SQFT, 3 Bdr's, 3 Baths w/loft area, 2 stone fplcs, gas heat, cath. ceilings, large family room on lower level, high elevation, metal roof. MLS#483525

What's On Your Mind?

Do you have an interesting hobby or pastime here on the mountain?

Do you have an interesting story (factual or lore) that you'd like to share?

Do you have an amenities story to share? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

Let us know what you are up to. Pictures and articles welcome!

Deadlines for the Top of the Bald for 2012 are

-- January 15, 2012

-- March 15, 2012

-- May 15, 2012

-- July 15, 2012

-- September 15, 2012

-- November 15, 2012

Send submissions to: browne.fe@gmail.com



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Hassiekay Honeycutt, Office Manager Cindy Tucker, Amenities Director



RESTAURANT RAMBLINGS

By Gwynne Beneke

One of my favorite historical figures is Thomas Jefferson. We have much in common: a love of good food, a love of music, a deep love of books. The most familiar and often repeated quotation of our third president is this: "I cannot live without books." I agree wholeheartedly, but I would add something to this saying to make it describe my own essential needs. It would go something like this - "I cannot live without books and CHOCOLATE!" As far as I'm concerned, chocolate should be officially designated as one of the major food groups. From my earliest childhood memories of sipping soothing cups of warm OVALTINE to savoring sophisticated truffles, redolent with dark chips of cacao beans and sprinklings of sea salt, I can honestly say that I never met a bit of chocolate that I didn't like. So a search for sources to assure the satisfaction for my cravings sent me recently into Asheville, where I found two downtown and entirely extraordinary chocolate emporia, The Chocolate Fetish at 36 Haywood Street and The French Broad Chocolate Lounge at 10 S. Lexington Avenue. Although these two businesses have the making of fine chocolate products in common, they could not be more different in some aspects of their approach to fulfilling the needs of the ever-growing number of choco-olics, like me.

CHOCOLATE FETISH owners Sue and Bill Foley moved to Asheville and bought the business about 10 years ago, after living many years in Europe, including tenure in Brussels, famous for its chocolate. This is a second career for the baby-boomer couple.

Their artist daughter Elizabeth works in the business also, designing many of the unusual confections that may be ordered for special occasions: colorful high heel shoes, tropical flowers, fruits of all varieties, hollow cakes hiding engagement rings or new car keys. But the glass cases, packed with truffles of what seems an infinite variety, provide the first mouth-watering impression, although the flat, round "cakes" topped with nuts or candied ginger or raspberries or cacao chips are customer favorites also. John liked the espresso/dark chocolate while I'm partial to the candied ginger/dark chocolate. Making a decision is difficult, but a friendly sales person is there to provide support and information. Nobody can be grumpy around chocolate! Bill happily regales anyone with stories of the special occasions enhanced by original CHOCOLATE FETISH confections. One can also watch the process of truffle making through glass windows - fascinating!

THE FRENCH BROAD CHOCOLATE LOUNGE is not only a shop that makes and sells its own confections, it also is a restaurant and event location. Initially a small storefront, the young owners, Dan and Jael Rattigan, (parents of 2 sons, ages 4 and 6) soon had to expand upward, adding two stories, to accommodate customers who came to enjoy a glass of wine with their chocolate truffle or sip a hot chocolate or dwell over a piece of the shop's extraordinary chocolate cake. A very popular gathering place during the day for young workers on a break or late night theatergoers, the LOUNGE seems to be crowded and humming

with music and conversation anytime the doors are open. While waiting for a table to open up, I browsed a large selection of "free trade" chocolate bars, produced by outside chocolatiers and purchased a Vosges bar, a Michigan based artisan chocolate I had read about. But I left the shop with a small box of the burnt caramel, dark chocolate, seasalt sprinkled truffles. Oh my

The Rattigan's story of their journey to find Asheville, their commitment to the entire chocolate making process, from choosing their cacao beans in Peru to crafting the truffles with cream from Virginia and maple syrup from Vermont, is fascinating and very well told on their website, www.frenchbroadchocolates.com. That site is easy to navigate, whether you're looking for the date of the next jazz event or ordering gifts for friends. You can even link to articles about the exciting plans for the future of this dynamic couple. Wherever possible the Rattigans use local produce providers. I plan to buy their pots de crème for a dinner party I'm planning for later this month!

For me this is a "must support" business undertaking.

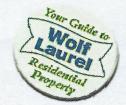
I've discovered another interesting story on the web while surfing for unusual chocolate information; I've ordered two varieties of their sipping chocolate and will let you know All profits from this Christian based "business" go to charity: www. holychocolate.com





Shannon E. Bryan

Broker, Realtor, GRI. ABR Direct 828-776-7244 www.ShannonEBryan.com



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS MARCH 11, 2012

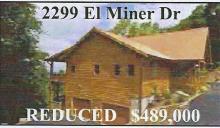


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New Custom Cypress 3 Bedroom 3 Bath Luxury Home that has it all. From Gourmet Kitchen with Granite Counter tops, Vaulted Ceilings, Commetrical Appliances, Wine frig, Center Island to the Cedar Closets.

Custom Features! MLS 451671



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Private 4 Bedroom 3 Bath Large Chalet walking distance to the ski slopes. This home is nestled a top of the ridge that has long ranges views of the ski slopes and mountain ranges from both front and back of the property.

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Landscape Plan or a Has Been's Dream?

By Sonny Colvett, ASLA

On background, a career as a landscape architect/contractor creating many, many beautiful gardens for clients but never a garden for myself, left an itch that was never scratched. When my long time associate and our son took over the day-to-day operation of GreenScape, our family company, and we began to spend more time at Wolf Laurel, our first house was an opportunity to create a small mountain landscape with a stream, woodland trail and a few unique plant materials.

When Willis Williams offered to sell us three and a quarter acres at 4800 foot elevation on the south slope of Bald Mountain, we grabbed it without my usual anal analyzing of all opportunities and problems. What we had bought was a substantial slope honeycombed with old logging roads and new, very substantial roads to two 800 foot depth water wells drilled by Carolina Water (one was for our use, how was then unknown, and the other to provide additional public water for Wolf Laurel), huge piles of downed trees from grading by Carolina Water for the new roads, and many trees scarred to the point of condemning them to an early decline and death by the grading. A real mess; one of the worst sites we had ever seen. Loved it! Our greatest gardens had been created from taking such a miserable site and turning it into something beautiful.

The challenges were formidable: What would grow there we had Zone 7 experience and this was at best Zone 5, or maybe 4, requiring a whole new palette of plant material and sources be researched. Locals told of problems of deer eating all flowers and soft foliage; how do we solve it? In lieu of an experienced construction crew from our company, we had to train associates in our methods. We had no backhoes, cranes, any other company equipment, only rental equipment from an hour away was available. How do you create a garden on a 45 degree slope with extremely erodible, but really good, soil (plants actually slipped down the slope or were covered by the eroding soil)? With only a six month growing season, how do you obtain maximum growth or does it take forever to see the design intent come through? Fortunately, unlike the previous gardens where it was economically best to solve the problems, construct, and collect the money, we had time to research, experiment and reflect on various solutions; the only limitations being at age 70+ how much time do you have left to see the results. The first season was to clean up the site. The huge piles of logs were burned. The virtually dead and badly scarred trees were individually evaluated and removed. Preliminary trimming to determine (if there were) windows of views were done limb by limb. Minor trees and brush was cleared so the details of the site could be seen. A preliminary building site was determined. A specimen Oak was found on which the building site was anchored. Several hundred potted evergreen seedlings were planted to define the property and screen the major site areas (rooms) along with several hundred daffodil bulbs. Fifty 6 foot Hemlock



Debris left by Carolina Water



Additional debris left by Carolina Water



Previous entrance

were planted to define the entrance and the views from the entrance. Small quantities of various plants were planted to determine their adaptability and survivability; most survived the winter but many—rhododendron, azalea, hosta, Japanese dogwood, liriope and even white pine—were decimated or destroyed by deer. Fescue and perennial rye were planted and a pesticide was applied to remove competition of weeds for the meadow areas. Wild flowers were researched and planted.

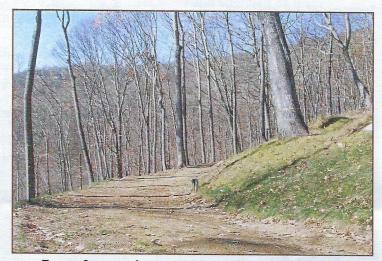
Over this time, Sudie had pressed me to watch the P.Allen Smith garden show on PBS about the development of his Garden Home Retreat in the Boston Mountains west of Little Rock, Arkansas. Realizing Allen was a gifted landscape designer, we finagled an invitation to see the garden via his sponsors who were also our company suppliers. His solution to creating a garden on a slope was to cut a notch into the slope and use the leveled space as the garden. This was a true revelation to us and became our slope solution.

The second season was to create the infrastructure of the garden, to attempt to control the deer, to further test plant material and begin research for garden art. The road constructed by Carolina Water to drill what became our well was the beginning of our notch which eventually stretched 350 feet around the nose of the mountain. Removing the limestone road base produced enough gravel to resurface all our roads, a surprise and welcome savings for the budget. The decision to use the well for water to insure an adequate supply in lieu of potentially using for geothermal heating and cooling was accomplished. An irrigation main and electrical supply was installed along the length of the garden. A garage, notched into the slope and painted brown and green to fade into the landscape, was built to house the equipment, which was growing fast and now included a tank sprayer, a pickup and a Mule. The wild flowers were a great surprise success and their area was expanded. An 18" stone wall was constructed along the upper edge of the entrance drive. Low voltage electric wiring, strung 5 to 8' in height depending on the jumping departure slope, was installed to deter the deer (cross your fingers, it seems to be working). The posts were painted green and the yellow plastic insulators will be painted green soon to make the deer deterant disappear. Individual wire hoops were used to protect the plants outside the fenced area. Cory Wallin, son of Freddie and Jane Wallin, was discovered to be a jack of all trades and did a great job with construction. A few selected arboretum quality trees and shrubs were installed as tests for survivability from cold and deer. A field trip to the Eastern Shore with Dwight and Janie Jenkins (he named our garden MountainScape) to see garden art which we really liked (iron gates for the garden entrance, a cast iron 12' diameter by 17' height Victorian gazebo, several Art Nuevo fountains and sculptures) was a bust due to a unimaginable retailer but gave insight as to what was available and helped determine what we want in our garden.

What's scheduled for season three? A lot depends on the results of the deer control, plant survivability, the economy, and sources of garden art. Presuming those are under



Current entrance



One of several terraces awaiting landscaping

control, it might include installation of the planting in the first 200' of the garden, construction of the iron gates and the roundel water feature (centerpiece of the garden), possibly the construction of the gazebo and/or a 1200 SF screened pavilion with kitchen and bath facilities for entertaining, establishment of the meadow surrounding the garage and some specimen trees in the foreground wildflower area.

MountainScape is not intended as a private garden just for us; it is intended, at least until it becomes a problem, as a private garden for all Wolf Laurel to enjoy. We hope you will come see it and, as you view our progress, enjoy it.



Wildflower meadow

WLPOA Village Amenities and Community Center Winter Events and Operations

The WLPOA Board has approved gatherings at the WLPOA Community Center for EVERYONE on the mountain during the winter months.

--Friday, February 17, 2012 at 5:30 pm. OWL Hoot Friday Nighter. BYOB. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Set ups provided. \$3.00 cover.

--Saturday, March 17, 2012 at 5:30 pm. St. Patrick's Day Party. Details TBA. Suggestions are welcome.

Contact: Cindy Tucker at 828-689-9229 or Gene Woolf at 828-208-3949.
**Please note that if severe weather will prohibit safe travel to these events,

an alert will be sent out on email via the WLPOA website.

The WLPOA Community Center will typically be open from 8:00 am until 12 noon, barring inclement weather. Typically Hassiekay works Monday, Wednesday and Friday, while Cindy works Tuesday and Thursday. If you need to see the staff specifically, call before you come to make sure the schedule has not changed. Coffee service has been suspended, but WI-FI is available, either inside or outside the barn.

Contact Information: Hassiekay Honneycutt, WLPOA Office Manager, 828-689-9229 Cindy Tucker, WLPOA Amenities Director, 828-689-4089 Roads and Security: 828-680-9162 for questions (or see the R&S website for contact information: www.wolflaurelrms. com)





www.wolflaurelpoa.com

often to find out about the
latest events and happenings

Check Early and Often!

Remember to check

WLPOA Village Amenities Program Great Success in 2011 and Great Potential in 2012!

Our 2011 season was a great success and so many of our members benefited from an excellent series of fitness classes and social opportunities. Our year-round residents and winter visitors have enjoyed parties open to all residents, meeting new friends and embracing those already known. Our big events - the 4th of July, Kid's Kamp and music events such as the Joe Penland concert in August, were enjoyed by many.

So, now's the time to look forward once again and begin to develop our plan for the 2012 season. The Stables' 2012 Horseback Riding Camp will take place June 25th – 29th. The Wolf Cub Kid's Kamp here in the Village will take place July 9th – 13th. Registration forms for these great kid's events will be available in March. Of course, the Village 4th of July celebration will take place on Wednesday, July 4th. Please keep those dates in mind!

The Amenities Committee would like to get your ideas and input so that our programs and events meet our members' needs. We have been given lots of great suggestions that are listed below, but you are also welcome to suggest other areas of interest that are not on the list! The great fitness programs that are already in place will certainly continue. See the brief articles below from two of our most successful fitness classes - Muscle Toning with Cathy Johnson and Water Fitness with Barby McQueen. We will also want to add classes, workshops and lectures that would be meaningful to our members. Some of these may be provided at no charge, some may be fee-based. So, look over the list below and e-mail your ideas and preferences to cindy@wolflaurelpoa.com by the end of February. A summary of programs and events that will be offered this year will be available by the end of April.

New ideas shared with us this year for consideration:

- Gourmet Cooking Class (monthly)
- Pickleball (check out: http://www. usapa.org/whatis_pball/index.php)
- Weight Watcher's Club (need to start in June and have 3 month commitment
- minimum 20 participants)
- Hatha Yoga (check out: http:// en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatha_yoga. See Concept portion of page.)
- Tai Chi Yang Style (http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Philosophy/Taichi/)
- Zumba (if you don't know what this is, check out: http://www.zumba.com/en-US/about/)
- Girl's Day Out! (the group chooses the activity of the day: spa, shopping, NC Arboretum, lunch, Biltmore, etc.
- Art Workshop fiber/felting (either needle felting or wet felting or both!)
- Art Workshop painting (tell us the medium you prefer - water color, oil, etc.)
- Art Workshops you help us decide! (photography, Appalachian rug making, etc.)
- Creative Writing Workshop (write your own life story!)
- CPR Class
- AARP Mature Driving Course
- Presentation by Appalachian Trail Conference/Carolina Hiking Club
- Wildlife Education Programs
 (Appalachian Bear Rescue, Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute, etc.)
- Fly Fishing Demonstration and Class
- Craft Demonstrations (specify what you'd like to see – blacksmithing, chair caning, etc.)
- · Taxes: Estate, Gift and Elder Law



Again, please respond with your suggestions and preferences by e-mail to cindy@wolflaurelpoa.com. We're looking forward to a great season!

Muscle Toning & Stretching with Cathy Johnson

Cathy Johnson's Muscle Toning and Stretching classes were very well received and attended by many during the 2011 season. Most all who attended came every Monday and Friday – rain or shine, windy or cold. Cathy is a personal trainer, certified by American Council on Exercise, and



has a passion to help others enjoy a healthy and fun lifestyle. Classes will resume in May, 2012, and will continue to be held on Monday and Friday mornings at 9 am.

During the winter and to keep your body in the great shape it was in when you left Wolf Laurel, minimum activities are: muscle toning two to three times a week, aerobic activities for at least 30 minutes a day, more if possible, stretching can be done every day (preceded by a warm up to get blood flowing through your muscles, ligaments and tendons). By keeping yourself on both consistent exercise and healthy eating programs, you will feel better, have more energy and be ready to "rock" next May when we resume classes.

Water Fitness with Barby McQueen

Nineteen ladies participated in the Water Fitness program, held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from June through August. The classes averaged 6 participants over the 23 sessions. We were challenged by weather in June but persevered! Our first Water Fitness Polar Bear Club was initiated on June 14th when the temperature was 64 degrees! The charter members of the Water Fitness Polar Bear Club are

Kippy Capers, Barby McQueen, Lee Moeller, JoAnn VanHyning and LaRae Weaver.

First year instructor, Barby McQueen used water fitness program routines that built on fitness, injury prevention and healing. 2012 will bring new program routines that will build on the physical benefits of improved flexibility, strength, endurance, muscular balance, increased circulation, improved ability to control and maintain a healthy weight, and to have fun!



Wolf Laurel Property Owners Express Appreciation to Ebbs Chapel Volunteer Fire Department

On Monday, December 12, 2011 Wolf Laurel property owners expressed their appreciation for the safety and well-being provided to our community by the Ebbs Chapel Volunteer Fire Department by providing funding for a dinner and gifts for the firemen and their families.

The fundraising was spearheaded by Becky McKnight, who worked with the WLPOA and the Ebbs Chapel School Foundation Board. With the approval of the POA Board, Becky sent an email to property owners on the POA membership list inviting any who were interested to make a donation for the appreciation dinner. Forty-four Wolf Laurel property owners donated generously. The funds raised were used to provide for the dinner, gift cards for the firemen, gifts for the children of the firemen, decorations, etc. The Ebbs Chapel School Foundation was the official sponsor of the event, providing the use of its dining room and making all of the necessary arrangements for catering and hosting the event. Fire Chief Josh Jenkins welcomed everyone and especially thanked the volunteer firemen and their families for all the hours they have devoted to Ebbs Chapel Volunteer Fire Department. He spoke of the training of all the volunteers-thus far in 2011 the volunteers have spent 1,466 hours in training and served the area with a record number of 279 calls. He then presented awards to the firemen who had recently completed 370 hours of training: Richard Pressley, Nathan Waldrup, and Will Willis. Chief Jenkins



then presented the award for the fireman of the year to Alan Wyatt. A delicious catered dinner was served by the ECSF Board members. Gene Cantrell, the Chairman of the Board of ECSF, thanked the firemen, introduced the ECSF Board members, and distributed \$50 Wal-Mart gift cards to each volunteer fireman (20). Dr. Cantrell then introduced Becky McKnight, an ECSF board member and a Wolf Laurel property owner; and she and Dixie Tipton presented each child with gifts.

Ebbs Chapel Fire Department was founded in 1984. It services northwestern Madison County, including Wolf Air Field and the communities of Foster Creek, Laurel Valley, Long Branch, Roaring Fork, Smith Creek, Upper Laurel, and Wolf Laurel. ECFD provides mutual aid to all departments in Madison County, West Yancey Fire Department of Yancey County, and Southside Fire Department of Unicoi County, Tennessee. The well-trained department is capable of first-response to fire, rescue, medical, hazardous materials, extrication, and wildland needs. The department is composed of I career firefighter, 19 volunteer firefighters, and 8 nonfirefighters. Each volunteer spends an

average of 4 hours per week at the fire station. The fire department has 9 vehicles available which includes 4 fire trucks.

Wolf Laurel has been fortunate for many years to have the services of the Ebbs Chapel Fire Department at our spectacular 4th of July fireworks presentation. At least two firefighters spend at least 5 to 6 hours at Wolf Laurel on that evening. Many Wolf Laurel residents have utilized the services of the fire department to help them with house fires, brush fires, heart attacks, strokes, falls, vehicle accidents, etc.; and usually the response time is between 10 and 12 minutes.

The Wolf Laurel property owners and the Ebbs Chapel Foundation want the firefighters and their families to know that they are appreciated every day of the year.

To learn more about our Ebbs Chapel Fire Department, please visit their web site: www.ebbschapelfire.com.



Becky McKnight and Chief Josh Jenkins





The Top of the Bald is published six times each year by the Wolf Laurel Property Owners Association, 91 Village Lane, Mars Hill NC 28754. Members are encouraged to send original articles (we have trouble getting reprint permissions on

previously published items) and photographs of interest to the Wolf Laurel community. Deadlines for receipt are the 15th of Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, and Nov. Email proposed articles and photos to wlpoaboard@wolflaurelpoa.com. We reserve the right to edit all entries to fit TOTB requirements. Please contact the WLPOA office to report any changes in your address, telephone number or email address to: 828 689-9229 or to: wlpoaboard@wolflaurelpoa.com ©Copyright 2012 Wolf Laurel Property Owners Association

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