



The

House Special

VOLUME XI

DECEMBER 1991

NO. 12

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

David Tilson, President

1992 BUDGET

The 1992 budget for the Association as recommended by the Financial Management Committee was approved -- with some minor changes -- by the Board of Directors at its regular meeting on November 20. The budget requires a 3.6% increase in the regular condominium fee effective January 1, 1992. The amount of the special assessment for 1992 will remain the same as it has been for the past three years. 1992 is the fourth and final year of the special assessment needed to pay for the balcony and spandrel repairs. Unit owners will receive a letter from the Treasurer advising them of the 1992 condominium fees early next month. The 1992 payment coupons and envelopes will be enclosed.

FINANCIAL MANGEMENT SYSTEM

Last spring, the Board approved a new set of financial management arrangements that involved support from an accounting firm that handles accounts receivable (primarily the condominium fees and special assessments), keeps the books, and provides monthly financial reports. Payroll is handled by ADP, Inc. under a separate contract. Accounts payable and disbursements are done by our own management office. Data from the management office and ADP are forwarded to the accounting firm each month which then enters

them into their computerized record system from which the monthly reports are produced. The contract with the accounting firm was set up on a trial basis for six months. It expires on December 31, 1991 unless renewed. All of the arrangements were set up with the assistance of our auditors who reviewed the procedures, approved the chart of accounts, and helped specify the format of the reports to be prepared each month. The arrangements have been working reasonably well except for one thing: the monthly statements from the accounting firm have been unsatisfactory. They have been late, in summary form, and not in the agreed format that was designed to enable the Treasurer and the Board to analyze the statements and carefully track our actual experience against the budget. At the November 20 Board meeting, the Board was informed that the General Manager has acquired a software package designed for large condominiums that will enable us to do all of our financial management in house without an increase in our staff. He and Nancy Reed, our new Deputy General Manager, who is computer-literate and started working at Skyline House on November 12, are now in process of installing this program, entering all of the necessary data, and setting up the necessary reporting capabilities so that they can commence doing the entire job (except for payroll, which will continue to be done by ADP) starting January 1. The new software was approved by our auditors before it was purchased, and the new procedures are being developed with their assistance. Additional expert consultative assistance in installing and programming the new software also is being obtained. The Board

(Continued on Page 3)



The

House Special

Editor: Law Henderson

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Business Office
(703) 578-4855

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: THE HOUSE SPECIAL welcomes brief comments from its readers. Please limit your letters to 250 words and include your name and unit number. The Association Board reserves the right to refuse incorrect or improper statements.

ADVERTISING: A rate card, showing the costs and sizes, is available from the Business Office. If there are services and/or tradespeople with whom you have dealt, let the Business Office, 578-4855, know so that we may pursue them as advertisers. The appearance of advertisements in THE HOUSE SPECIAL does not constitute endorsement by the Association.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Rule prohibiting moves on Sunday and limiting hours on Saturday is idiotic. It is what causes overbooked elevators, and it inconveniences dozens of residents yearly. The cost of hiring a moving crew on a weekday, as opposed to getting help from friends on a weekend because elevators or trucks are unavailable then, can run over \$500.

The pretext for the rule was a far-fetched fear that violations of the county's blue laws might subject the condo to liability. Not only have the blue laws been held unconstitutional, but there is no nexus between the day of the week and the risk of accident. It is silly to enforce dead-letter laws to the detriment of the residents.

If I were moving and an officious manager tried to turn off my elevator promptly at 8:00 after another mover had hogged it all day, I would throw the bastard down the shaft, head first. Each mover should get priority for a reasonable block of time, say 4-6 hours, and the evening deadline should be flexible.

Bertrand C Barrois
Unit 512 E

* * * * *

Again this year, rather than send individual Holiday Greetings, we have chosen instead to send a donation to the Salvation Army in honor of our friends here at Skyline House. We wish all of our neighbors and the entire Skyline staff a joyous Holiday Season and a happy and healthy 1992!

Gordon and Mimi Frank,
Unit 1111W
Sally Frank,
Unit 304E

DEADLINE

In order to assure the timely publication of the *House Special*, submissions for the next edition must be received by the 20th of the month.

(Continued from Page 1) will receive a detailed report by December 6 on the plans for implementing these changes in financial management arrangements. The Board will then decide whether to approve the management proposal to discontinue contracting with an accounting firm and rely on in-house financial management. The advantages of going to a full in-house system of financial management are that it is cheaper and, more importantly, it gives us better access to the information so that the Treasurer and the Board can more easily stay on top of our financial status. The new system will require careful safeguards, including additional auditing services.

TELEPHONE SYSTEM

There appears to be substantial consensus that our new telephone system should include intercom service between the apartments and the front desk, but that secretarial service -- that is, telephone answering service -- is unnecessary because those who want this kind of service either can purchase their own answering machines or obtain the service from C&P Telephone for \$5 per month. ORS Associates, the consulting firm we retained to help us decide on what kind of equipment we should consider for replacing our present system, should complete their report to us very shortly. The report will include a Request for Proposals that we can send to vendors of the kind of equipment we need to obtain competitive bids. Once we obtain the bids, we will determine how to pay for the equipment. It seems likely that we will have enough funds in our replacement reserves and our current operating budget to be able to purchase and install the type of equipment we need next spring.

In the process of exploring what we should do about the telephone system, our management office found that intercom capability is available in every room in each apartment that has outlets for telephone service. All that is needed is to have the proper jack installed and a 2-line telephone. Thus, any resident who wishes to have access to intercom service from any phone in his/her apartment can do so. Management is in process of

determining costs for installing the jacks and will make an announcement on this matter shortly.

NEW SKYLINE APARTMENT BUILDING

The Smith Companies are planning to build a 250-unit low-rise rental apartment complex in the area between Skyline Square and Skyline Towers. They are in process of seeking approval of their site plan from Fairfax County and therefore have been consulting with interested parties. Two representatives of the Smith Companies would like to make a presentation to Skyline House, preferably before the Planning Commission considers their application on December 11. Accordingly, we have arranged for a special meeting of the Community Relations Committee on December 3, at 7:30pm in the East Card Room, to hear the Smith presentation and to discuss the project with them. This is, of course, an open meeting so anyone interested is invited to attend.

This being the December issue of the House Special, I would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.



Happy Holidays

PHYSICAL PLANT AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Ed Ing, Chair

FALL LANDSCAPE PROGRAM. At its November 7, 1991 meeting, the PPOC asked the General Manager for an update on the fall planting program. The General Manager stated that 13 cypress trees, 3 red maple trees, and 1 sweet gum tree had been ordered and will be planted within the week. In addition, a number of boxwood plants had been ordered for the hexagon. He also anticipated that tulip bulbs will be planted. Remaining budgeted and reserved funds will be used for more plantings in the spring.

COMMITTEE CHARTER. The PPOC previewed the charter revisions which the Ad Hoc Governance Committee has proposed. The PPOC was opposed to the removal of the committee's current responsibility to review condominium operations, contracts, and contract performance. During the past year, the committee's review activities have decreased because less matters have been presented to the committee. The PPOC, however, remains of the opinion that its review of condominium operation provides an opportunity for thorough discussion and informed community input on service and equipment performance.

WINDOW WASHING. During the past three years, the annual spring window washing has been delayed until completion of the balcony and spandrel repairs in the fall. The General Manager reported that only the West Building's windows will be cleaned this year, because repair work on the East Building will extend through November beyond the original projected completion date. The PPOC proposed to the Board that the annual window washing next year be returned to the spring for both East and West Buildings. Since the General Manager reported that the current price bid for the window washing is half the cost in past years, the PPOC will explore the possibility of washing the windows twice rather than only once a year.

FRONT DESK MANUAL. The PPOC discussed the management's delay in completing the front desk manual revisions despite the past target completion dates set by the Board. After repeated inquiries and reminders to the General Manager and the Board, the designated PPOC committee members finally received the revisions from the manager at the end of October. The Board subsequently directed the PPOC to complete its review and report on the revisions by December 18th.

VOLUNTARY IN-UNIT PLUMBING INSPECTION PROGRAM. The PPOC reviewed and favorably recommended Board adoption of the General Manager's voluntary in-unit plumbing inspection program. The PPOC noted to the General Manager that the inspection should also include caulking such as the caulking between the bathtub and the wall tiles or the caulking of the bathtub overflow pipe connection. Caulking will shrink as it becomes old and allow water to seep through possibly into the unit below. Therefore the caulking should be checked and replaced periodically.

(Continued)

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(PPOC Continued)

RECYCLING. The PPOC reviewed the General Manager's proposal to collect and recycle aluminum cans, clear glass, and plastics. Although recycling will entail additional labor, it is ecologically beneficial. For this reason, the PPOC endorsed the program with a clarification. To make the condominium grounds attractive, the condominium buildings were designed to have trash bins and trash receptacles placed inside the buildings and not outside. Paper recycling, however, has led the General Manager to place a trash bin behind the West Building. For the winter season, the General Manager has also placed trash cans -- covered plastic barrels and uncovered sawed down 50 gallon metal drums -- filled with sand along the driveways. After Christmas, another trash bin will be placed behind the West Building to collect Christmas trees. Unsightly bins, cans, and receptacles should be minimized if not avoided completely to maintain the appearance of the grounds. In response to this concern, the General Manager stated that additional trash bins for the cans, glass, and plastic will be kept inside in the trash rooms. He stated that these receptacles or bins will not be kept outdoors.



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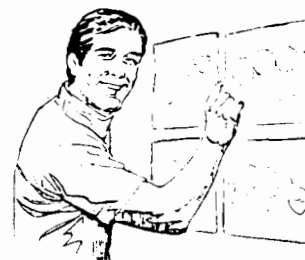
Until last year at this time, residents of Skyline House annually expressed their thanks to the Staff through contributions to a Holiday Fund. Each year late contributions resulted in a small carryover balance. In 1990 there was no Holiday Fund because the Board instituted an end-of-year bonus program for the staff out of the regular budget.

Recently, a group of former Chairpersons of the Holiday Fund met to discuss using up the balance from 1989 to benefit our staff. The decision was to provide something to improve the facilities of the ground floor room known familiarly as the "Porters Room". Mr. Fenton is trying to make this basement room a more attractive place for our staff to relax and to have lunch.

In the name of those residents who had supported the Holiday Fund with their voluntary contributions, a microwave and a toaster oven have been now put in said "Porters Room" for the use of the staff, completely utilizing the available funds.

Millie Foley
Chairperson
1989 Holiday Fund

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REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

(Ed. Note: The following is a condensation of comments and recommendations by John Petrella, Chair of the FMC, after the preparation of the 1992 budget. Presentation of that budget appears separately in this issue.)

° The Financial Management Committee began work on the 1992 budget in August. It met twice in that month, twice in September, twice in October and once in November for a total of 27 hours. In addition, the Chair of the Committee met with the General Manager for 11 hours discussing the monies to be set aside for the several reserve funds in the 1992 budget. The members of the FMC who worked on the budget are: Sophie Anderson, Gladys Frank, Julia LeBert-Francis, Grace Krumwiede, Bill Miller, Lisa Ruiz and the Chair. Also meeting with the committee were: Wayne Krumwiede, Treasurer, Ed Bisgyer, Vice President, and Don Fenton, General Manager.

° The Committee included in its deliberations a preliminary projection of the 1993 budget to get an early picture of expenses based upon a certain percentage increase over 1992. Beyond the formal recommendations included in the 1992 budget forwarded to the Board of Directors there are several items recommended by the committee for 1992-1993:

A. That employees be allowed to accumulate or carry over a certain number of sick leave days. (The maximum number to be determined by the General Manager.)

B. That in-unit maintenance be operated at cost or on a break-even basis.

C. That any excess or unspent funds from 1991 be contributed to the Working Capital Fund.

D. That the necessary funds are available to start to repaint, carpet and redecorate all the hallways in the East and West Buildings in August of 1992 and complete in 1993.

E. That, if unspent funds are available, a handicap ramp near the main lobby be installed in 1992. If not, the item will be considered in the 1993 budget.

F. That, if unspent funds are available, a vestibule be added to the West Building mail lobby entrance in 1992. If not, the item will be covered in the 1993 budget.

G. That the funds to build a wall on the right side of the parking entrance in front of the skyway be considered in the 1993 budget.

H. That the funds to build a walk way in front of the West Building be considered in the 1993 budget.

° Note that these items are recommendations of the FMC; they have not been formally discussed by the Board of Directors. There will not be a meeting of the Financial Management Committee in December. The next meeting is scheduled for January 14, 1992 in the East Card Room. Residents who are interested in the financial management of Skyline House are very welcome and invited to attend.



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RECREATION COMMITTEE

✓ Tony DiSalvo and Dave Harvey, Co-chairs

The Committee met on November 13 and the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 11, in the East Card Room.

The main topic of discussion was the possible rental of a large screen TV to view the Superbowl and the playoffs in January. It appears now that the Redskins will make it to the first round playoffs and hopefully the National Conference Playoff and the Superbowl on January 26. Enthusiasm has not yet reached a crescendo but perhaps will grow after the holidays and as the events approach and by then we should all be in the mood for Redskins football. Leave a message for Tony at the front desk if you are interested. Tony has found a place where the rental is very reasonable and we can possibly tap into Media General system or the in-house cable system to pick up the broadcast.

✓ We then discussed the possibility of a theater party at a special group rate for the show *Beyond the Fringe* which will be presented by the American Showcase Theater in Alexandria from February 7 through March 8, 1992. Some comments about the show:

"...the satirical revue that ravaged

the Broadway stage in 1962. This evening of madness recreates the artistic anarchy that touches the funny bones across the spectrum of humor, from subtle parody to outrageous farce. Elevated absurdity that raised irreverence to an art form."

Also discussed was meeting for an optional dinner at one of the nearby restaurants before the performance. We will be discussing these items at future meetings so come along and add your input.

The Mexican Dinner on November 21 was a great success with a very satisfying and satisfied turnout. We want to thank Maria Boykin and Elsa Paez who were responsible for preparing an excellent dinner and to Les Boykin who did his share. Many thanks go out to the Recreation Committee members who assisted in serving the dinner.

Everyone is reminded that the Annual Holiday Party is scheduled for 7:00 pm, Saturday, December 7 in the West Party Room. All residents are invited, just bring your own liquid refreshments, setups, and a **plate of hors d'oeuvres** to share. This event usually draws a good number of residents since the goodies are something extra special. Mark your calendar. No reservation is required.



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SECURITY, FIRE, AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Rob Sherrer, Chair

The Committee meets on the second Thursday of the month. Ten residents attended the meeting of November 14th. The following are the items that were discussed and other security and safety related matters that will be of interest to Skyline House residents.


- ° In the second week of October, one of the periodic meetings between the Mason District Police and the managers and Neighborhood Watch coordinators and security committee chairmen of the Skyline Residential buildings was held. Captain Robert Allison, newly appointed head of the Mason District Station, and Officer Larry Clark discussed the current crime situation in the area, and other police matters. Skyline House General Manager Don Fenton explained our video camera security system to the group.
- ° The abbreviated log-in procedures for visits by police, fire department, and ambulance personnel have been in operation for a few months now. These entries are intended to serve as a general indicator of the security-safety status of Skyline House. In September, 12 such visits were recorded; in October, 13.
- ° As you have no doubt noticed, the phones in the garage have been painted yellow, and the particular garage location of each has been painted in huge letters adjacent thereto. This will facilitate the residents quickly locating the phones and swiftly and accurately conveying to the front desk the exact location from which they are calling. The Committee considers this to be an important upgrade in garage security.
- ° Management is still planning to institute an entry procedure for the Front Lobby whereby the vestibule will be partitioned, possibly with a plastic wall. Residents with keys will let themselves in on the right side; those without keys will have to request entry through the left side and report to

the desk. This entrance control procedure was recommended some time ago by an outside security consultant and has been strongly endorsed by this Committee. With respect to entry control, residents have been observed on numerous occasions letting people in through the West Lobby door. Residents are again urged not to open the door for anyone unless they know the individual requesting admittance. This is an obvious security breach that circumvents the Front Desk control procedures.


- ° Recent incidents at Skyline House: (1) Car incidents: In the early hours of September 26-27, a Toyota Camry was stolen from the garage, D level, East side; another Toyota parked in the same area was reported to have been vandalized. A guard checked and found that the ignition switch had been torn out; apparently the thieves had been frightened away as they were about to steal the car. Also on September 27, a car in outside parking, West side was reported vandalized. The car was dented on both sides and a large mark was scraped across the trunk. On November 7, another Toyota Camry was stolen, this time from the West side garage, B level; another Camry that was parked nearby was vandalized at about the same time. (2) On October 19, a unit on the T level was burglarized and jewelry taken; entry was gained by removing a screen from an open window. The screen was found on the grounds and taken by the police for fingerprints. On October 31, there was a break-in on the sixth floor, West building. A resident in an adjacent unit climbed around the partition wall separating the balconies and gained entry. However, he was met by the police and arrested on the spot. This was only the second case in the history of Skyline House in which someone has climbed around the wall to the adjacent balcony; in neither case was the perpetrator successful.
- ° Residents are reminded that the Holiday Season, unfortunately, is a high-crime time of year, so be alert and take adequate precautions in safeguarding your possessions. Lock all packages in the trunk of your car rather than leaving them in full view in the passenger compartment of the

car. Also be more aware of the possibility of purse snatchers and pickpockets in large shopping crowds. At Skyline House, report any suspicious characters in our buildings or on the outside grounds.

° On Wednesday, December 11, Officer Larry Clark of the Fairfax County Police Department will visit Skyline House for a presentation in the West Party Room a 7:30 pm. Officer Clark always presents excellent points on how to limit the opportunity for crimes -- how to promote crime prevention and personal safety.



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MANAGEMENT QUIPS

° With the Holiday season just around the corner, this month's Quips is again devoted to the Association's methods of the handling of packages. In the last few months we have experienced a dramatic increase in the amount and size of packages. Management would like to remind one and all that our package room is very small and our operation is not meant to handle large and/or heavy packages. In some cases packages in excess of 60 lbs have made their way to Skyline House. Because of the limited space please check the front desk daily for letters and packages. If you are called from the front desk because a package has been received, please pick it up as soon as possible. Your cooperation is appreciated.

How does your FRONT DESK handle packages?

° Couriers deliver bulk parcels, large and small envelopes, messages and packages to the front desk to await delivery. Different couriers use different procedures for placing items into our system. Some must be signed for while others do not require a signature. Following are the established procedures the Desk personnel use when receiving items:

° Upon delivery, we double-check to see that your name and unit number are valid before allowing the item to enter the system. If they are not correct we will not accept delivery and will return it to the courier.

° If valid, we ensure that the entries into the log are correct.

° If the item *cannot* be placed directly into the mail slot for the unit, we inscribe the unit number, using a heavy mark-a-lot, on it so that it is readily identifiable at delivery. The item is then placed on the designated shelf in the package room behind the front desk. These items must have a Notification Slip placed in the corresponding mail slot. An exception is the US Postal Service delivery wherein notification of

packages/letters is made to the residents via his USPS Mail Box.

° When you call for delivery of a package/letter, we identify the resident, verify the unit number and have you sign the appropriate log, if necessary.

° All notification slips, including the USPS's notifications, should be destroyed at confirmed delivery. Please, if you don't see your slip destroyed, bring it to our attention.

° Desk personnel, working on the weekends or on the 3 pm to 11 pm shift during the week, routinely check the desk's mail slots, package logs and shelves to determine if any deliveries have been waiting for more than 48 hours. If so, they make every attempt to apprise you of this fact. Notice of these attempts should be made in the desk log. Items which are perishable or time sensitive (flowers, frozen items, telegrams, FAX, etc.) cannot wait 48 hours. We will make every attempt to notify you of receipt of such items immediately.

° Please, remember that the Association cannot take responsibility for any items left at the Front Desk. Rule 6, B. states "Front desk personnel may accept packages, keys and telegrams at the resident's risk. Registered or Certified Mail will *not* be accepted at the front desk."

° We have experienced three acts of vandalism in the last few days. The yellow emergency telephone, located on the D Level West Garage was stolen. I guess the thief badly needed a phone which doesn't dial. The emergency light in one of the East elevators was smashed and in another East elevator the emergency phone glass was stolen. If the perpetrator would like to have an emergency phone glass there is no need to steal one; we will gladly sell you one very cheaply.

*The optimist is often as wrong
as the pessimist,
but he is far happier.*

1992 BUDGET PRESENTATION

At the Town Meeting on November 19 John Petrella, Chair of the Financial Management Committee, presented an outline of the budget for 1992 that the Committee is recommending to the Board of Directors. Essentially, there is a small increase in total expense for 1992 over the 1991 budget, coupled with a decrease in income from interest on investments (i.e., the funds kept for the replacement reserve accounts).

◦ The net effect is an increase of 3.6% in the 1992 condo fee over 1991. Further, the Committee recommended no change in the special assessment fee for 1992, after which it will go to zero. The special assessment for 1992 is needed to complete payment for the work on the East Building, plus some additional work on the West Building (not included in the original contract for phases I and II), and to repay the \$89,000 which was taken from reserves for excess expenditures on work on phase II in 1990.

◦ The recommended 1992 budget includes increases in Payroll and Benefits, Utilities, and Contracts, with decreases in Administrative, Maintenance and Repairs, and Supplies. Other Income, that is income other than the condo fee, shows a large decrease in interest due to the very sharp drop in rates paid on Treasury Bills and Certificates of Deposit. Also, as we use funds from the replacement reserve there is less money for investment. For example, the replacement of most of the roof systems, and recarpeting and repainting of the residential corridors in both buildings, will use substantial amounts of the reserves in 1992.

◦ The 1992 budget also includes the following recommendations from the Financial Management Committee: an increase in the funding of the employee pension plan to 5% (from 4% previously); a 6% pay raise for all employees; \$5,000 for employee bonuses at Christmas time; an increase of \$16,000 to the reserves toward the purchase of a new telephone system (to be added to the approximately \$58,000 in that reserve

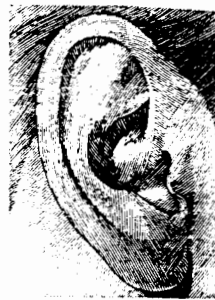
account); completion of the redecorating of the main lobby.

◦ See the 1992 expense budget recommended by the FMC on the following page.

(See the report of the Financial Management Committee elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter for additional recommendations on expenditures in 1992 and 1993.

Ed Bisgyer,
Vice President

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	BUDGET	BUDGET	ESTIMATED
	1991	1992	1993
Assessment Income	\$1,528,750	\$1,587,183	\$1,616,531
Other Income	122,150	70,000	70,000
Total Income	1,650,900	1,657,183	1,696,531
Payroll, Taxes & Benefits	462,850	528,047	554,450
Administrative	173,100	121,898	126,974
Utilities	385,600	405,000	394,300
Maintenance & Repairs	40,450	24,900	25,149
Supplies	20,250	19,250	19,828
Contract(s) & Lease(s)	228,150	248,206	258,134
Operating Expenses	1,310,400	1,347,301	1,383,835
Net Income before Taxes & Reserve	340,500	309,882	312,696
Reserve Contributions	325,500	304,882	302,696
Provision for Taxes	15,000	5,000	5,000
Total Expense	\$1,650,900	\$1,657,183	\$1,696,531

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