

THE HOUSE SPECIAL

Skyline House

Volume XXI, No.5

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May 2001



Report From our President David Tilson

The first regular meeting of the 21st Board of Directors took place on Thursday, April 17, 2001. In my introductory remarks I said that as a self-governing community it is essential that we address two major issues affecting the long-term health and well-being of our association:

- (1) Our ability to identify and recruit able volunteer leaders to provide competent and effective leadership to our committees and the Board of Directors, and;
- (2) to make the necessary changes to our bylaws to facilitate more effective governance of our Association. After 21 years, it seems obvious to all of us involved that both these matters merit high priority attention. Later in the meeting, the Board agreed that these issues will be addressed at a carefully planned weekend retreat that will be held in late spring or early fall with participation of Board, management and representatives from the various committees. I hope that we can take some constructive steps in the next few months to address both of these issues.

Both the Treasurer, Carol Cataldo, and the Chair of the Finance Committee, Betty Weber, agreed that our finances are in reasonably good shape. The audit of our 2000 books has been completed with satisfactory results. No problems were reported. By maintaining for the next few years the same

level of contributions to the reserve funds that we have in this year's budget, we will be able to finance the overhaul of the elevators and complete the work on the balconies, as well as other major repairs and replacements that are foreseeable without any need to increase our condo fees for this purpose. Of course, the operating budget part of our condo fees which are subject to inflation in such areas as wages and salaries, health insurance, supplies, utility costs, and contract services, will be likely to increase slightly each year, but the almost 20% increase which was necessary this year is not on the horizon.

Our neighboring condominium, Skyline Square, has asked us whether we can allow access to our pool for some of their residents for 4-6 weeks at the beginning of the summer. Their pool is undergoing repairs, which are not expected to be complete until early July. The Board asked management to negotiate the details of a possible agreement with Skyline Square and present their recommendations to the PPOC for consideration. The PPOC will then make a recommendation to the Board. It is our understanding that other condominiums in the area with swimming pools have also been approached.

An *ad hoc* Decorating Committee, with the limited charge of recommending an interior design firm to redecorate the main lobby, has been appointed. The Committee consists of Jean Orben, Chair, Carroll Thompson and Louise Albin. They have been busy interviewing potentially qualified interior designers and expect to complete their work in late May or early June. A little over \$50,000 has been budgeted for redecorating the lobby this year. The General Manager requested that the designers also be asked to recommend replacement lighting

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE HOUSE SPECIAL welcomes brief comments from its readers. Limit your letters to 250 words or less 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 sent by e-mail to the Editor, dropped off at the management office or the reception desk.

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on the first floor, at least for the galleries and the west building's garage elevator lobby. She said that the fixtures had deteriorated and posed a potential safety hazard and should be replaced soon. She said there is \$20,000 in the reserve budget available for this purpose. The Board then authorized the Committee to ask their designers to include replacing the lighting fixtures in their design recommendations. Subsequently, the Committee learned from the Chief Engineer that all of the lighting on the first floor urgently needs replacing because it is the only part of the building that did not have its lighting fixtures replaced during the last redecorating cycle. I then asked Jean Orben to ask the designers to recommend new fixtures for the entire first floor of both buildings as well as the main lobby as part of their scope of work. When we get the recommendations, and have the total cost estimates, we will have the PPOC and the FMC make recommendations to the Board as to how best to proceed.



EDITOR Louise Albin

April was my first issue of The House Special, and frankly, I was a bit nervous about how it would be received. I appreciate all the positive comments. I strive to get The House Special delivered as close to the first of the month as possible, but I can do that only if you get your reports to me by the 23rd of the month at the latest.

Having spent a few evenings in our House Library located in the East building, I realize that many residents are not taking advantage of what we have available in this library. Through the generosity of Judith York, a retrospect of Princess Diana is available through the month of May.

Two residents have approached me about publishing recipes. If you have a favorite recipe you would like to share, or would like to have recipes included in the monthly News Letter, please send me a response by e-mail. I will also consider negative responses. I'll include two of mine at the end of this publication.

Look for some reports of interest further in this issue.



I want to thank everyone in the Skyline House for your kind thoughts and support during my time of sorrow.

It is a great comfort to know that so many people have shown their respect for Mike.

Edith S. Moore

Virginia Fissmer graciously volunteered to proof read for me and I greatly appreciate it. I sincerely thank Virginia for being my second pair of eyes.



From The General Manager Gusbey Silva

Balconies Seal coating

Commercial Roofing and Sheet Metal Company has been selected for the seal coating of the balconies. The job is scheduled to begin on Monday, May 14, 2001, with an estimated duration of 10 weeks. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 7, 2001. At that time we will receive a full schedule from the contractor and notices will be posted notifying residents of the start date for the first tiers to be worked on. We will notify you at least two days in advance before work starts on your tier. All items, including furniture, plants, etc., must be removed from the balcony while work is being done.

Arabic TV Channels

The Board of Directors approved the installation of an additional satellite dish to be installed at Skyline House for the reception of two Arabic TV Channels offered by Washington Cable. If you wish to receive these channels, please visit the front desk to pick up the programming agreement information. Washington Cable requires a minimum of 100 subscribers prior to dish installation.

Front Entrance School Bus Stop

Management has received several complaints of noise disturbance and misbehavior of the children in the lobby while waiting for the school bus in the morning and returning home in the afternoon. We want to remind parents of the children who are picked up at the front entrance that the Skyline House Rules and Regulations must be followed at all times and that parents are responsible for the behavior of their children. The lobby will be closely monitored and violators will be reported to the Covenants Committee.

Storage Bins

Last year a total of 16 additional storage bins were built. All were rented immediately. If you are interested in renting a storage bin, please call Tania at the Management Office. We have enough room to build an additional 16 to 20 storage bins.

Elevator Doors Rehabilitation

The Door Rehabilitation on all the elevators is now completed. Please allow a few weeks for minor operational adjustments.



Finance Committee Betty G. Weber

Financial Management Committee Betty Weber, Chair

The Finance Committee met on 17 April 2001 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room.

Management discussed the Auditors' recommendations resulting from the year 2000 audit. Actions recommended by the auditors included:

1. Increasing our accruals for taxes. We had budgeted approximately \$2,000 for taxes this year. Our taxes were approximately \$9,000 higher than last year because of an increase in interest income and from unit rental;

- Adjustments to bad debt reserves: Auditors recommended that we reduce our bad debt reserves based on our current history of collections;
- 3. Transferring year-end operating funds in the amount of \$44,480 to reserves. Our 2000 operating costs were under budget by this amount and the overage was transferred to the lobby furniture account to increase funds available for lobby furniture and lighting;
- 4. Work on the elevator doors will be completed in approximately two weeks. The association has not yet been billed for this work. We can expect a healthy outlay of funds from our reserve account for that work when completed. The next work planned for the elevators is on the elevator controls. We anticipate that most of the outlays for that work will occur in 2002;
- 5. The FMC also considered the proposals submitted for the balcony coating as reported by the PPOC. We concur with the PPOC's recommendation that the contract be awarded to Commercial Roofing in the amount of \$337,600. We have \$266,000 in the budget this year for that work. This means that we are short approximately \$71,000, which will have to be funded next year in the 2002 reserves.

Due to recent problems with vandals, and in response to the Board's request, we were pleased to note that management has taken the initiative to proceed with obtaining bids to re-key all perimeter doors. This action was planned for and included in this year's budget. Homeowners will be issued the same number of keys they turn in unless the number turned in exceeds the number authorized for the unit. Management reports that, based on the first two bids thus far received, it appears that the re-keying may cost somewhat less that we had budgeted for this year, and we may be able to free up an additional \$12,000 to help compensate for the shortage of funds in the account for the balcony repairs.

Replacement of lights planned for the west parking lot is also expected to come in about \$2,000 under budget (\$3,000 vs. \$5,000).

Our House Engineer plans to install ballasts in the garage lights on D-level in an effort to improve lighting. If the ballasts prove to be insufficient, then installation of new lights will be needed. Funds for new lighting, if needed, will be included in the 2002 budget.

The FMC provided the Board a forecast for reserve requirements through 2004. Included in the forecast is the \$71,000 makeup for shortage in the balcony account and the continuing overhaul of the elevators. So far, the estimated reserve contributions required through 2004 remain comparable to the reserve contributions being made this year. The PPOC has identified a number of other items that are not included in the reserves forecast. These items will need to be addressed in the near future. Accounts for those items will be added to the reserve schedule, but, in an effort to keep future increases in Association fees at a minimum, funding for the work will probably not commence until 2005.

Account	2001 YTD	2001 YTD	
	Actual	Budget*	
Total Income	775,295	750,760	
Total Frances	744 500	750 700	
Total Expense	744,568	750,760	
Net Income (Loss)	30,727	0	
Total Reserves			
Beginning Balance	831,760	831,760	
Contributions	319,180	266,860	
Expenditures	37,159	37,159	
Ending Balance Total Reserves	1,113,781	1,061,461	



Physical Plant And Operations Committee George Beams And Kurt Bedenbaugh

The Committee met on April 12, 2001. The following subjects were discussed:

a) Elevator Door Rehabilitation: The passenger elevator doors on the East and West Garage are completed. The repairs to the West Freight Elevator doors are completed. The repairs to the East Elevator doors are scheduled for completion by the end of April.

- b) East Driveway & Parking Areas Asphalt Reseal: The resealing of the driveway is scheduled for May 1, 2001. Management has discovered water infiltration in the same area where the new French Drain was installed last summer. Management has notified the Contractor to resolve the problem. The work is still under warranty.
- c) Arabic TV Channels: Cox Cable has discontinued the transmission of the Arabic Channel as of 3/01/01. Washington Cable will offer two Arabic Channels, one scrambled on Channel 2 that duplicates another Channel, and Channel 8. Subscriptions will be offered at \$15.00 per month with a minimum of 100 subscribers. Washington Cable will test several Arabic Channels on Channel 41 in April for 10 days.
- d) Passenger Elevator Floor Covering: Management will install the surplus of carpet remnants inside the cars in lieu of installing vinyl tile. Modifications to the elevator cabs are scheduled for 2005.
- e) <u>Domestic Booster Pumps</u>: PPOC approved the specifications prepared by Management to have the pumps refurbished for the East and West Buildings.
- f) Switch Gear Maintenance: PPOC approved the Management proposal to execute a maintenance upgrade contract to the existing switchgear equipment, shop, four Meter rooms, two Penthouse electrical rooms, and two boiler rooms.
- Balcony and Terrace Surface Coating & Repair
 Bids: Management notified the PPOC that four
 bids were received for coating the concrete
 balconies for the East and West buildings.
 Commercial Roofers were the lowest bidders.
 Result from discussions by the PPOC, the
 Committee accepted Commercial's bid and
 recommended that the board approve them in
 order to execute the contract.



Security, Fire And Safety Committee Robert Busby

Fairfax County Police are investigating a sexual assault, which occurred in the Skyline Mall, located at 5115 Leesburg Pike, in the Baileys Crossroads area, just before 9:00 pm Friday, April 6, 2001.

An 18-year old Leesburg girl was walking through the mall with a friend when a man yelled to her from behind. The victim turned around to see what the man wanted. The suspect walked up to her and engaged her in conversation. The victim started to walk away with the suspect following. The suspect then put his arm around the victim and kissed her on the neck. The victim tried to pull away but the suspect continued to kiss and fondle her. The suspect finally let the victim go and walked away. The victim contacted mall security officers who called police. During this event, the suspect told the victim his name was "Amilcar."

The suspect is described as Hispanic, in his twenties, five feet nine inches tall, weighing approximately 160 pounds, with brown eyes and short, black, curly hair. He was wearing blue jeans, a black tee-shirt with red lettering, a gold watch on his right wrist and a couple of gold chains around his neck.

Anyone with information on this suspect is asked to call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131 or Fairfax County Crime Solvers at 1-800-673-2777 or 703-691-8888

In another incident, two youths were walking toward Skyline Mall and were approached by two teenage males who took a jacket and a t-shirt after implying they had a knife.

For a more complete listing of all crimes in Fairfax County, please follow the link below to the County web site at:

http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/ps/police/police7.htm



Ad Hoc Lobby Decorating Committee Jean Orban, Chairman Carroll Thompson & Louise Albin

At the beginning of April, the Board of Directors established the Ad Hoc Lobby Decorating Committee. We contacted eight interior designers referred to us by the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID). We drafted a Scope of Work, interviewed five interior designers, selected three that were the most qualified and asked them to proposals. submit We also visited five condominiums decorated by two of the designers. Two of the designers were rejected and two that we contacted withdrew.



Recreation Committee Tony DiSalvo Chairman

The Committee met on April 11 in the West Card Room. The next meeting will be in June.

A Flea Market will be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2001 in the East Party Room. Complete details will be published in the June Newsletter as well as the bulletin board explaining how to make your reservation.

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

The next TGIF is scheduled for Friday, May 4, 6:30 p.m., East Party Room

COMING EVENTS:

TGIF, Friday, June 1, 6:30 p.m., West Party Room Flea Market, June 20, East Party Room



Good Neighbors Committee Co-Chairs Toska Prather 703-379-7849

Virginia Wallace 703-671-7648

Good Neighbors for May 2001

Martha Beams (703) 578-9507 Raymond Mills (703) 820-7438

The Good Neighbors are available to assist all residents who are in need of temporary help due to illness or an emergency. Please call on them if a need arises. If any one wishes to join the Good Neighbors, please call one of the Co-Chairs.



Covenants Committee David Kafka

No meeting was held in April; therefore, no report. The next meeting will be on May 16th at 7:30 p.m. The Covenants Hearing will be held on May 22nd at 7:00 p.m. Both meetings will be in the West Card Room.



The Chief Engineer Greg Grimm

Look for Greg's report next month



Letters To The Editor

ANY SOCCER PLAYERS IN THE HOUSE?

I am interested in playing soccer/football. I would be interested either in joining an existing group or starting a new group. There are a number of schools near Skyline House where an informal pick-up game could be played, evenings or weekends. If anyone (resident or employee) is interested, please call Joel at (703) 820-2080, or send an e-mail to joelmaybury@hotmail.com

A Short History Of The Crossroads Now Known As Baileys Crossroads

By Tony DiSalvo

In the late 1800s, Hachaliah was a young driver in New York State working out of the Bowery, NYC. He often visited Connecticut to buy cattle and return to the Bowery to fatten up the cattle. A bit earlier, ginseng was discovered in Western Virginia and this made many farmers wealthy. In 1796, after a year on the ocean via Cape Horn, Captain Crowninsheld returned from China in his vessel with prized cargo that caused as much wonderment among Americans as gin did among the Orientals. The prized cargo was an elephant with her native attendant. Hachliah bought the elephant for \$10,000. As America's first elephant, she was a real curiosity.

Hachaliah took the elephant, known as Old Bet or Bette, 300 miles into Connecticut on a cattle-buying trip where he charged 10 cents per person to see her. A story is told that Hachaliah said that the elephant had a very tough hide and that a bullet could not pierce it. On July 24, 1816, someone took him at his word and shot the elephant with a rifle killing it. There are a number of different stories and this is one of them.

Hachaliah built a hotel called the ELEPHANT HOTEL (from the book "The Elephants and Quaker Guns" pub. 1985) located in Somers, N.Y. This classic three-story, red brick structure was built between 1820 and 1825 by Hachaliah Bailey, "the father of the American Circus." The words ELEPHANT HOTEL were painted across the top of this building to commemorate the elephant that had been responsible for Mr. Bailey's fortune. In 1827 a wooden replica of Old Bet was mounted on a granite shaft in front of the hotel. The monument remains today, although the original statue had to be replaced in the 1930's because of its decaying condition. A piece of the trunk is on exhibit in the museum in the hotel. Its hotel registry was a virtual "who's-who" in the 1800s. Mark Twain, Horace Greeley, and Washington Irving, among others, stayed at this hotel. Nancy and I had an opportunity to visit the Elephant Hotel.

Hachaliah became a customer of P.T. Barnum who sold cheap jewelry, which Hachaliah probably obtained for his circus gimmicks. Hachaliah hired a

trainer and took his group and toured as far away as California. He bought animals as he went along. He wintered his traveling herd in Connecticut. Washington, D.C. was a regular stopover for these traveling shows.

Barnum had financial trouble and P.T. was hired by Bailey to run his circus front office in New York.

Realizing the need for a country place for animal training and wintering quarters in the Washington area, Bailey bought land in Fairfax County on December 19, 1837. The land tract of over 500 acres surrounded the crossing of two important highways, Leesburg Turnpike, which extended from Alexandria to a northwest mountain gap, and Columbia Turnpike. Little River Turnpike, three miles distant from the Crossroads, was a main highway to the west. Bailey considered his Virginia purchase to be situated on the pathways to all points north, south and west. He immediately put his property to circus use. The land was formerly used for raising cattle and producing milk, which was sold to the Willard Hotel in D.C., among other places. Bailey owned no slaves but rented them.

Crossroads was formed in 1809 by the crossing of Columbia Pike with Leesburg Pike. Later it was given the name of the owner, Hachaliah Bailey, and was then called Baileys Crossroads

In 1843, Bailey deeded his property not to his son Louis, but to his wife Mariah Snook Bailey who was known for her business acumen. Lewis and Mariah arrived at the Crossroads in 1840 to develop the Bailey's estate. The land was also used for traveling circus shows. Lewis continued to farm the land, but Mariah had other interests.

Lewis and Mariah found that there was a handsome old structure behind the Crossroads in the area now called "Glen Forest." The house having every aspect of a mansion, was called Maury or Moray.

Among one of the many things that Mariah did was to move the old Crossroads Inn to adjoin the family mansion. Hachaliah spent some time at the Crossroads during the earliest years of Bailey's ownership. His declining months were spent at the Elephant Hotel talking with the many visitors who congregated there daily. Bailey, America's entertainment pioneer circus showman, died in1845. He and Mariah had 10 children.

A Grand Review was held on November 20, 1861 during the Civil War. The ceremony was for the changing of the guard. General McClellan, who had replaced the elderly General Scott, was to review the troops. Depending upon which story you read, there were 50 to 70,000 army troops. President Lincoln, his cabinet, and foreign dignitaries were there. Of course, they came by horse and carriage taking about one-half day traveling from Washington, DC via Columbia Pike.

A bit more about the Elephant Hotel: The hotel was purchased in 1927 by the town of Somers, N.Y. from the Bailey family and is now used as the town's city hall. The beauty of the building can still be seen in its stately portico and entrance hall, the woodwork surrounding windows and doors and the fireplaces in each room. The huge fireplace measuring 8' x 6'3", once used for cooking, is now one wall of the town employee's lounge.

The top floor of the three-story building contains the circus museum, library and offices for the town historian and curator. Nancy and I spent at least two hours talking to the historian (83 years old), and she was great. We exchanged stories, and we told her we lived in Baileys Crossroads where all this started. A great deal of memorabilia was found there. A lot can be said of this building, but a visit is much more important. A return visit to Somers is in order.

SEVEN CORNERS. During the Civil war, there was a fort called Fort Buffalo. It was then that this 34-acre area known as Seven Corners was rezoned from suburban to general business. Frederick Foote, a black man with white and Indian blood, had purchased 34 acres for \$500 in 1864. In his will, he directed that the land must remain in the family and never be sold. The annual taxes on the property grew to tremendous proportions. However, his descendants obtained a release from the will's provision and sold the acreage for

\$750,00. As we all know this land was developed into a new shopping center, which revolutionized the shipping habits, social life, etc., of the community.

Submitted by Tony DiSalvo.

IN CASE YOU MISSED THIS ARTICLE IN: "The Washington Post," April 25, 2001 METRO In Brief VIRGINIA

Falls Church Raises Real Estate Tax

The Falls Church City Council has approved a \$41 million budget that raises the real estate tax rate 3 cents while cutting \$400,000 from what school officials had sought for the coming fiscal year.

Council members said their 6 to 1 vote Monday night reflected a compromise between rising school costs and taxes.

Homeowners in the city already are faced with property assessments that have increased an average 17.5 percent this year – the largest such jump in Northern Virginia. The average assessment of a single-family home in Falls Church is now \$321,300.

The new tax rate of \$1.13 for each \$100 of assessed value means that the typical homeowner will pay \$3,631 in property taxes in the fiscal year that starts July 1 – about \$625 more than at present.

The city's schools will receive \$26.3 million, 13 percent more than this year's allotment but short of what administrators wanted.

Submitted by: Deputy General Manager, Darryl Hall

VIRGINIA STATE TAXES

This is an alert to senior citizens age 60 and above that a study is going to be done to change the deductions in our Virginia State Taxes. The following is information copied from a National Association of Retired Federal Employees publication:

"The Tax Study Commission Report includes recommendations to eliminate the age deduction (\$6,000 for age 62-64 and \$12,000 for 65+) and tax Social Security benefits the same as on the federal income tax returns. If these two recommendations were accepted, seniors could expect substantial tax consequences.

Be an active participant in the state elections this fall to assure the incoming General Assembly knows where we stand on these unfair tax issues. Make it a point to talk to each of the candidates that are running for election to the House of Delegates from your area. Let them know we are opposed to the elimination of the Age Deduction."

Contact Delegates and Senators to let them know how you stand on these issues. Addresses for local Delegates and Senators:

Delegate Robert D. Hull PO Box 2311 Falls Church, VA 22042.

Phone: (703) 573-4855; GAB (804) 698-1038;

Delegate James M. Scott, PO Box 359 Merrifield, VA 22116-0359

Phone: (703) 560-8338; GAB (804) 698-1053

Delegate James F. Almand 5526 N. 18th Road Arlington, VA 22205

Phone: (703) 524-9700; GAB (804) 698-1047

Senator Leslie L. Byrne PO Box 2612 Falls Church, VA 22042-2612

RECIPES from the Kitchen of Louise Albin

Spinach/Artichoke Hors d'oeuvres

2-8 oz. cans crescent rolls – spread and flattened out in a 15x10x1" cookie or jelly roll pan, making a little rim (like a pie-crust). Bake at 375 for 10-12 minutes (light brown).

Mix:

- 1 9 oz. package frozen spinach, squeeze out all the liquid, OR
- 1 14 oz cans artichoke harts chopped
- 1 can chestnuts, chopped
- 3/4 cup Parmesan cheese
- 2/3 cup mayonnaise
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 1/8 tsp. garlic powder

Spread on baked crescent pastry and put back into oven 5-8 minutes Just to heat up. Cut in 1-1/2 inch squares and serve. Best served warm.

My next all favorite for a quick dinner

CHICKEN MARSALA

2 whole chicken breasts, split, boned and skinned 2 to 3 tablespoons flour ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper ½ pound mushrooms, sliced 4 tablespoons butter or margarine 1 tablespoon plus ½ cup Marsala

Sprigs of watercress for garnish

Pound chicken with a mallet or rolling pin until thin and dredge in flour and pepper mixture. In large skillet sauté mushrooms in butter and one tablespoon wine until limp. Remove and set aside. Sauté chicken in same skillet 3 minutes per side. Remove and set aside with mushrooms. Add remaining wine to skillet and scrape together with pan remnants. Cook over high heat for few minutes until reduced by more than half. Pour over chicken and mushrooms and garnish.

Basting with wine adds flavor as well as helping keep chicken, fish and meat from becoming dry.

SPECIAL EVENTS AT SKYLINE HOUSE MAY 2001

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
					TGIF 6:30 P.M. ECR	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	LIBRARY OPEN 7:00-8:00 ECR		SECURITY 7:00 P.M. WCR	PPOC 7:00 P.M. WCR		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Remember Mom	LIBRARY OPEN 7:00-8:00 ECR	FIN MGT 7:00 P.M. WCR	COV MTG 7:30 P.M. WCR	BOARD 7:00 P.M. WCR		ARMED FORCES DAY
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	LIBRARY OPEN 7:00-8:00 ECR	COV HEARING 7:00 P.M. WCR				
27	28	29	30	31		
	MEMORIAL DAY LIBRARY CLOSED					

Skyline House Unit Owners' Association, Inc., 3711 South George Mason Drive Falls Church VA 22041-3711