

Puttin' On the Ritz

By Heidi Carlstadt

Since its inception in 1995, South Riding Proprietary in South Riding, Va., has always tried to maintain a small hometown feel *and* the sophistication of a Washington, D.C., suburb. With close to 6,000 homes and 20,000 residents, it's not an easy feat. The special events at South Riding

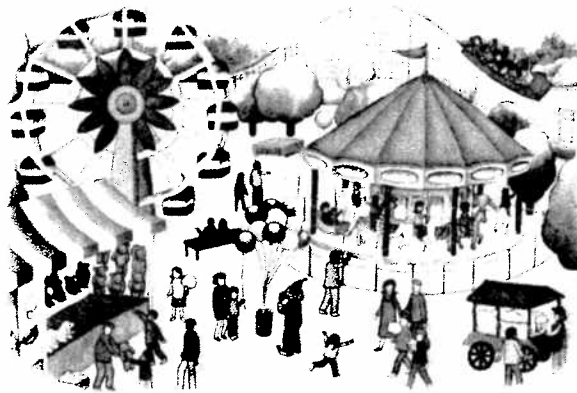
have helped ensure that the community comes together throughout the year, just like a small hometown would.

By creating and repeating great events, we build community traditions year by year. It takes a tremendous amount of effort to put on an event for the first time, but if it's done well, it will take a lot less work to produce and promote it the following year.

South Riding has many events throughout the year, but Celebrate South Riding is the community's premier event. It started out as a three-hour marketing event for the developer and turned into an annual two-day affair. Held the first weekend in June, Celebrate South Riding has grown from an event that included a few hundred people and cost a few

A full calendar

South Riding Proprietary in South Riding, Va., has a full events calendar every year. It starts with a spring egg hunt and continues with a last-day-of-school pool party; breezes through summer with Fourth of July fireworks, summer concerts, movie series and a triathlon; winds down with Oktoberfest and a Halloween parade and finishes off the year with a winter fest. That doesn't include a community shredding, recycling and cleanup effort around Earth Day; a community-wide yard sale; a neighborhood safety seminar and a volunteer appreciation reception.



thousand dollars to an event with thousands of people that costs more than \$150,000. It feels like one big community block party, and it includes rides, food, music and comedy acts, fireworks and entertainment for as many tastes and age groups as possible. With a daily admission fee and commercial sponsors, the event breaks even.

It's not all fun and games though. South Riding's staff has to work diligently to assure they have filed for the proper permits, complied with state and county regulations, minimized liability issues and obtained proper insurance coverage. Though the events used to be organized by one part-time, passionate individual working from her home, at this point, only a full-time staff can handle the volume and magnitude of the activities in the community. Even with a staff, the association needs an army of volunteers to help defray costs and ease the burden on everyone else.

The economy might throw some wrenches in our plans, and Mother Nature can always create challenges and stress, but community events are important to residents. If creating smiles and producing memories aren't enough, events help maintain property values while adding to the quality of life and the general satisfaction of homeowners. **CM**

Heidi Carlstadt is events director at South Riding Proprietary in South Riding, Va.

STRICTLY LEGAL

By Beth Mulcahy, ESQ.
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CONSTRUCTION VIOLATES COVENANTS, GUIDELINES

El Dorado Heights Homeowners' Association v. Dewitt, 344 Mont. 77 (2008) El Dorado Heights Homeowners' Association filed a complaint requesting construction on a lot be stopped because the plans violated covenants and architectural guidelines. The property owner agreed to remove construction within 90 days. About two months after the agreement, the owner asserted that the construction did not violate the covenants, and argued that the covenants were "void for vagueness, arbitrarily enforced, and a violation of the state's public policy..." The court ordered removal of the construction, imposed a fine and awarded the association attorney's fees. The owner appealed. The Supreme Court of Montana found in favor of the association.

CC&RS CAN CONTINUE IN PERPETUITY

Supkis v. Madison Place Homeowners' Association, Inc., 2008 WL 2465788 Tex. App. Madison Place Homeowners' Association filed suit against Supkis to recover delinquent assessments, interest, fees and costs associated with a lien on Supkis' property. Supkis filed for summary judgment. The association's CC&Rs are binding and automatically extend for successive periods of 10 years. Supkis argued that the automatic extension of the lien was invalid, as it could reasonably continue in perpetuity. The trial court denied Supkis' motions. The appellate court dismissed Supkis' argument and enforced the declaration.

Beth Mulcahy is founding attorney and partner and Kristen L. Rosenbeck is an attorney at Mulcahy Law Firm, P.C., in Phoenix. The full text of these cases is available through Lexis, at www.lexis.com.