

The House Special



Volume 31 Issue 4

Skyline House

April 2011



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

31st Annual Meeting and Election of the Board of Directors

Presiding, Norman Baker

The 31st Annual Meeting of the Skyline House Unit Owner's Association was held on March 22, 2011. The election for two three-year seats on the Board of Directors was conducted in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

I would like to thank the three candidates for their willingness to serve. Upon conclusion of the election process, **Inspector General Jack Prather announced that current Board members Maria Elena Schacknies and Charles Roberts had been re-elected.**

Shortly after the election results were announced, and the Annual Meeting was adjourned, the new Board met and elected the following Officers: Maria Elena Schacknies was elected President, Robert De Mayo, was elected Vice-President, Charles Roberts, was re-elected Treasurer, and Barbara Thode, was re-elected Secretary. The three remaining members, Jean Orben, Al Lambert and I will serve as Directors.

As an interesting aside, once she was elected, I noted that President Schacknies is the first woman President of the Board in the Association's 31 year history.

I congratulate President Schacknies and Vice-President De Mayo and I look forward to working with them and supporting them as best I am able to in the coming year.

Finally, I would like to say that as President of the Board for the past five years of my eight year tenure on the Board, I have enjoyed serving the Association and its members and working with my fellow Board members and our incredibly skilled and professional Management team and their staff to try to insure Skyline House has remained a wonderful place in which to live and invest. I look forward to continuing that effort and those relationships as a Board Director for the final two years of my term.

The directory on the calendar page in this issue reflects the new Board line-up and also new email addresses for each of the Board members. Please be sure to note them for future use.

As President of your Association, I presided over the Annual Meeting. My report (along with those of the Treasurer and Committee Chairs) presented to the attendees at the meeting follows:

President's Report Presented At The March 22nd 31st Annual Meeting

Welcome to the 31st Annual Meeting of the Skyline House Unit Owner's Association. My name is Norman Baker. I am the current President of the Board of Directors. Almost the entire purpose of my report this evening is to say thank you. I will begin by thanking all of you for attending tonight. Thanks also to everyone who cast their vote in tonight's election and to all who voted early.

As you know, the election is for two three-year seats on our Board of Directors. The terms of current Board Vice-President Maria Elena Schacknies and current Board Treasurer Charley Roberts are ending. The Association is fortunate both are dedicated enough to have decided to run again in this election. We are also fortunate a third owner, Mr. Ahmad Wali Shairzay volunteered to be a candidate this year. I, my fellow Board members, and the Association thank each of you for your volunteer spirit and your willingness to serve and wish you Good Luck this evening.

I and the Board also thank Covenants Comm. Chair Joe Livingston, and all the volunteers, especially Sonya Livingston, who assisted in the many tasks essential to insuring a successful election.

Thank you also to Jack Prather for serving as Inspector General of the election and, again, to Sonya Livingston, for serving as Proxy Representative.

I am pleased to report the overall state of our Condominium and our Association remains excellent and our financial status is sound, even in light of the current economy. Our Treasurer Charley Roberts will provide details on our financial status shortly.

In the other various reports to be presented this evening, you will hear of many of the accomplishments in our community over the past 12 months and of some of those to be addressed and/or completed this year. The list is quite impressive, not the least of which is the recently begun phase 3 of the multi-million \$ Balcony Restoration and Railing Replacement Project on the North side of the East building.

I must mention that many people assist in bringing the many accomplishments to fruition and to otherwise making life in Skyline House so enjoyable for all of us. First, the Board and Management would not be able to do all that is required of them without the assistance of four key committees and their few (and I emphasize **FEW**) members: the Financial Management Committee, chaired by Winny Joshua; the Physical Plant and Operations Committee, chaired by Al Lambert; the Security, Safety, & Neighborhood Watch Committee, chaired by Bob De Mayo; and, as I previously mentioned, the Covenants Committee, chaired by Joe Livingston.

Beyond those, there are other various groups and individuals who also contribute significantly to our quality of life in Skyline House:

There is the group of individuals who are always there for us when we are in need -- The Good Neighbors -- Coordinated by Toska Prather and Virginia Fissmer.

There is the group of volunteers, coordinated by Carol Cataldo, who insure our in-house library is open and operating almost every Monday evening of the year.

There is the group of volunteers coordinated by Howard Haymes who make up our small but blossoming garden club.

I would also like to mention that PPOC Chair Al Lambert has assumed the duties of former resident Joyce Routt as our web site developer.

Again, thank you to all the volunteers who help so much to make Skyline House a great place to live.

The actual work of keeping Skyline House an attractive and desirable place to live continues to be well accomplished by 20+ full time staff members ably led by our General Manager, Gusbey Silva, and her Deputy, Tycia Haight. Their staff include:

the engineering, maintenance and paint teams led by Chief Engineer Greg Grimm and his assistant, Tettie Moore;

the housekeeping staff supervised by Betty McLaurin and her assistant Gerardo Carranza;

the office staff, Alice Rodrigues and Noemi Najera;

and, finally, the dedicated front desk staff who, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, serve on the front lines of Skyline House and look out for all of us in so many different ways.

I know everyone shares my strong feelings of appreciation for the excellent services Management and staff provide to our community and our home year round on a daily basis.

Finally, I want to express appreciation to my fellow Board members: Vice-President Maria Elena Schacknies Treasurer, Charley Roberts, Secretary, Barbara Thode and Directors Jean Orben, Al Lambert, and Bob De Mayo. It has been an honor and a pleasure serving with you this past year.

Again this year, I feel confident in asserting to all owners, your condominium is financially sound, well-governed and well managed and will continue to be served conscientiously and responsibly by Management, staff, and the Board and its committees.

I would like to mention what I, and others, view as an ongoing, and growing, crisis of frightening magnitude in our community. That is the lack of owner involvement on our Committees. We are, in some cases, so short-handed, that the committees are having difficulty achieving the quorum necessary to conduct business. These are the committees YOU expect to enforce YOUR rules and regulations, insure YOUR safety and that of YOUR family, to insure the maintenance and upkeep of YOUR home and its supporting physical plant and to insure that YOUR condo fee is spent as effectively as possible and is responsibly safeguarded for future needs. I remind each and every person in attendance this evening or those who read this report when it is published in the April newsletter -- THERE IS NO EXCUSE which even slightly justifies YOU not getting involved in the business and governance of YOUR community. YOU chose to buy a condominium and to enjoy the many benefits and amenities condo life provides and YOUR investment in it, and YOUR enjoyment of it, necessitates YOUR involvement to insure its proper functioning and its continued high quality. Don't say "I'm too busy." Many of YOUR volunteers have extended families and/or work full time. Don't say "I'm too old." One of YOUR committees is comprised mostly of octogenarian members. Don't say "I already served." Most of YOUR volunteers have served for a decade or more or have served previously and are now serving again. Don't say "I just don't care." Especially if YOU use that excuse, then YOU should never, ever feel YOU have even the slightest right to lodge a complaint about YOUR condo fee, YOUR comfort or safety level, the quality of YOUR condo life or the value of YOUR investment. I repeat - YOU bought a share of a condominium which, by its very nature, requires YOUR involvement in its operations and governance. There is no good excuse for YOU to be totally uninvolved in YOUR self-managed, self-governed community while others carry YOUR share of the load. It is YOUR duty as a condominium owner to routinely attend meetings of YOUR committees and, even better, to join one or more of YOUR committees.

IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GET INVOLVED. NO EXCUSES!

Summary of Treasurer's Report Presented At March 22nd Annual Meeting

For those who own units in this property, the Skyline House Unit Owner's Association is the lowest level of governance with legal authority to affect our personal finances. As such, the financial performance of the Association is of great interest to each Unit Owner. I present here a summary of the report I presented to Unit Owners who attended the March 22nd Annual Meeting. (The complete Treasurer's report is available for Unit Owner review in the Management Office.)

The firm of Goldklang Group CPAs, P.C. performed the 2010 audit of Association's financial records and provided a favorable opinion. Total Income was \$3,880,962, up 5.05% from 2009. Expenses less contributions to Reserves: \$2,645,339, up 3.59%. Net loss: \$44,773, a decrease of 59.32% from the 2009 result. Unappropriated Members' Equity ("Working Capital Fund"): \$25,106, a reduction of 64.05%. Excess Operating Funds are an indicator used by the auditor to assess current financial position and are comprised of the Working Capital Fund, the Periodic Maintenance Fund, and the Consultant Fund for consulting engineering services. At year's end the combined account stood at \$367,254, a decrease of 5.68% from the previous year but still satisfactory. Total Designated Reserve Funds: \$1,738,749, up 3.55%. Contributions to Reserves: \$1,289,356, up 3.00%.

These figures reflect subtraction from the Working Capital Fund to offset the Net Income loss.

Factors contributing significantly to the net operating loss were variances from budget projections in water and sewer, legal, income tax and bad debt items.

At its October 27, 2010 Regular Meeting the Board of Directors approved a budget for 2011 of \$3,924,223. Income from condominium fees of \$3,628,783, a 3.14% increase, is projected to provide 92.5% of required income. Principal sources of the remaining 7.5% of projected income are In-Unit Maintenance, interest from securities, rental of Association-owned storage and parking facilities, rental of space for a satellite radio antenna station, and rental of an Association-owned apartment. Planned expenditures for 2011 track closely with those in previous budget years for all major categories, with increases budgeted in water and sewer, legal, and income tax line items.

Since its first professional reserve study in 1997, the Association has engaged in disciplined evaluation of long-term maintenance requirements. Virtually every major piece of machinery in Skyline House has been replaced or thoroughly overhauled in the intervening years. The next reserve survey is due to be conducted in 2013. Each year the Association evaluates the condition of the items in the reserve schedule to determine whether they are likely to achieve their planned service life up to the next scheduled major repair, overhaul or replacement. The Physical Plant and Operations Committee assesses operations and reserve items that need to be addressed in the budget. The Financial Management Committee examines and revises the draft budget and proposes it to the Board of Directors for approval and execution. Unit Owners are strongly encouraged to share in these efforts through participation in one or both of these committees.

The Association concluded 2010 with, once again, a delinquency rate of less than two percent of condominium fees due, an excellent result compared to an average in comparable communities of around five percent. The Association takes all available measures to collect all monies due. At the end of December 2010, the property was 77% owner-occupied and 23% renter-occupied. The number of renter-occupied units – 130 – has remained fairly constant throughout the year.



MANAGEMENT

General Manager, Gusbey Silva

Balcony Concrete Repairs and Rail Replacement Project

During the first week of March the contractor completed the installation of a rig above the upper balconies for each North Side tier of the East Building. On March 7th the contractor began removing existing railings in those while recording a preconstruction video of each balcony. Update notices were delivered under the door of each unit in those tiers. Notices with specific instructions and information were also delivered to those units with tiled balconies in those tiers.

The concrete repairs performed to the 12” outside perimeter of these balconies started on March 11th with concrete demolition. The West Party Room was made available during this time to all East Building residents seeking solace from the very loud noise generated by the concrete demolition. The sandblasting of all exposed rebars, after the demolition was completed, began on Friday, March 18th. Currently, the contractor is performing installation of new concrete with an estimated completion date for this task during the week of April 4th. After the concrete repairs on all balcony floors are fully completed, the contractor will proceed with any needed concrete repairs to walls and columns. That task will be followed by the seal coating of walls and ceilings in all balconies and patios which is estimated to be completed at the end of April.

Unit owners with tiled balconies are responsible to provide replacement tile and appropriate colored grout for the area where tile was removed. The contractor is responsible to install the new replacement tile only in the area where the original tile was removed. If your balcony is tiled, please procure the necessary materials for these repairs by not later than April 30th.

Unit Windows and Balcony Door Replacement Project

All new windows and doors ordered by unit owners were delivered by the manufacturer during the middle of March and the contractor began the installation during the third week of March. The estimated date for completion of this project is mid-May, except for the replacement of the windows/balcony doors in 18 of the units located on the North Side of the East Building which will be performed during the summer months, after the balcony project is completed on that side.

Children Returning Home From School Must Be Met By A Parent

It has been brought to Management’s attention that some parents are not coming to the front lobby to receive their child (children) from the Fairfax County School bus as they return home from school each afternoon. Please insure that your child is received by you from the school bus in front of the main lobby. Your presence as your child returns home will prevent what has occurred – children playing unattended on the lobby furniture and running noisily in the first floor corridors. It is a parent’s responsibility to supervise their children when in common areas.



INFO FROM THE ENGINEER

Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm

Air Conditioning Season

Cooling season is almost here. If you haven't scheduled a preventative maintenance servicing of your air conditioning unit, please do so in the Management Office to ensure your unit operates at peak performance during the coming cooling season. This small expense on your part will keep your unit running at its best. Remember to check and change the filter in your unit as needed.

Unit Door Closer Mechanisms

Again, we have noticed that there are several units that do not have closer mechanisms on the entry door. Either the door closer mechanism was removed by a resident before you, or you had it removed. The National Fire Code requires that your unit door shut and latch automatically when you exit the unit without it having to be pulled closed. If your unit door does not have an automatic door closer mechanism attached, it should be re-installed. To have this done, call the Management Office, or your contractor.

HELP! I'VE FALLEN AND I CAN'T GET UP!

Falling in your apartment can be a very frightening experience, especially if you cannot get up without assistance. We would like to provide important information so you will know what to do in the event this happens to you or a visitor.

- **ALWAYS CALL 911 FIRST** – 911 Emergency Medical Technicians have the medical training and knowledge to assist in a “rescue operation” such as a fall. Regardless of whether a fall seems serious or not, proper care is essential to the safety of an individual who has fallen and cannot stand on their own.
- **AFTER CALLING 911, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, CALL THE FRONT DESK** – If at all possible, after calling 911, you should then call the front desk to inform them you have called 911 and Emergency Personnel are on the way and, if your front door is locked (as it should be), to also inform them your door is locked and you are unable to unlock it. The front desk staff can then alert an engineer who can retrieve the emergency access key to your unit and assist Emergency Medical Technicians to enter your unit. (To insure you can be reached without damage to your door even when it is unlocked, consider utilizing the safety chain only when an unfamiliar visitor comes to your door.)
- **DO NOT EXPECT SKYLINE HOUSE EMPLOYEES OR CONTRACT SECURITY GUARDS TO PHYSICALLY ASSIST AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS FALLEN** – There are two reasons why Skyline House employees and contract security guards are **NOT ALLOWED** to assist individuals who have fallen to get back on their feet: (1) our concern for the safety of the individual and (2) legal liability. Our first concern is for the well-being of the individual; it is imperative that only professionals with medical expertise assist individuals in such circumstances on Association premises. Emergency Medical Technicians are trained to assess the situation and render appropriate aid. Second, Association employees and contract guards attempting to provide physical assistance to those in need, no matter how well intended their efforts to render aid might be, could create real and significant liability exposure for themselves and the Association.

If you are prone to falls, medical issues or other emergencies, it might be a good idea to look into the possibility of investing in a medical alert service. We care about our residents and visitors and want the best for them, including being assisted by properly trained professionals whenever an emergency occurs.



COVENANTS

Chair, Joseph Livingston

Chair's Report Presented At The March 22nd Annual Meeting

The Covenants Committee meets regularly every other month except in August. Last year, with one exception, all meetings were held as scheduled.

Because of illness, for part of the year, we had only a quorum plus one. While technically we had a sufficient number to conduct business, we believe it not reflective of the association's membership, since the end product of our work is usually a recommendation to the Board. We feel that a greater participation by more unit owners would be more helpful.

The most recent issue of the House Special noted two changes to the Association's rules and regulations. One was recommended by the Association's attorney (Rule 1) and the other by the Association's General Manager (Rule 13C). After due consideration, the Committee recommended and the Board approved both. These are examples of some of our work.

On a regular basis, the Committee receives information of reported infractions of association rules and regulations and where warranted, referrals are made for a hearing in the matter

We conducted a number of hearings during the past year. Most recently, one hearing was conducted last month, and one last week. Findings are made and corrective action is taken, and where appropriate, assessments are imposed. Action taken by the hearing panel may be appealed to the Board of Directors

Another responsibility of the Committee is the oversight of the Election Committee. At the annual meeting of the Association, the Election Committee conducts the election for members for the Board and follows up with a complete report to the Covenants Committee with recommendations for changes or improvements. Last year, the election was error-free and the results were provided to the membership in record time.

Looking back, I am sure that there were things we could have done better. To the Committee's volunteers, you have my sincere thanks for your work and my apologies for making so many requests of you. Looking forward, we hope Mrs. McKelvey and Mrs. Wiener will be able to join us soon. We have missed you.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board and Management for the support you have given to the Covenants and the Election Committees and me during the past year. Good luck to the new Board members. The next Covenants Committee meeting will be Monday, May 18, 2011.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Friends of George Mason Regional Library USED BOOK SALE

One huge sale in five areas of the library.

Rare and unusual books, children's books, fiction and non-fiction books, audio books, foreign language books, recorded music, videos, DVDs and much, much more.

Thursday, April 14, 5 pm to 9 pm

Friday, April 15, 10 am to 6 pm

Saturday April 16, 10 am to 5 pm

Sunday, April 17, noon to 5 pm

George Mason Regional Library 7001 Little River Turnpike Annandale, Virginia 22003

APRIL GOOD NEIGHBORS

Good Neighbors assist residents in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency. Services provided are typically short term and in the local area. For example, picking up mail or prescriptions or making small grocery purchases.

Anyone experiencing a medical emergency should call 911 immediately.

NORMA ANDERSON 703-931-0850

FRAN STAMM 703-998-8221

Good Neighbors welcomes new members to assist those in need. If you are interested in serving your neighbors, call Coordinator Toska Prather or Virginia Fissmer. Their contact information is listed in the newsletter directory.



PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS

Chair, Al Lambert

Chair's Report Presented At The March 22nd Annual Meeting

Should I roll the dice? Most of us have asked ourselves that question sometime in our life. Usually it is because we are facing an important decision or crossroad on an issue and time is of the essence. We have to choose a course of action! We have collected information, sought guidance from others and yet there is still uncertainty. Hazards and unknown outcomes are involved affecting either positively or negatively our lives. These crossroads tend to be a big deal with risk for potential reward or a major disaster in the future. Otherwise, we would not be spending a lot of time on making a decision. Sometimes in these moments of decision making we are asked by others or ask ourselves the following: Should I go out on a limb? Should I put all my eggs in one basket? Am I skating on thin ice? Am I playing with fire? In the end if things turn out well, we can boast in retrospect that we totally anticipated a positive outcome. However the downside could be anything from a personal loss of economic security to degradation of our health and lifestyle. Also, choosing the wrong course of action when things do not work out means exposing oneself to criticism. On most major life decisions, we give a lot of forethought before taking a gamble. Should I retire early? What are the benefits and downsides? For example, I can live comfortably, take vacations and participate in hobbies while still relatively young in age. On the other hand, I could out live my money. Sometimes we roll the dice routinely in our lives when we consciously increase our car speed when driving to run a yellow traffic light. We quickly do an assessment for signs of a Police Car, traffic camera, and oncoming vehicles. If signs are positive we may either speed up or simply continue through the changing yellow light going to red. But even taking this alleged low risk assessment has danger, because it is not always one hundred percent correct. Haven't we all saw intersections where accidents have occurred and possibly fatalities with ambulances on-site? More than likely one or more of the drivers did an assessment and took a risk.

How does this apply tonight and more specifically to the PPOC? The PPOC once consisted of twenty to twenty-five members dedicating about ninety minutes one evening a month to maintaining our Home. Today, we are enjoying the benefits of a much smaller but active group of volunteers. They oversee the operation and maintenance of the infra-structure, improvements to the interior of the buildings, and the landscaping. For example, in the past year, the committee has been intensely monitoring the balcony repair project on the north end of the West Building, upgrade of the employees work areas, replacement of the internal telephone system, creation of motorcycle parking spaces, asphalt resurfacing of the East and West Buildings and the creation of a Garden Club to name a few activities.

In addition, the committee members are following in the footsteps of their predecessors by identifying cost cutting measures in the category of conservation with the introduction of new technology or equipment. It was our predecessors, who kept abreast of technology and amenities by the purchase of a fax machine, introducing electronic payment of the condo fee, in-house maintenance services, and the ability to offer for purchase major end items such as hot water heaters and heat pumps. The creation of a website sprung from residents and committee members. Today, the PPOC is again addressing the rising costs of utilities, improving existing amenities such as the Physical Fitness Center and possibly accommodating electric cars to meet future Owner expectations. These initiatives increase the monetary value of individual units and help define our image and reputation while targeting a select class of future owners. Our goals for this year are to bring to fruition an energy audit of the Association identifying long-range monetary savings in the heating and cooling of common areas. Options are being explored to reduce our Association water consumption costs by investigating the feasibility of installing individual water meters within each Unit. Throughout the year as replacement of major components become a reality the committee seeks to extend the useful service life of an item or recommend the purchase of a replacement that provides a longer service life and lower life cycle maintenance costs. As we seek to lower infrastructure costs, we are simultaneously attempting to enhance our housing market image as a premier investment for future Home Owners. This is accomplished by offering value with our large square footage units, modern amenities, a strong Reserve Fund, and a moderate condo fee.

Unfortunately, the PPOC membership has grown smaller as the exodus of old members has exceeded new volunteer committee members. What does this mean for the future? Without Resident participation it means there will be no Owners overseeing the amenities or infrastructure maintenance and repairs in the future. Who will perform these tasks if the PPOC can no longer function? The Board? The Board is basically a reactive entity. Our form of governance is generated from the Committee level. The Board depends on Management, Residents and the Committees to identify issues and propose a course of action on procurement or repairs and assess the quality of operations and maintenance. Do you expect Management to fulfill the responsibilities of the Committee if the PPOC goes away? Our Management team has the responsibility to supervise all employees on the property, run a payroll, keep records of correspondence, and account for all funds that are spent to include creation and oversight of a Budget. Moreover, the General Manager has to be highly skilled in General Contractor duties for the creation of a Request for Proposal and provide oversight on repairs and maintenance services. As important as these tasks are, Management lacks the insight and experience with Resident daily living in the Association. Regardless of good intentions and strong work ethic Management cannot provide the insight nor live with the results of projects. There is no substitute for Owner input on the desirability of project outcomes and the focus on attention to details provided by Committee members. Owners live here 24/7, 365 days per year and thus observe, cope, and are affected by the benefits and shortfalls of all projects. This is in contrast to an apartment building where Management represents a corporation and there is no obligation to participate in Committees. In apartment living there is no requirement to participate in self-governance and all decisions are made for you. In this situation, one has no financial investment and only has to worry about paying the monthly rent. Yet without Owner participation in Association governance, the apartment analogy of ambiguous Management initiating repairs and replacement of major components is not farfetched.

Hence, it does seem that we are at a crossroad where each Owner is going to have to make a decision on participation in a committee. Each Owner is going to have to choose a course of action. Do I take a risk and hope the roles and responsibilities of the PPOC and other Committees will be addressed in the future by someone or somehow? The benefit is if things work out, I win because my Home and financial investment are secure. I can continue the comfort of non-participation in governance. However, the downside is lack of oversight on

replacement of major components affecting monetary expenditures and significantly less input on proposing real or cosmetic building changes. No Owner forum to voice new ideas, dissent, and no methodology to initiate new ideas or projects such as the Garden Club.

All of us can solicit input from family and friends on a course of action regarding participation in governance. On matters truly essential to our well being there is neither debate nor a need to consult with others on choosing a course of action. We make time for what is important and dismiss any notion of risk by vowing to do whatever it takes to succeed.

At some point in the future every Owner will know if the PPOC and other Committees are still in existence or whether they are a distant memory. Should I roll the dice? Thank you!

The next meeting of the PPOC is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 14, 2011.



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chair, Wynfred Joshua

Chair's Report Presented At The March 22nd Annual Meeting

Members of our Skyline House Community it is my pleasure to present to you the annual report of the Financial Management Committee (FMC). It is a pleasure not only because it reflects the efforts of a fine and dedicated group of people, but also because it shows progress in the financial running of our condo. True, we still had a deficit this past year, but it was much less than the year before and part of the deficit was the result of the economic crisis we are experiencing: some \$15,000 of the \$44,000 deficit represents a write off of bad debt which is condo fees we have not been able to collect. On an almost \$4 million operation this is not bad, particularly if we compare this with other condominiums.

The key culprits in the deficit remain, like last year, our water and electricity accounts and the legal fees. We are still not able to contain our water usage. To cover our expected utility bills we increased these accounts for 2011 with \$45,000 which represents more than 1% of the 3% 2011 increase in the condo fee. We also significantly increased the legal fees account because in our litigious society the Board and Management are requiring greater amounts of legal advice as they conduct the Association's and deal with issues as they arise.

Let me turn to the positive side of our financial picture. Many of our accounts showed that the outlays were as expected or below the allotted budget share. And in some we even made money. When we cashed in some of our bonds this past year, we had a gain of more than \$24,500. But most important was the fact that when major planned projects and the more mundane operational activities required it, the funds were there. This is the result of careful planning over the years and annual updating of requirements in line with our five year study that lists the major replacements and expected repairs. This, along with the selection of the contractors to carry out the projects, is what takes up most of our Committee's time.

Most prominently, this past year we completed the second phase of the balcony remediation, a multi-million dollar project. Also in 2010, we evaluated the financial aspects of a number of less spectacular projects. Thus we recommended to the Board to replace our obsolete telephone and intercom system, to resurface the parking lots of the two buildings, the painting of the doors and walls of the first floor corridors, the contract for trash removal and recycling services, and the upgrading of our in-house security surveillance.

There were two projects which cost very little, but which triggered wide support. One, thanks to the initiative of the PPOC, was improvement of Skyline House staff facilities. Much of that was done by in-house staff but we supported it whole-heartedly and made clear that funds would be available. The second, initiated and advocated by FMC members with the steadfast endorsement

of our Treasurer, Charlie Roberts, was the organization of a 2010 holiday party. Our thanks to the Krumwiedes and their team for bringing back this annual ritual we enjoy so much.

This year we are looking forward to working on some key projects. We expect to complete the third phase of the balcony repairs and railing replacement project on the north side of the East building. Let me mention another very prominent new plan: the installation of replacement panels under balcony windows and on the façade. This multi-year project is scheduled to start in 2011 and reflects the recommendation of the five-year reserve study. Closely related to this project is the ongoing window frame and terrace door replacement project which will be optional and at owner expense. At this point almost 100 owners signed up for this project. We believe we can look forward to a continuously well maintained building.

All this would not be possible without the dedicated efforts of our General Manager, Gusbey Silva and her able Deputy, Tycia Haight, our Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm, and all our other staff members. Our thanks go to all of you for all your efforts. The FMC is most grateful for the steadfast backing of our Treasurer Charlie Roberts. It was a pleasure to work with you. Above all, thanks are due to the individual FMC members who loyally meet every month to review our financial activities and plans: June Baker, Tremayne Bunaugh, Inge Chilman, Alina Gonzalez, Grace and Wayne Krumwiede, Gladys Manrique, and Liza Ruiz. And to the members of our Skyline House community who have not joined the FMC or another committee, I would urge you to come to our meetings and help us support a continued well run condominium. The next meeting of the FMC is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 25, 2011.



SECURITY, SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Chair, Robert J. "Bob" De Mayo

Chair's Report Presented At The March 22nd Annual Meeting

Fellow resident owners, Board members, Security, Safety and Neighborhood Watch Committee (SS&NWC) members and all Neighborhood Watch volunteers!

Over the past year, your Security, Safety & Neighborhood Watch Committee has been very engaged in maintaining the highest-standards for the physical safety of both you and your resident family members, as well as assuring all is done that can be done to provide the best security for you, your family, and our Skyline home.

In our opinion, the overall security of Skyline House is fairly provided for, in-place, and well-executed. Could it be better for our 550 units and over 2000 inhabitants? Of course, it could always be improved upon. But on those three points (provided for, in-place, and well executed) over this past year, let me explain further.

Our "***first line***" of security, our Security Officers, despite periodic turnover (which, by the way, is well-managed by our Deputy General Manager Tycia Haight), have done a very credible job of: (1) patrolling all of our grounds and all of our two buildings, at least once per shift during weekdays and twice on weekends; (2) providing reliable, written reports – some in minute detail – on the occasional incident, especially if the police are called to respond; and, (3) going the extra mile (for example: personally helping some residents load up packages at the front desk and controlling the horde of school children arriving home on school buses each weekday who then charge into the Front Lobby, unsupervised, to use the furniture as trampolines!). At each of our SS&NWC meetings, we receive an update on the month-long activities of our guards from the Deputy Manager, and I periodically read each incident report. Bottom-line, they are doing a very good job and our committee is satisfied with their performance.

Our *second line of security*, our security cameras and, of note, the secure doors activated by our computer-tracked “key fobs” are providing us with very good security. The fobs, by the way, are a *vast* improvement over our previous metal keys. At each of our SS&NWC meetings, we review a complete record – well-kept by Front Desk and Management Office staff – of those residents who must approach the front desk for admittance due to forgetting their fob, losing a key fob, or not having been issued one in the first place for a variety of reasons (e.g., a minor child who keeps losing the fob and the parents will not give him or her another; a tenant not being issued enough for his/her family members by the owner due to restrictions or rules). We continue to assess the monthly key fob log and press for reasons why people do not produce one for entry.

The computer-tracked key fobs have allowed Management to track entry to controlled spaces such as bike rooms and storage areas. Such computer-controlled tracking of our numbered fobs – specifically issued to each unit – have successfully enabled Management and Fairfax Police detectives to track down vandalism suspects in some cases.

The *third line of security* is *YOU*, and you are getting much better at challenging what I’ll term “individuals without fobs attempting to gain access to our buildings” than last year, or the year before that. I’ve had many residents proudly relate incidents about how they challenged persons attempting to “scoot in the closing doors behind them” or challenged individuals hanging around our entrances before they activated their own fob. To those folks, I say “**Thank You**” for taking the personal responsibility of making Skyline House a safer place for your family and my family and giving us a “no nonsense” reputation here at Skyline House for tough security! To those of you who don’t challenge individuals without a key fob, I urge you to join your neighbors, literally – in challenging “strangers without a key fob.” Remember, a “challenge” can be done very politely, but also quite firmly.

The committee has had no major “Safety” issues reported this year. The Maintenance Log at the Front Desk is available to any resident to register a perceived maintenance item and Noemi Najera in the Management Office has been dutifully registering resident email and telephone reports on maintenance issues. Both are followed up on quite well by Management and staff. By the way, our patrolling Security Officers also contribute measurably to the Maintenance reports.

Moving on to “garage” safety issues, we continue to deal with several reports each month on: First, speeders in the garage who have been observed and/or reported to the Management Office. (let’s be clear ---these are “*egregious speeders*”, not someone going 6, 7, or 10 miles per hour, but cars zipping up the parking ramps, squealing tires on turns, and posing clear threats to pedestrian safety) and second, people driving “*without headlights turned on*” in the garage which continues to baffle me. It should be axiomatic and automatic to always turn one’s headlights on inside a garage but especially at night!! Both are clear violations of our rules.

Violations of these two basic rules - speeding and no headlights in the garage - I trust you will agree, underscore a lack of mutual courtesy and a blatant disregard for safety by some drivers in our garage. I call upon *everyone* to report any such violators observed to me or to the Management Office; such watchfulness on everyone's part could preclude our worst nightmare – that of a pedestrian or child from being hit by an unseen auto speeding inside the garage.

Violators who are reported are registered by the Management Office into our violations record. Currently, we’re like California with felons – third strike you are called before a Covenants Panel for a hearing and adjudication.

On our Committee, I am pleased to report we have added new members bringing our total to five but we still need more members. Why? We need fresh ideas and we need more attention to a very wide range of security and safety issues; simply stated, we are spread very thin and need your help. It doesn’t take much more than volunteer spirit and an hour or two each month. And, if you don’t want to join the Committee, I urge you to at least participate in our Committee meetings – we want to hear your opinions, even if you don’t agree with us!!

Lastly, our very merry band of Neighborhood Watch volunteers is slowly growing. What – you may ask - is the bottom-line on "Neighborhood Watchers"? Who are they? What do they really accomplish? The answer to the first question “who are they?” is, they are **you** -- your neighbors, your friends, the person down-the-hall whose first name you can't recall; the friendly guy you see on the elevators; the lady in the garage three parking spots down from yours. They are **your neighbors** who, to me, are real heroes. You might know them; you probably do not. But, they take time out of their busy lives – one hour a week, maybe two – to patrol your hallways, watch out for your well-being and fill out a simple preprinted report form. Those forms, those patrols, those "eyes on your property" really add up!

In answer to the second question – What do the "watchers" really accomplish? – the answer is that they are our Skyline House **Fourth Line of Security Defense**. They are a "**deterrent to crime**"! Criminals or potential criminals, vandals, thieves, and such, want to operate without anyone seeing them or hearing them. By more and more pairs of Neighborhood Watchers casually walking our hallways and property, always at random, watching out for you and me, and always tied to the Front Desk by Walkie-Talkie or cell phone, we can hammer the incidents of vandalism here down to next to nothing and put an end to such nonsense! But, it will take your voluntary personal commitment. I urge you to join up, bring one of your like-minded neighbors along for the walk, and join us on one Skyline House patrol. It will make our condo a better place to live and enjoy!

We will have scheduled Neighborhood Watch Rallies over the next two months. Look for us in the Mail Lobbies handing out information and always willing to talk - enthusiastically - about the training and events you can attend as a Neighborhood Watcher. I give everyone I meet at the Rallies the following challenge, and I'll give it to you dear reader: *Call me anytime to join you on a Neighborhood Watch patrol and I'll be there!! I'll personally give you the guided tour!! My number is in the House Special. Call me!*

Finally, I'd like to remind everyone about our Neighborhood Watch **National Night Out (NNO)** the first week of August. The event is celebrated just one evening for several hours - **nationwide!** It is a group demonstration – hey! ...just like the 60's!! It represents two things: one, our mutual rejection of crime in our neighborhood, and, two, our solidarity with our local law enforcement. Please, join me and your Neighborhood Watchers...help shape and plan a major event here at Skyline House ...and let's make it a real blast!!

The next meeting of the SS&NWC is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 13, 2011.

BALCONY ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES

SPRING IS ALMOST HERE. EVERYONE WANTS TO ENJOY THEIR BALCONIES. PLEASE HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS DO SO BY READING AND PRACTICING THE FOLLOWING SIMPLE 'GOOD NEIGHBOR' BALCONY ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES

Is your balcony a cluttered, unsightly storage area? Rule 15G states, “Balconies shall not be used for storage.” Please be sure your balcony is not an eyesore. Clean it up. Remove empty pots, dead plants, trash containers, and other items not appropriate for a balcony.

When watering your plants remember, water running out of your pots rains down on all the balconies below. Not only does it stain and damage balconies and furniture, on occasion, it might even drench a neighbor. Please use saucers under all your plants.

Feeding birds on your balcony might seem a nice thing to do but is prohibited by House rules as it creates major problems for your neighbors and the Association. Do not feed birds and if you have a bird feeder please remove it.

MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, NO MATTER IT'S SIZE, NEVER THROW ANYTHING FROM YOUR BALCONY (especially cigarettes)

“HOUSE” HINTS

FRONT DESK BOXES

Your Front Desk Box belongs to you. It is your responsibility to routinely check it for anything which might have been left in it.

Yes the Front Desk staff will call you for certain deliveries.

But you never know when someone might leave something (a note, a card, incorrectly delivered mail, etc.) in your box for you.

You will not always be called in those cases.

Please make a habit of checking your front desk box routinely throughout the year.

RESIDENT VEHICLE REGISTRATION

Rule 18 E. 6. Of the Rules and Regulations states:

“All vehicles...parked in the garage or outside spaces on a regular basis, shall display the Skyline House registration decal issued by the Association.” **If you park inside or outside on Skyline House property, register your car with the Association and display the sticker on your vehicle window as instructed or risk having your vehicle towed at your own expense.**

DISPOSING OF OLD BATTERIES AND FLOURESCENT BULBS

Standard batteries and fluorescent light bulbs can be brought to the front desk for safe and environmentally friendly disposal/recycling.

SKYLINE HOUSE E-MAIL NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

300+ residents/owners have now signed up for e-mail delivery of The House Special newsletter. It is so easy to do! Just stop by the Management Office and register your e-mail address. It will only be used for the newsletter delivery. Don't miss any House news ever again, even while traveling. Receive your copy via email before the hard copy is even back from the printer.

DO YOU STORE A BICYCLE IN THE BIKE STORAGE ROOMS?

Our bike storage rooms in both buildings are at, or almost at, capacity. There are bikes there that have not been moved in ages. Many have flat tires. Be honest with yourself and considerate of your neighbors. If you have a bike(s) in one of the rooms and have not used it in a long time and are not likely to do so again, please remove it.

Overhead Mirrors in the Garage

Slow down and you will notice that there are overhead mirrors located on the garage ceiling at the up/down ramp. Please use these mirrors to check for pedestrians and oncoming vehicles as you approach the ramps. These mirrors are a great safety device and allow you to see areas not directly in front of you. Slow down and use the mirrors!!

Skyline House Library

If you have never visited the lending Library in the East Building Penthouse, you should do so. You will find an amazing inventory of books (mysteries, biographies, fiction and non-fiction), audio books, videos and even children's books that can be borrowed at no cost. The library, staffed by volunteer residents, is open most Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. It is certainly one of the hidden gems of Skyline House and you will be glad you discovered it. Save gas and time spent on a trip to the local public library. Save the money you plan to spend on that next book. Visit the Library. You never know what you might find and it is just an easy, inside stroll, from your unit. Many thanks to the dedicated volunteer librarians who help make the library available to us all.



SKYLINE HOUSE CALENDAR

APRIL 2011

(WWW.SHUOA.ORG)



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	5	6	7 Physical Plant & Ops. Comm. Walk Around 7:00 p.m. Meet In Front Lobby	8	9
10	11 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	12	13 Security, Safety, and Neighborhood Watch Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	14 Physical Plant & Operations Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	15	16
17	18 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Financial Mgmt. Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	26	27 BOARD MEETING 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	28	29	30
GOOD NEIGHBORS: FRAN STAMM 703-998-8221 and NORMA ANDERSON 703-931-0850						

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