

Echo Hill South Association News

Echoes About the Hill

BRUSH PICK-UP

Brush pickup is scheduled to begin on **May 6, 2006**. Please do not put brush on the verges before April 20, 2006. Brush should be piled with butt ends toward the street. The chipper can only handle branches up to 5 inches in diameter; do not include larger materials. Construction materials will not be accepted, nor will trees and branches left behind by a tree service. It is your responsibility to remove this material.

ANNUAL DUES

Bills for annual dues for fiscal year 2006-2007 will be mailed soon. We would appreciate prompt payment. Our out-going treasurer, Jackie Tuthill, has done a remarkable job collecting dues, and we happily report that all but 6 owner-dues for this year have been received. Dues not paid during the fiscal year are subject to an 18% interest charge. Owners who continue to ignore payment have a lien attached to their property. When purchasing your dwelling in Echo Hill South, you became a part owner of the common lands held by the Association and agreed to abide by the restrictions and covenants of our Association. For those of you who question what the dues are used for, the Association is obligated to maintain our common lands (mowing, removal of dead or threatening trees), the payment of local taxes, and liability insurance.

CHANGING of the GUARD

In March we are losing two dedicated officers of the Association: Vice President Bob Tuthill and Treasurer Jackie Tuthill who are moving out of Echo Hill after 36 years in our neighborhood. We offer all of them our heartfelt thanks for their many years of service. Joe Kunkel is stepping down as President but has agreed to serve as a member of the Board if elected.

NEW BLOOD

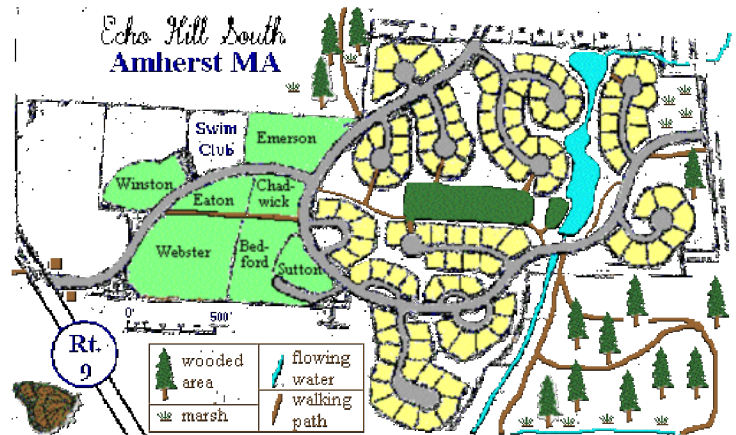
Ours is the first and longest existing residential Association in Massachusetts, lasting 38 years so far because of the willingness of people to serve on the Board and committees. Almost all other such associations in Massachusetts cease to exist after their initial charter period. We need residents to step up to help us in the stewardship of our Association. Openings are available on the Board of Directors, and on the Grounds Committee and the Architecture Committee. We want to involve our younger neighbors so that the functions of the Association can continue without interruption into the future. If you are interested in helping, please contact any member of the Board (address and phone numbers below)

SPRING/SUMMER PROJECTS

As you plan landscaping and building projects, please apply to the EHSA Architecture Committee for permission. Forms are on the association website or available from Board members.

MAINTENANCE

As you walk or drive around Echo Hill, please note any road hazards (serious potholes) or defective street lights. These problems should be reported to the Town Dept. of Public Works who will (in the fullness of time) respond.



Visit our website at URL: <http://ehsa.blix.com/>

NOTICE OF THE 39th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ECHO HILL SOUTH ASSOCIATION

Fort River School 7 P.M. Tuesday, March 28, 2006

The annual meeting is the one opportunity you have to address your concerns and to learn in detail our major accomplishments as well as the problems facing us in the future. Among the topics to be discussed is the Pond Revitalization Project, plans for repaving Stony Hill Road, the Grounds Committee report, the Architecture Committee report, Treasurer's report, and election of Officers and Board members. Attendance at past meetings has been poor, and we urge you to participate and tell us your concerns such as potholes, non-working street lights, verges, the pond, cutting of trees, etc.

Nominations Committee Slate of Officers for 2006-2007

(to be presented and voted on at the annual meeting. Additional nominations can be offered from the floor at the annual meeting)

President:	Eric Einhorn
Vice President:	John Donahoe
Treasurer:	Hubbard Smith
Secretary:	Don Proulx

Directors (those whose terms of office have expired)

Dave Triozzi (three year term)
Joe Kunkel (two year term)

POND REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Despite the conditional approval of the Amherst Conservation Commission and the State Department of Environmental Protection to dredge the ponds to prevent them from silting up and turning into a marsh, one of our residents petitioned the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, arguing that our ponds were vernal pools which cannot be modified. The above mentioned agency, without viewing the ponds, certified them as vernal pools, thus putting a hold on the dredging and negating over 10 years of studies, environmental testing and countless hours of planning by members of the Pond Committee.

EHSA resident, Guy Lanza, has written a letter to the Board explaining his action and asked that it be published in this newsletter. Space does not allow the entire letter to be included; the Board of Directors provides a summary in italics below and offers a response:

(continued next page)

Lanza: *"I would like to correct some inaccurate and personal statements that appeared in the last issue of the EHSA Newsletter. In mid April of [2005] accompanied by one of my students as my guest, I observed and documented prolific breeding activity of several amphibian species in the upper, middle and lower pools of our common area...I reported the presence of both wood frogs and the eggs and larvae of mole salamanders [to the above agency]. The presence of either of these species is used by the state to document the existence of a vernal pool habitat.*

While not an expert on Amphibian classification, I do hold a Ph.D. in Aquatic Ecology. There was nothing "putative" about our identification of the species, which we observed and documented with photographs, egg masses and larvae, GPS, and habitat descriptions. It is simply incorrect to state that "The expertise of Lanza and his class in identification can be questioned."

Finally, habitat loss is a major factor contributing to the current global decline in amphibian species. We should treasure our vernal pools for their beauty and value as an essential ecological habitat for important species."

EHSA Response to Lanza remarks

As stated above our ponds were designated vernal pools based on the simple fact of presence of the egg masses of the obligate species. As explained in our previous newsletter, the obligate species will lay their eggs almost in any standing water; that is what they do to survive. Our expert, Dr. Al Richmond, a true aquatic ecologist and amphibian expert, later that same spring could find no surviving tadpoles from either of the obligate amphibians by trapping or dip netting in our major EHSA pond and identified pond and moving-water species not pool species. That would be expected if the body of water is **not** a vernal pool. We do have several true vernal pools in our EHSA common land.

Lanza did not examine them or have any of them certified. That is where the obligate species might have laid eggs that survived. Lanza has used the ease-of-certification rules for vernal-pools to interfere with our Board's hard work to conserve our ponds.

Lanza jumped the gun on certification and did not follow up on whether the egg masses survived. He has created a lot of work for our EHSA Board to undo his easily obtained egg photography. The State Program that certified our ponds as vernal pools were not told that the ponds are a part of a PUD. They were not told that the ponds are catchments for seven sources of run-off water from Pelham and neighboring EHSA streets. They were not told of the downstream canyon, including EHSA resident's property, that will inevitably be more seriously eroded when water is not held back in our catchment ponds as they are more seriously silted-in by the current process. The State Program was not told these facts but were swayed by a minority interest in allowing the ponds to further fill in and become an eyesore and danger to our total property. A Natural Heritage Program representative never inspected the ponds or the planning documents that have affected the ponds over the past 40 years. They are willing to listen to our arguments and we are marshalling the facts to have the decision reversed.

**The Current Echo Hill South Officers [2005-2006]
The ECHO HILL SOUTH ASSOCIATION, INC.**

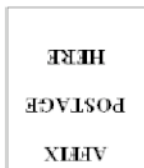
'05 – '06 ELECTED OFFICERS

and

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joe Kunkel, Pres.	74 Stoneyhill Rd	253-3391
Bob Tuthill, Vice Pres.	12 Thistle Ln.	253-3638
Don Proulx, Sec.	11 Laurel Ln.	256-6751
Jackie Tuthill, Treas.	12 Thistle Lane	253-3638
John Donahoe	15 Red Fox Lane	253-5003
Eric Einhorn	11 Red Fox Lane	256-8258
Michael Malone	19 Hickory Lane	256-2353
Sally Malsch	12 Emerson Court	253-5250
Harry Brooks	32 Hickory Lane	256-8831
David Triozzi	80 Stoneyhill Rd	

Echo Hill South Association Newsletter



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Echo Hill South Association
P.O. Box 3463
Amherst, MA 01004