

# AVALON

at Carolina Forest

March 1, 2009

Dear Avalon Homeowner,

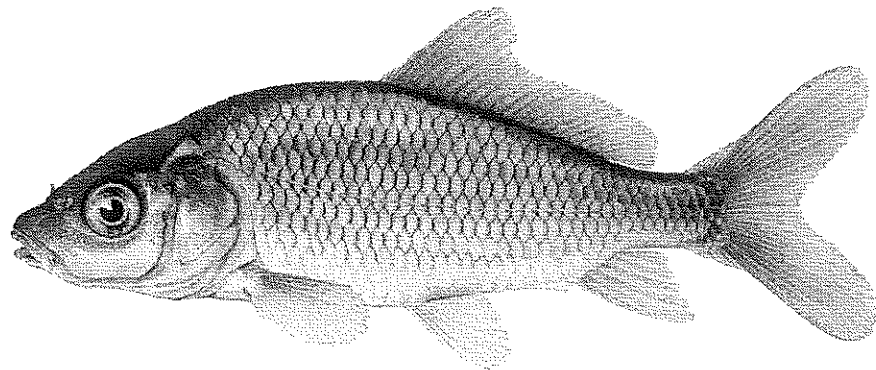
There are several topics that the board wishes to discuss with you. In the last newsletter we informed you that we were starting an Avalon email notification system. If there is an emergency or something of importance that is happening in the community, you can be notified immediately. If you wish to have your email added to the list, email HOA President Ed Stapleton at [stapey@sccoast.net](mailto:stapey@sccoast.net) with your name, address, phone number, and lot number. Your information will be kept confidential and your email address will not be shared with anyone.

Recently there have been some major problems caused by residents feeding the stray/feral cats that wander the neighborhood. Feral cats can be extremely destructive through spraying and scratching. Feral cats also carry diseases that can be transmitted to domesticated household pets and even humans. An Horry County Animal Control Officer recently told the board that feeding stray/feral cats actually does more harm than good. People think that they are helping when they feed a feral cat when they are actually attracting cats that would not have been together otherwise. When groups of cats get together they fight and they breed. If you are having problems with feral cats (or any other stray animal) call 248-1520 and they will come and trap them. Remember, by feeding them you are not doing them any favors.

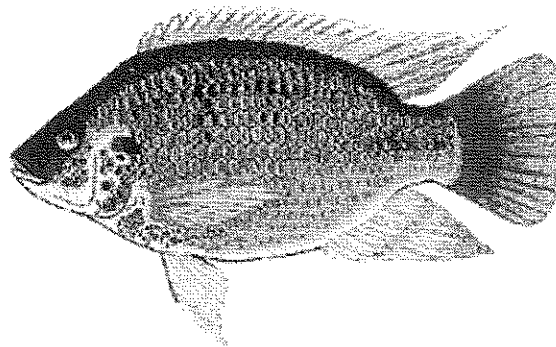
Attached to this letter is an invitation to the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Avalon "Welcome Spring Egg Hunt". It will be held on Sunday, March 29, 2009 (rain date Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009) from 2:00 to 4:00 at the Avalon soccer field. It is for ages 0-12 and will be lots of fun for everyone involved. There will be prizes given and contests for the different age groups. We hope to see you there!

One of the things that the board needs to bring to your attention is basketball goals. We get a lot of complaints from homeowners about them being left hanging over the street and we are even aware of several occasions where they were hit by passing vehicles. Last year at the urging of the Advisory Committee, we instructed Wright Management to issue violations during their weekly drive through for basketball goals left hanging over the street. All that needs to be done is when the children are done playing basketball; take the goal away from the street. Also, if your children are playing basketball in the street please make sure they are being courteous to motorists and getting out of the way when cars are coming.

One of the improvements that the board has been working on is the algae that forms every year in the ponds. The algae primarily forms because the ponds have no movement. A combination of the summer heat and the stagnant water are prime conditions for algae to grow. Traditionally we have treated the ponds chemically which is expensive and yields moderate results. The worst pond is at the corner of Silvercrest and Stoney Falls which is problematic because that pond provides water for a lot of the irrigation in Avalon. Several months ago the board brought in an expert on pond maintenance to evaluate the problems. His suggestion for the ponds was to stock each pond with about a dozen algae eating fish. The cost of the fish is a drastic savings from the chemicals that we have been using for years. He suggested in addition that the Silvercrest pond needed an aerator which the board has already had installed. The fish that he recommended was a combination of carp and tilapia. The carp are primarily plant eaters where as the tilapia are primarily algae eaters (carp are those big ugly fish that you see swimming around at Barefoot Landing and Broadway at the Beach). In Avalon, we have never discouraged children from fishing and we don't want to start now. If you have a child that fishes in one of the ponds, please make sure that they are immediately throwing back anything they catch. The ponds are basically run-off basins where fertilizers and pesticides wind up so you can't eat anything you catch anyway. If we stock the ponds with algae eating fish it does not make sense for the kids to catch and kill them. Again, please catch-and-release anything that is caught in our ponds.



Carp



Tilapia

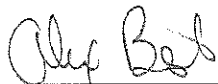
On March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 there was a seminar held at the Carolina Forest Community Center hosted by the Horry County Fire Department and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). The entire purpose of this seminar was to educate Carolina Forest residents (especially Avalon, Plantation Lakes, and Walkers Woods) about the unique conditions that are present in our community that appear no place else in the world. People don't understand that Carolina Forest is built on top of the Carolina Bays and that creates fire conditions that are different than anyplace else. If you walk around our woods it feels like you are walking on a sponge....that is because the Carolina Bays are several feet thick with a "moss like" substance that has been forming for hundreds of thousands of years. When that "moss like" substance burns it is extremely difficult to extinguish and can burn underground for months or years. This seminar was tailored specifically for us in mind and was designed to teach homeowners how to keep their homes safe. One of the goals of the Horry County Fire Department and the SCDNR was to urge neighborhoods to become "Firewise" communities. This program is something that the Avalon Board of Directors is solidly behind and we urge you to visit "<http://www.firewise.org/>" to learn more about it. You can also visit the following link for a short video about the Firewise program: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cy4kLwzIA40>

In keeping with fire safety, in the next few months Wildlife Action Inc. will be cutting back approximately 50 feet of shrubbery (not large trees) from the woods that are encroaching on the homes on the east side of Avalon. This would include Pantherwood Drive, Whetstone Lane, Callalily Court, behind the amenities center, and parts of Dandelion Lane. You may recall that Wildlife Action Inc owns all the property on the east side of Avalon and their mission is wildlife conservation and preservation. The Avalon Board of Directors is applying for a grant to do the same thing on the west side of Avalon which the HOA owns. This would include Silvercrest Drive, Copper Creek Court, parts of Seneca Ridge, parts of Sugar Creek Court, and parts of Stoney Falls Blvd. This area was originally cleared years ago by Beazer but has since grown back and is creating dangerous fire conditions for the homes. Once the shrubbery is initially cleared, it can be easily maintained on a yearly basis through brush-hogging by our landscaper. Basically, if there are woods in your backyard then 50 feet of brush will be cut back. The board will be keeping you apprised on all developments as they come. There is a large map of the Avalon development on the Avalon website ([www.avalonatcarolinaforest.com](http://www.avalonatcarolinaforest.com)) and clicking on "About Avalon"

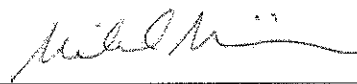
One of the complaints that the board and the Advisory Committee has been hearing a lot about is the behavior of teenage and pre-teen children. When kids get into groups they are usually trying to outdo each other trying to prove who is the "coolest". Lately the language that some of the kids are displaying could make a sailor blush. We are asking that parents closely monitor their children's behavior and listen to some of the things they are saying. Some homeowners are hesitant to even let their little kids play in the front yard for fear of what they are going to overhear from the older children.

The Avalon pool will be opening on April 15<sup>th</sup> this year for several reasons. In years past the pool opened on April 1<sup>st</sup> but there is a new federal law requiring the drains to be replaced to prevent child entrapment. The repair can be done one of two ways....by draining the pool or by diving to the bottom. Obviously draining and replacing 150,000 gallons of water would be very expensive so the board opted to wait a couple more weeks until the water warmed up so that the repair can be done more economically. The other reason is that when we opened the pool on April 1<sup>st</sup>, nobody was ever swimming because the water was too cold.

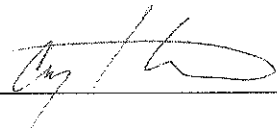
Finally, we would like to congratulate James & Linda Murphy from 6080 Pantherwood Drive for winning Avalon Yard of the Quarter! You have done a wonderful job landscaping and your house is beautiful!



Alex Best - Treasurer



Mike McGinnis - Vice President



Cory VanNote - Secretary



Bill McGinnelly - Officer At Large



Edward Stapleton - President