

# The House Special

Volume XIX, No. 7

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November 1999



**HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

Editor Nadyne McKelvey

Copy Due Date 20<sup>th</sup> of the Month

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.

Information for the House Special may be left at the Management Office, the Reception Desk, or sent by e-mail to nmckelvey@hotmail.com

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## FROM THE MANAGER

*Randy Lyon*

We extend a hearty "WELCOME BACK" to our Deputy General Manager, Gusbey Silva, and our sincere condolences on the death of her father.

We also welcome 2 new Front Desk employees: Andrew Owsu and Olawatsin Matti.

A Fair Housing Seminar was held on October 28, and attended by staff members. Our General Manager was selected to be a judge in the Richmond Apartment Association "Best Community" awards. Only 12 were chosen from this area.

### Services completed or in progress

West building windows have been washed and when the East roof is finished, the windows in

the East building will be washed — weather permitting.

Pansies, purple, blue and white, were planted at the entrance to Skyline House and are now showing great progress. West and East lobby level glass, including entrance and skylights and bridge were cleaned.

East elevator #3 car motor was replaced; as well as the asphalt patched at the East entry to the garage. Handrail painting has been started in the garage — doors and trim painted (exterior) at Penthouse level and the trash chutes were cleaned.

A new water treatment contract for the boilers was negotiated that reduced the monthly payment by \$100. A new pest control contract was signed, increasing the number of service calls from twice a month to a WEEKLY service schedule (EVERY THURSDAY) at a reduced price point. Please sign up at the Front Desk if you are in the need of this service. It is free to owners.

Several active rodent burrows were found and were treated to eliminate the problem.

Management and staff, including volunteers Rose Bravo and Margaret Jaffee completed the mass mailing of the Special Assessment letters. Thanks Rose and Margaret for your assistance.

On Friday, October 29, Management and staff held a Halloween party for all Skyline House children. They were given bags of candy; faces were painted; Hula dancing lessons for the girls was a hit; games were played, and the West Party room was filled (no direct count, but an estimate of 60-70 children plus parents were present.)

Thanks to Patty Scharf who baked all those cupcakes that disappeared and also was the Hula instructor; to Tania, Tycia and Betty for the decorations and to anyone that helped in any way to make the party such a success.

**A FRIENDLY REMINDER:** If you did not receive the Assessment letter, mailed on October 1, 1999, please contact the Management Office and one will be sent to you at once. **IN CASE YOU FORGET,** and we're sure you won't, the Special Assessment is due in full on or before **DECEMBER 1, 1999.**

**REPORT FROM THE BOARD**

*Dave Tilson, Vice President*

**STATUS OF GARAGE REPAIRS**

There will be some additional work by SPS, Inc., on the A-level beams in the garage that they previously repaired. Our expert consultant, Dr. Randall Poston, has specified the work that remains to be done and SPS has agreed to do it at no charge to us. At the present time, based on the inspections conducted by Dr. Poston, no additional work on repairing garage beams will be required in the near future.

We expect the work on the terrace level (the roof over the garage) to commence shortly. The cost of this work is included in the amount to be borrowed from the National Cooperative Bank and is covered by the Special Assessment that all unit owners have already been officially notified about.

**SPECIAL ASSESSMENT**

A letter to all unit owners notifying them of the amount of the Special Assessment on their unit was sent by first class mail on October 1, 1999. As noted in that letter, the Special Assessment is due and payable on or before December 1, 1999. If you cannot pay in full by December 1, you should have contacted the Management Office by November 1, 1999 and filed an application for paying the fee on a monthly basis over a period of up to three years. There is a processing fee of \$350. And the unpaid balance carries an interest rate of 9%. A substantial number of unit owners have already paid their assessment.

**BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2000**

The General Manager and the Financial Management Committee are working hard to develop a realistic budget for the next calendar year. A major consideration is the amount that should be allotted to building up our reserves to cover the costs of major structural and equipment repairs and/or replacement that can now be foreseen. This is a complex calculation since the amount rests on assumptions of the timing and the future costs of various types of work that will have to be done and when major equipment replacements will be necessary. The intent is to

build the reserves rapidly enough to permit us to do the necessary work without requiring any additional special assessments — something all of us would like to avoid. The numbers are still being developed by the Committee which will complete its work by mid-November. The proposed budget must be acted on by the Board at the November Board meeting to allow time for notifying all unit owners as to the amount of the monthly regular assessment (i.e., condo fee) due January 1, 2000. Since this is a 20-year old building, and some substantial demands on the replacement reserves can be expected over the next few years, we should expect a significant increase in our condo fees starting in January.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

At the October 27 Board meeting, there was an extensive discussion of whether we should contract with an outside organization to do our accounting and prepare our monthly financial statements. We have had difficulties in staffing our accounting office and in obtaining accurate reports. We had a very extensive (and expensive) audit of our 1998 records, and we have spent a great deal of money on accounting consultants in the last year to get our records corrected. There are software issues: the software recommended by our auditors is no yet available. The Treasurer, the Financial Management Committee, and the General Manager have recommended that we seriously explore contracting for accounting services as an alternative to operating our own accounting office. The Board deferred action on this matter pending much more specific information on costs and specific procedures and responsibilities among existing staff to assure that we don't have the same headaches we had in the past when we contracted for these services. It was noted that Ms. Silva, the Deputy General Manager who is still very new on our staff, is trained in accounting and has had considerable relevant experience. The FMC and the General Manager were directed to present the Board with a full report and recommendations on this matter.

**Neighbors:**

Progress continues on a number of important projects here at Skyline House. The replacement of the West Building roof is nearly complete, and work on the East Building roof is approximately 50% complete.

There are important recent developments in the status of work in the garage. The Association, management and National Cooperative Bank continue to work to complete essential repairs funded through the line-of-credit.

Our engineering consultant for the post-tensioned beam repairs, Dr. Randy Poston, has delivered a written assessment of the work remaining to be done. He has met with representatives of SPS/VSL, our prime contractor for the garage work, and they are in agreement on the course of action from this point forward. The remaining work will necessitate rotation of some vehicles out of the garage, however, I do not expect that it will be necessary to displace as many vehicles at one time nor for as long a period as we experienced in earlier stages of the project

I look forward to commencement of work in the near future on the plaza east of the swimming pool. Restoration of the walkways in that area will improve our enjoyment of the park, and elimination of some leaks and drainage problems will protect the work we have completed in the garage proper.

Our General Manager, Mr. Randy Lyon, has obtained brochures from the National Safety Council concerning window safety. After consultation with the Association's attorney and our insurance agent, we are making this information available via unit mail slots at the Front Desk.

Thanks to Rick Reither for his service during the past two years as Chairman of the Financial Management Committee. And thanks to Betty

Weber for volunteering to step forward and assume the duties of chairperson.

The Board of Directors depends on the research, planning and expertise made available to it through the Association's several committees. Every committee can use more members. Chairpersons and meeting times are posted on the bulletin boards. Pick a meeting and drop in.

The quality of life at Skyline House depends in part on the willingness of unit owners to contribute their time and talent as members of the Board. At its Annual Meeting at the end of March, the Association will elect four members to the Board of Directors. Three persons will be elected to fill three-year terms, and one person will be elected to a one-year term, completing a term vacated due to a resignation earlier this year. The election process begins in January. It's not too early to start thinking about it.

*Charley Roberts, President*

Let us not forget to honor our veterans that fought so hard to save our country--**VETERANS DAY, NOVEMBER 11.**

The first unit owners of Skyline House moved into the WEST building on November 16, 1979. Some are still here — that's proof that it is a great place to call HOME.

We hope to bring to you, in the next few issues, some of the history of Skyline House. The first Newsletter was "published" on June 23, 1980. It was 1 and ½ pages and typed on a manual typewriter. A far cry from today.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE***Betty Weber, Chair*

The FM Committee met on October 19.

Financial statements were available for the first time since June. Statements were received in time but were not in a format to be of use to the committee. Later analysis, using data provided, has resulted in an estimate of our current status.

For September we were over budget by approximately \$32K. This is an optimistic estimate as some expenses were omitted from the statements and income from assessments did not identify delinquent payments not received.

Major areas that resulted in expenses over budget year to date include: payroll (over by \$15,528), Interest on Line of Credit (over by \$3,663), Insurance Expense (over by \$627), In-Unit Supplies (over by \$40,704) and elevators (over budget by \$10,000).

On a brighter side, it appears that our performance year to date is somewhat better... with expenses exceeding budget by approximately \$34,784.

**THE BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE**

Accounting is the basis for budgeting. Given the lack of accounting information available for this calendar year has made it very difficult to develop a budget for CY 2000.

However, the budget sub-committee has prevailed and is nearing completion of a budget for the year 2000.

The Reserves sub-committee completed the reserves schedule October 25. The budget sub-committee is meeting October 26 to finalize the budget. The Reserves sub-committee identified 14 high priority items that will need to be repaired or replaced within the near future (1-5 years). Additional reserves were provided in order to fully

fund for those items in the near term. The items were further prioritized in order of criticality in order to provide the Board with some flexibility if the resulting increase in condo fees is viewed as too burdensome.

A special meeting of the Finance Committee will be called next week to review and finalize the recommended budget to be presented to the Board of Directors no later than mid-November.

Based on recommendations from the auditors, the Finance committee is identifying activities that we can implement to provide better oversight. We plan to take this business up at the next FMC meeting in November. We are also recommending that the Board consider contracting out our accounting functions. There are several reasons for this recommendation.

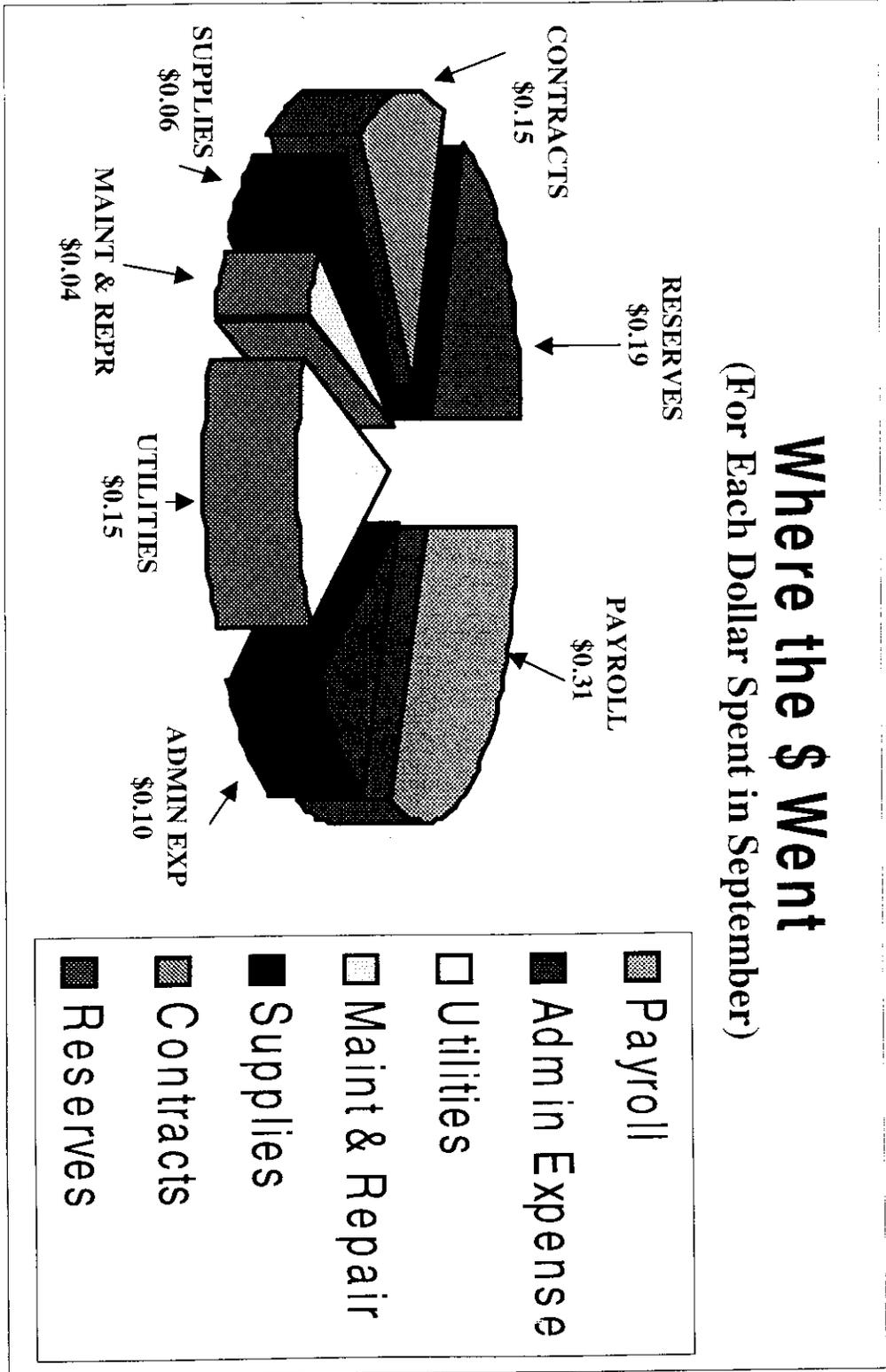
The accounting software is an outdated, DOS version. Our General Manager has informed us that the accounting software recommended by the auditors will not be available for 6 or more months.

We are currently paying \$60 and hour for a consultant to clean up our accounts. This expenditure cannot continue for an extended period of time.

Despite our best efforts, our self-management in this arena is dismal and cannot continue. We feel our only solution is to seek professional management of our accounts. Therefore, the FMC has instructed the General Manager to obtain three bids from companies who specialize in managing the accounts of condominiums and ask the Board to seriously consider this option.

# Where the \$ Went

(For Each Dollar Spent in September)



**PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS(PPOC)***Bob Lowry, Co-chair**Ken Grant, Co-chair*

Excerpts from Minutes of October 21, 1999

Robert Lowry gave an overview of the five years he has been Chairman and Co-Chairman, citing what has been accomplished, problem areas and future issues that should be addressed.

(a) Accomplishments include a clarification of the PPOC charter; formalizing a procurement procedure and being the driving force in getting the garage renovation work started and well along towards completion.

(b) Problem areas are quite apparent. They include the thin participation of committee members as most of the workload is carried by the Chairman and two or three others. The procurement procedure is not always followed by the Manager or the Board of Directors. Although we have fourteen to eighteen people attending meetings, many people attend only once to speak on a single issue but do not have a continued interest. The Committee has not been good at advance planning and directs most of its attention to near term problems.

(c) In the future the Committee should pay much more attention to advance planning with clear priorities to cover not only replacements and repairs but additions to improve the value of our units. More attention should be paid to Skyline House "Curb Appeal". PPOC should be made an equal partner with the Finance Committee in reviewing and preparing the Replacement Reserve Fund and Maintenance Budgets in order to put long-term planning into effect. The Procurement Policy should be reviewed and modified, if necessary, to make it easier to follow and still achieve its goals, i.e., to make purchases with a well defined scope at the best price.

The Nominating Committee recommended Mr. George Beams and Mr. Kurt Bedenbaugh to be the new Co-Chairmen of PPOC beginning with the November 19 meeting. They were

unanimously elected and they accepted.

Ken Grant supported the excellent overview by Bob and confined his remarks to a nostalgic recall of committee participation since coming to Skyline. Of the several standing and special committees in which he had served, Ken considered PPOC to have been the most interesting and challenging. It has always been a well attended committee bringing substantial matters for consideration and decisions.

Ken endorsed Bob's recommendations for the future, adding that continued support for the committee will be enhanced by ensuring that it continues to watch over the fabric of our buildings and bring relevant matters of interest to the community for committee consideration. An agenda for meetings which clearly indicates matters for discussion and decision is essential, Ken felt, if we are to attract participation of residents who could become committee members. Speaking for Bob and himself, Ken said that stepping down from the chair only marks the end of a phase since, when in town, they will participate in meetings. At this time they stand ready to assist a smooth transition to the next chairmen.

**Management Report:**

(a) Status of garage beam repairs. Two things have happened since our last meeting that point to resolving our garage beam concerns.

First, the ad hoc garage committee and the Manager met with Bob St. John of SPS to discuss a resolution of a repair procedure for cracks in the strengthened beams. SPS indicated a willingness to review Dr. Poston's recommendations and work out a repair procedure with Dr. Poston and proceed with the repairs.

Second, Dr. Poston's report arrived on October 21, 1999 and stated very briefly that:

- ◆ The repairs done to date meet load requirements
- ◆ The cracks in repaired beams have

weakened the beams and they should be reinforced.

- ◆ The remaining beams that have not been reinforced should be inspected.
- ◆ If the inspection uncovers potentially distressed beams they should be load tested to determine if repairs are required.
- ◆ Inspection should be made every two years.

(b) **Status of Contract for Garage Roof Plaza Renovation:** The Board of Directors approved the low bid by Commercial Roofing. In the specifications we identified Randy Lyon as representing the Owners (Skyline House) as the approval agent. Our Attorneys considered this inappropriate and recommended that we have a licensed engineer. Arrangements are being worked out with Dr. Poston's firm to do this. It is our understanding that when this is done and when the bank gives its approval, the contract will be signed.

(c) Randy Lyon reported that the Elevator Infrared Door Edges will be installed in 30 days.

**Window Panel Caulking and Glazing:** Bids were received to caulk and glaze the exterior windows and panels below the windows on the south side of the East building. After examining the bids the ensuing discussion concluded that no action be taken for the following reasons:

- ◆ The Procurement Policy had not been followed which requires Board approval of the scope of work before soliciting bids.
- ◆ It was not clear to the committee that the bidders were bidding on the same scope of work.

The Manager stated that he would prepare a more detailed scope of work for the Committee's review at the next meeting.

**Regulations for the Installation of TV Satellite Dishes:**

The Manager and residents have noticed a growing number of Satellite dishes being installed

on balconies and exterior walls, primarily, on the south side of the West building. The Manager has been giving these units copies of the FCC handout titled FCC RESTRICTIONS. So far some of the dishes have been relocated but the problem is growing; so what should we do?

The discussion that ensued covered recollections of discussions that took place several years ago when we were looking into alternate TV service. The discussion ended inconclusively with the understanding that Management would try to come back to the Committee with a specific plan to review.

#### LIBRARY

*Barbara Michelman*

#### WANTED:

A volunteer for the first Monday of each month.

Light work, likes talking with residents

Good hours--7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

No resume needed and no pay.

Call Barbara at 931-6093

**COVENANTS COMMITTEE**

*David Kafka, Chairman*

During the period June, July and August, 1999, there were two cases that could not be resolved administratively. Both regarded speeding in the garage. Both were cited for a hearing for October 19, 1999.

Before the hearing date, one of the persons involved sold the unit and left.

The second person cited, appeared for the hearing and after a thorough airing of the charges and the responses, the Subcommittee determined there was insufficient evidence to sustain the charge.

The Covenants Committee has received complaints about TV cable dishes being mounted illegally on balconies. They cannot be attached to the railing or overhang the balconies. They must be attached to a heavy duty stand or tripod, away from the railing and not attached to the floor.

%%%%%%%%%

**SECURITY, FIRE/SAFETY COMMITTEE**

*Bob Busby, Chairman*

The SFSC Committee did not meet in October.

The November 9, 1999, Security, Fire and Safety Committee meeting will be held at 7:00 P.M., in the LIBRARY, located in the East Building.

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**GOOD NEIGHBORS COMMITTEE**

*Joan Collins..... Co-chair*                      998-0788  
*Toska Prather, Co-chair*                        379-7849

Good Neighbors for the month of November:

Stephaney Keyser    671-8545    413E  
Lytton Stoddard    578-1090    1202E

Good Neighbors are available to assist all residents who are in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency. Call the Good Neighbor of the Month

if need arises. "YOU REALLY GET A SENSE OF SELF-WORTH WHEN YOU'RE HELPING PEOPLE. YOU REALIZE THAT IT'S WORTH IT."

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Tony DiSalvo, Co-chair  
Tish Linsinbigler, Co-chair

The Committee will meet on November 10, West Card Room at 7:00 p.m.

The Flea Market is scheduled for Friday, November 19, East Party Room. There is no charge to reserve a table; selling is RESTRICTED to Skyline House residents. This is a good time for you to sell those heirlooms that are taking up space. Tables will be reserved for Skyline House residents only. Refer to the inserted flyers.

It appears that we will replace the Annual Holiday Party in December for a Millenium Holiday Party on December 31. We will rent a large screen TV for that evening. Complete details later. On the agenda for the November meeting will be using the TV for a super bowl party.

If you are a new resident and have not attended the monthly TGIF, make this your first and meet your neighbors and to make it easier, you are requested NOT to bring a plate of *hors d'oeuvres*, just your own liquid refreshment.

The next TGIF will be on Friday, November 5, East Party Room, 6:30 p.m.

**COMING EVENTS**

- TGIF: Friday, November 5, East Party Room
- Rec. Cte. Meeting: Wednesday, November 10, 7:00 p.m., West Card Room
- Flea Market: Friday November 19. East Party Room
- Rec. Cte. Meeting: Wednesday, Dec. 10, 7:00 p.m. West Card Room
- Millenium Party: December 31, West Party Room

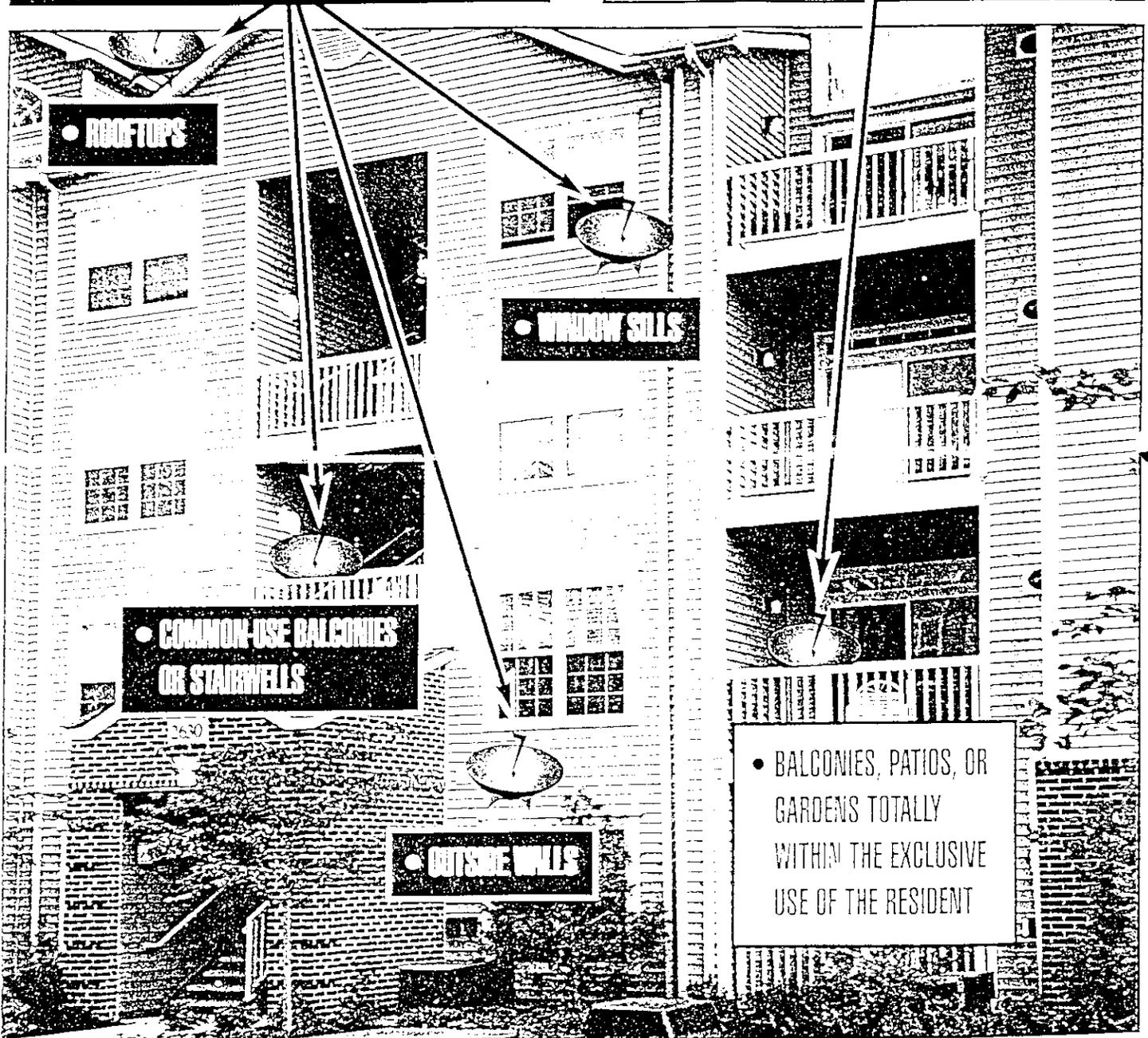
# FCC RESTRICTIONS

ON THE PLACEMENT OF SATELLITE DISHES  
1 METER OR LESS (PIZZA-STYLE)

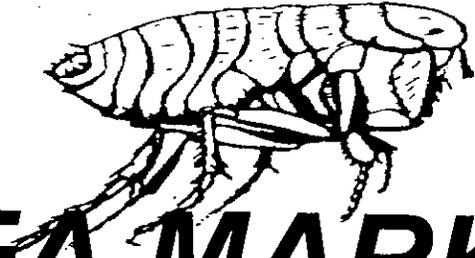


**OWNERS MAY PROHIBIT  
PLACEMENT ON:**

**OWNERS MAY NOT  
UNREASONABLY PROHIBIT  
PLACEMENT ON:**



**NOTE: NO HOLES MAY BE DRILLED IN OUTSIDE WALLS, ROOF, OR WINDOWS.  
NO HOLES MAY BE DRILLED IN A BALCONY RAILING. NO PART OF THE DISH OR  
ANTENNA CAN EXTEND BEYOND THE BALCONY RAILING LINE.**



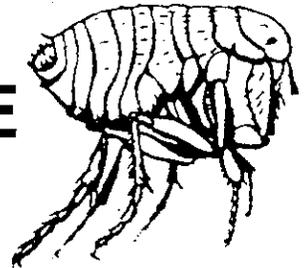
# **FLEA MARKET**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH**  
**EAST PARTY ROOM**

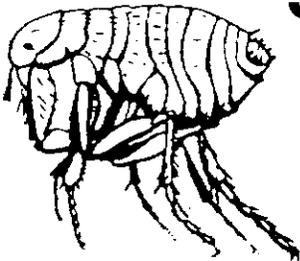


**RESERVE YOUR TABLE**  
**(NO CHARGE) BY CALLING**  
**TONY DISALVO, 824-1958**

**TABLES FOR SKYLINE**  
**RESIDENTS ONLY**



**SET UP AT 6:30 P.M.**  
**DOORS OPEN 7:00 TO 8:30 P.M.**  
**SPACE IS LIMITED.**



**SPONSORED BY**  
**YOUR SKYLINE HOUSE**  
**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

