

# Settles Bridge Sentinel

Newsletter of the Settles Bridge Homeowner's Association, Inc.

Post Office Box 837

Suwanee, GA 30024

February 2005



## President's Post

Since our last newsletter, your Settles Bridge Homeowners' Association has been very busy. We've addressed problems with sinkholes, streetlights and fallen trees. We've attended City Council, Planning & Zoning, and public works meetings, and represented our neighborhood at the celebration of the Suwanee Police Department. We've had the honor of welcoming new families and infants. And we've respectfully shared our sympathies with our grieving families.

Your SBHA Officers are nearing the end of their term in office (April 2004-2005). We hope that we have done a good job in serving our community. And to assure that we end our year with a bang, we want to spend our last full month in office informing you about a host of significant issues that will come to a vote at our April meeting. A sample of these issues include:

1. New options available from Gwinnett County for conversion of homes from septic to sewer
2. Suwanee's plans to change our garbage collection options and how you can voice your opinion
3. How to reform and our SBHA Committees
4. A proposal to allow selected Suwanee businesses to become non-voting members of SBHA
5. A proposal to allow members of SBHA to publish advertisements in our newsletter in exchange for donations above and beyond our maintenance donations
6. A proposal to make our community a "No Soliciting" neighborhood
7. A proposal to maintain the United States flag at the front entrance
8. A proposal to compensate the position of Secretary

Please attend our March social and share in open conversation about these important issues before we vote in April.

Best Regards,  
Clinton A. Lowe

## Suwanee may offer trash pickup

The City has decided to investigate providing garbage collection for Suwanee residents. Their stated reasons for considering this service are as follows:

- Multiple garbage trucks on residential streets, multiple times a week, damage roads
- Trash containers curbside all during the week
- Little control over the quality of the equipment currently used, leading to environmental and safety concerns.
- Citizens paying a wide range of prices for the same services
- Some contractors don't provide pick-up service for yard debris and bulky items (like refrigerators and furniture)

The City is exploring revenue-generating options outside of raising property taxes, and has put together a citizens group to solicit input, feedback, and guidance on the issues surrounding garbage collection. If they do finally contract with one company for garbage collection services, the decision will be based primarily on price and quality of the service provider. The final vote will be by the City Council.

Some questions remain unanswered - such as if everyone will be forced into using the City's contractor. Your SBHA is keeping very close watch on this project and will keep you posted as the situation develops.

## St. Patrick's Day party March 19th

Your new Social Committee hits the ground running, and is already planning our next event - a St. Patrick's Day celebration.

Look for details soon!

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### SBHA Septic Tanks Woes

You are at a friends house and wistfully notice them scraping their plates into the sink and grinding the scraps in their garbage disposal. If only you could live with such reckless abandon...

But you have a septic tank, and regularly adding food to your system is just one of the things you shouldn't do. While a well maintained septic system could last for the life of your home, a poorly maintained system is a nightmare.

Here is the bad news - most septic systems today have a lifetime of 20 to 30 years, and many septic systems will fail before this time. Over time the pores of the soil in the drain field become clogged with normal organic material or blocked by roots. Almost all of the homes in our subdivision were finished before 1990 - which means that the rate of septic failures in our neighborhood will probably increase.

The good news is that you can make some changes now to get the most out of your system. Improper maintenance is the main reason for failure, so here are a few suggestions:

- Get the tank pumped. A 1,000-gallon tank with 4 people in the home should be pumped every 2.5 to 3.5 years.
- Don't put grease down the drain. This is bad for the system, and *will* clog it up.
- Limit water use. Excessive water can overload the system.
- Don't plant anything near the drain field.
- Don't divert some household water directly into the drain field. While it may seem like a good idea, this actually hastens the demise of the field.

Oh - and don't waste your time with additives. Current research shows that while most do no harm, there is no independent evidence that they help either. A completely dormant or "dead" system will completely recover within a few days with just normal use.

To go much deeper into your septic system (yuk), see the links in the "Newsletter" section on the SBHA website.

### Odds & Ends

Long John Silvers is coming behind CVS. They had a little problem with a water quality issue, but you should see the building soon.

There is about to be massive construction north of Suwanee Dam near intersection with PIB. Jolly Development will start development on 99% of the site at the same time.

400 Bulbs will be coming up along the front fence, thanks to the work of Kerri McCoy and other volunteers. Watch for them in the Spring!



Work on Sims Lake Dam, which holds back the lake on the Hewell Property park that adjoins our subdivision, should be completed shortly after May, although the recent rains may slow the work. Once the dam is considered safe, the City will put together a commission to plan the park.

Like many cities, Suwanee is investigating red light cameras. Intersections along the major thoroughfares (PIB, Buford Highway and Suwanee Dam) are being considered, along with the most dangerous intersection in Suwanee (McGinnis Ferry and Satellite).

It looks like we are getting an access to the Chattahoochee River in Suwanee. Rumor has it that it will be at McGinnis Ferry road, and may even open this year.

What is Wayne Hill doing now? As many of you know, Wayne Hill lives just across the street from our subdivision. One of the first things he plans to work with the City on - a no smoking ordinance for Suwanee.

While not yet accessible, there is a park in Gwinnett called Settles Bridge Park that is expanding to 268 acres. Next to the Chattahoochee and near the original Settles Bridge, the property is next to Riverside Elementary School.