



The

House Special

VOLUME XIII

JULY 1993

NO. 7

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

David Tilson, President

o Board meetings are now on a bimonthly schedule, so there was no meeting in June. The next Board meeting is set for July 28. However there are a few items of general interest to discuss.

— CABLE TV OPTIONS

o At the May Board meeting, I asked Michael Moore to chair an ad hoc committee to explore the question of what we should do, if anything, about bringing low-cost cable TV to all apartments in our condominium using our house wiring connected to our master antenna. The issue was prompted by the decision by Washington Cable to discontinue its service to Skyline House because too few residents subscribe to its service. Washington Cable's service was available to non-subscribers because it used the house wiring to distribute its services and only the premium services (HBO, Showtime) were scrambled.

o Fewer than 40% of Skyline House residents subscribe to Media General cable service, so the majority of residents would be adversely affected by the suspension of Washington Cable's service.

o Mr. Moore's committee will prepare a report for the Board that will be presented at the July Board meeting. We anticipate that the committee will recommend that their report be

made available to all unit owners and that unit owners should be asked to express their preferences on a series of options for Board action. Having seen a draft of the report, I am impressed that unit owners will have a clear, factual report that will provide an excellent basis for expressing their preferences.

BALCONY REPAIRS

o The difficult and expensive task of repairing the balconies and spandrels on both buildings took almost four years to complete, cost us about \$1.6 million dollars, and left many balconies with rather ugly looking scars caused by the materials used to fill cracks. Most residents are unhappy with the unesthetic results and most have taken steps to solve the problem either by having their balconies covered by ceramic tile, by carpeting (provided the carpet is not rubber-backed or glued down), or by painting the balcony deck -- at their own expense. A few, however, are of the view that they are entitled to have the unesthetic results of the balcony repair project remedied by the condominium. This would, of course, entail costs that would be in addition to the costs the unit owners have assumed for repairing the balconies and spandrels. The costs for such an "esthetic" fix were not included in the costs for the "technical fix". Although this matter has not come before the Board for formal action, in my opinion the esthetics of the balcony remain the unit owner's responsibility. My wife and I had carpeted the balcony of our unit when we moved into it five 5 years ago.

(Continued on page 3)



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Editor:

Law Henderson

Advertising:

**Skyline House
Business Office
(703) 578-4855**

Copy Due Date:

**20th of the month
preceding issue date**

Published:

Monthly

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.

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PUBLISHED BY: SKYLINE HOUSE UNIT OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC., 3711 South George Mason Drive, Falls Church, VA 22041-3713, (703) 578-4855.

PRINTED BY: Curry Printing and Copy Center
Alexandria, VA

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**David Tilson
Dolores Littles
Wayne Krumwiede
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Sam Blumberg
Michael L. Moore**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR


As a resident of Skyline for over 12 years, I am increasingly concerned with the tendency toward unnecessary condominium spending. Given the continuing weak economy and the fall in Skyline House real estate values, it would behoove the Board to curb excessive spending and reduce condo taxes.

The recent *House Special* lists several new projects ranging from the frivolous -- "redecorating the party rooms" to the questionable "A new treadmill". If there is any area where we should do more spending, it is the essentials.

By essential spending, I mean the elevators. At least two weekends a month, one of the elevators in the East Building is out the entire weekend. Last weekend, two were out of service. There is no reason for this to happen week after week. The elevators should be repaired. In the event that they break down on a weekend, we should have a service contract to fix them quickly.

Sincerely yours,

**Steve Charnovitz
Unit 709E**



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(across from Skyline Mall)
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SECURITY, FIRE & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chair - Vacant

ATTENDANCE

The General Manager, Don Fenton, along with Board Liaison, Sam Blumberg, and six committee members were in attendance; Elizabeth Grant was acting chairman.

GUARD AND INCIDENTS REPORT

Arlene Burbank gave the report for April and May. Among the items reported were:

- Actions by an alert guard defused two potential problem-situations involving, in one case, a small child and, in another, a suspicious car.

- The shrubbery fires at the west end of the West Building.

- The number of cars towed from Guest Parking spaces for two months and the number of visits by police and firemen.

RE-KEYING The last time the access locks to our buildings were re-keyed was in 1985. Since then the number of keys have proliferated, and many are in the hands of people who no longer live and/or work here. Some locks are worn and need replacing. It is now high time to repeat this exercise. Management is looking into the potentials and cost of re-keying or of upgrading to a high tech system. This committee will be further involved before a recommendation is sent to the Board of Directors.

OLD BUSINESS

- An additional 30-40 residents, who had not previously done so, have submitted keys for their units to Management. It is so important that there be access, in case of fire, water damage, or an incapacitating injury. Those residents who resist complying with this Skyline House rule risk

liability should EMERGENCY ENTRY to their apartments be necessary and a key not available.

- Mr. Fenton reported that the fence erected by NVCC was placed two feet inside their property line. He intends to discuss with the college, that in at least two places, through improper installation, there are gaps. He will also speak about the garage lights being constantly illuminated and not, as originally specified, turned off when activities at the college are finished for the day. This is a source of annoyance to some residents living on the south side of the West Building.

- Mr. Fenton reported on new plans for Visitor Procedures. Soon there will be no sign-in book. Information will be entered directly into the computer. One of the benefits of this new procedure will be a print-out of cars registered in the Guest Parking spaces. This will facilitate the towing of illegally parked cars.

The next meeting of this committee will be on Thursday, September 9th at 7:30 p.m. Please check the Bulletin Board for location.

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RECREATION COMMITTEE

Tony Di Salvo & Dave Harvey, Co-Chairs

o The committee did not meet in June but we will meet at 7:30 p.m. on July 14 in the East Card Room.

o We asked the residents (in the June Newsletter) to submit suggestions for improving the offerings of the committee by leaving a message for either of the co-chairs at the front desk. We had hoped to hear from you but unfortunately we have received no response at this writing.

o A reminder for those new residents who have not attended a TGIF, make the next TGIF your first and meet your neighbors. You are more than welcome, and to make it easier for you, you need not bring hors d'oeuvres, just your own liquid refreshments. There is always plenty of food to eat.

o Again, the next meeting of the Recreation Committee will be Bastille Day, July 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the East Card Room. Please come and join us.

o The next TGIF is scheduled for Friday, July 2, in the West Party Room.



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MANAGEMENT REPORT

Don Fenton, General Manager

○ Last month we published the Fairfax County Regulation covering barbecue grills on the balcony/patios. There is apparently some confusion as to what type of grills are permitted at Skyline House. Rule 20, applies - **Only ELECTRIC grills may be used.**

Rule 20. Fire Safety

- A. Unit Owners/Residents shall not permit or engage in any act that may cause an increase in the rate of the Association's insurance premium.
- B. Unit Owners/Residents shall not keep any gasoline, explosives, fireworks or vapor-producing flammable material anywhere on the premises.
- C. As prescribed in Fairfax County Ordinance F318.1, only electric grills may be used on patios and balconies. Use of electric grills must not result in any nuisance, such as smoke and/or odoroffensive to other residents, or violation of Fairfax County air pollution regulations.

○ In the meantime, the **pool** is open and the water is great. We have a lap lane installed for the first time ever. So come out and have a swim. Many pool passes are still awaiting owners in the management office. They may be picked up any time during regular office hours.

○ The **garage deck** dunes are gone, meaning the planters have been waterproofed and refilled, and the area reopened. Tables, chairs, chaise lounges and umbrellas are out in force. Please notice the gladed garden deck area is ready and waiting for users. We have several picnic tables in the area to the east of the pool in the shade. Its a great place for lunch, a lazy afternoon or early evening stroll. You don't have to be using the pool to utilize the other areas. Management is thinking about recommending providing **barbecue** grills for resident use in the garage deck area. Also what do think about some early evening **TGIF style get togethers** out on the side pool deck. Let us know what you think about these ideas by dropping a note in the suggestion box at the front desk.

○ **Handicap List** - Did you know that Skyline House maintains a list of individuals that may require assistance during emergencies? This list is maintained in the Fire Control Room, front desk manual and in the administrative offices for

use during any emergencies. Additionally, when we have scheduled events, such as the recent power outage, we will hand deliver any applicable notices. If you think that you or someone who lives here with you needs to be on this list please leave a note for me. Include the name, unit number and a short description of the handicap. This list reminds me that it is always good to periodically update your **OCCUPANCY** form for your unit. Items such as telephone numbers, especially work numbers, often change. For example if it is necessary for emergency personnel to enter your unit we will try to call you at your outside number before entry, if possible. Also, this is the form whereby you nominate an individual to be notified in case of emergency and to even allow them use of the emergency key for entrance. If someone living with you is not listed on the form, Skyline House **CANNOT** issue the unit key if they are locked out. Stop by the office and update your occupancy form periodically.

○ **Front Desk - Packages, special mail and faxes.** Excerpt from front desk procedure manual:

4.2.2 Immediate Notification. If the delivery is a special delivery, express mail package, express courier package, telegram, fax message or a perishable item such as flowers, fruits or meats, immediately call the resident to obtain permission either to direct the courier to the unit or to accept delivery at the Front Desk. If the resident refuses the delivery, inform the courier accordingly. If the resident does not answer your call, accept the delivery (except for registered and certified mail which is discussed in Part 4.2.7 below) and periodically try to call and inform the resident of the delivery when time permits. Record your attempts in the Duty Log and instruct the desk clerk on the following shift to try again and inform the resident of the message or package.

4.2.3 Written Notification. Place the message or package in the resident's unit message slot. If this is not possible, place a Package Notification Slip in the resident's message slot, write the unit number on the package in bold print using a large felt marker, enter the delivery information in the Package Log and place the package in the storage room behind the Front Desk with the unit number visible. (The mail carrier prepares and leaves delivery notices for U.S. Postal Service parcels. See Part 4.2.7 below for discussion.)

4.2.4 Notification Calls. Desk clerks on weekend shifts from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and on weekday shifts from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. are to check the entire front desk area including message slots, Package Log(s), shelves, etc for any deliveries awaiting

resident pick-up. The Desk Clerks on these shifts are to call the residents up to 9 p.m. and inform them of items at the Front Desk.

4.2.7 Registered and Certified Mail. Front Desk personnel are not authorized to sign and accept U.S. Postal Service registered or certified mail for residents. Postal carriers will attempt to contact the resident through the lobby telephone and deliver the registered or certified item directly to the unit; if unsuccessful, the carriers will leave an attempted delivery slip in the resident's mail box. Also note that the U.S. Postal Service will leave its own notification slip for parcel deliveries in the resident's mail box; you do not need to place a duplicate notification in the resident's message box for these U.S. Postal Service parcels.

While desk personnel will attempt to contact residents when items are received it still is imperative that each resident check his mail slot at the front desk periodically, daily if possible. Also if you are expecting an item give a call after you expect it. Perhaps they tried while you were out.

o We had a couple of near accidents in the garage this month. One badly frightened resident reported that when she opened the garage door she was staring at a vehicle coming out the entrance directly toward her. The only time we should use the in entry door as an exit is when the exit door is undergoing maintenance and a gate guard is present. Additionally, cars seem to be going faster, tailgating more and using their lights less. Don't be surprised if you get a Skyline House ticket for violating these common sense safety rules.

o Guest parking. We are now checking daytime use of guest of parking more frequently. As you know residents are allowed to park for only one hour in guest parking. We only have 42 spaces for 552 residential units, (commercial units supply their own parking) a ratio of .076 vehicles per unit. I haven't found too many .076 vehicles about. Also vehicles are allowed to park a maximum of sixty days in the previous 365 days. After that the operator is considered to be a resident and is counted against the units occupancy limit besides being no longer eligible to park for more than one hour.

o West Building Scheduled Power Outage

followed by the **Unscheduled Power Outage**. Virginia power notified us that it would be necessary to shutdown power for some two to three hours in order to by-pass the defective switch on South George Mason Drive. As a result of replacing the power cable from Seminary Road which they believed was responsible for the outages last December it was discovered that, 1) the cable was not where the plans said it should be, and 2) the switch was defective and required to be replaced. Keep in mind we have been operating on the back up cable since December 92. They came out and direct-wired the transformer and planned to remove the switch later the same day, Thursday. Everything went well, we closed down on schedule and power restored on schedule about 4:30 am. However, at 6:22 the world went dark again in the West building. Why? Because of a blown transformer fuse on a pole on Seminary road. It seems they didn't replace "all of the cable" that was thought to be bad. "Executive Decision"? Any way we are back to where we were in late December. We will keep you informed as to the latest in the "Great Continuing Power Outage Saga". If anyone feels that problems with electrical appliances have developed as a result of the outage please contact Virginia Power and give me a copy of your incident. You can address your comments to Virginia Power, Attn: Mr. Chip Gilliland, Senior Service Representative Alexandria/Arlington District, at 907 Glebe Rd. Alexandria, VA 22305, with a copy to me. Maybe we can help. Virginia Power will be reimbursing Skyline House for the expense of any extra personnel used during the outage.

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NAIFA OMARY
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