

# *The House Special*



*Volume XXVI Issue 8*

*Skyline House*

*August 2006*

## **Board of Directors**

**President, Norman Baker**

Business at the July 26<sup>th</sup> Board meeting was routine. Committee reports cover the one approved action item. I am, therefore, using this report to address a few general items. There will be no Board of Directors or standing Committee meetings in August.

### **The House Special Newsletter**

I regret to report that Louise Albin informed the Board that the July edition of the House Special would be her last as Editor. Louise served in that capacity for over five years and 65 issues. The Board and the Association acknowledge her incredible dedication and service and her invaluable contributions to our community. **THANK YOU LOUISE.**

Now we face the daunting task of replacing Louise with a new volunteer who is willing to assume responsibility for nurturing our newsletter to publication on a monthly basis. Since it will be necessary for me to be able to describe to an interested volunteer exactly what is involved in producing the newsletter every month, I have assumed editorial responsibility while we seek a new Editor. This August edition is the result of my humble efforts. In an attempt to update the newsletter's look, readers will see several changes to the format and design, including, among other things, a new header, one column instead of two, and one handy page containing, not only the monthly calendar, but also good neighbors information and the directory of important House phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Resident feedback will be much appreciated. Please share with me, other Board members, or Management what you think of the new look and changes as well as any creative ideas you might have for our newsletter during this time of transition.

## **VOLUNTEER EDITOR NEEDED**

**Skyline House is seeking one or more volunteer(s) to serve as Editor/Co-Editors of its very important monthly newsletter, The House Special.**

**Please contact Norman Baker at [nbaker@fjc.gov](mailto:nbaker@fjc.gov) or 703-671-6759**

## Have You Signed Up For Skyline House E-Mail Yet?

Management will soon disseminate House information to residents via e-mail. If you have e-mail access and would like to receive information such as the newsletter, committee meeting agendas, bulletin board announcements, and short notice announcements (those usually placed under the door), etc., please contact Tania Saib, the Association's Resident Services Coordinator, at [tania@shuoa.org](mailto:tania@shuoa.org) with your e-mail information, indicating that you would like to be part of the voluntary e-mail list. Your information will be confidential and used only for the above-mentioned purposes.

## Resident Vehicle Registration

Rule 18 E. 6. of the Rules and Regulations states "All vehicles...parked in the garage or outside spaces on a regular basis, shall display the Skyline House registration decal issued by the Association." **If you park inside or outside on Skyline House property, register your car with the Association and display the sticker in your vehicle window as instructed or risk having your vehicle towed at your own expense.**

## West Lobby Door

An automatic opener and closer controls the door leading to the West lobby mailbox area. Please, **DO NOT** hold or prop this door open as doing so will damage the mechanism and, more importantly, **presents a severe breach of our security**. If you see this door being held open please try to close it and report it immediately. No one should enter through this door without a key. Please help by referring all guests to the front lobby. **This door is not for loading and unloading. Use the loading dock for such purposes.**

## "HOUSE" HINTS

Useful Information from Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm

### Do You Know Sheila Shine?

Sheila Shine is a product that temporarily cleans, polishes and protects all the metal on your balcony (the door, the railings, and the wall panels). Simply spray it on and rub it in with a clean cloth...some effort but a renewed look. The Association has sold Sheila Shine for years and those who use it really like the results. Sheila Shine is available at the front desk for \$7.50 a can.

### Water Alarms And Air Filters

When did you last check your unit's utility closet containing the air conditioner and hot water heater? Water leakage in this closet can be a big problem for you and your neighbors. Do you know you can purchase (for \$13.80 in the Management Office) an alarm to place on the utility closet floor? The alarm will sound whenever it detects water on the floor? When did you last replace your air conditioner filter? Doing so will improve your cooling efficiency and save you money. Do you know you can purchase replacement filter for your air conditioner at the front desk?

### Dryer Vent Cleaned At No Charge

The Association schedules cleanings for dryer vents for all units in tiers 5, 6, and 14, and for all units on the 17th floors. Dryer vents for all other units will also be cleaned at no charge; however, you must schedule the service with the Management Office. Your dryer vent is located right above the balcony door on the outside. You can tell if it needs cleaning simply by looking to see how much lint is caught in the vent.

A clean vent will reduce drying time and thus your utility costs.

More importantly a clean vent will reduce the possibility of a dryer fire.

**Save your money and be safe. Schedule a dryer vent cleaning at no charge.**



# Management

## General Manager, Gusbey Silva

### Garage Painting To Begin

The painting of all cinder block walls and vertical columns in the garage will begin on Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, in the lower C Level and will continue upwards. During this time residents will be required to park their vehicles three feet away from the wall/railing, just as was done when the garage concrete panels were seal coated in 2004.

The A, B and C level ceilings will not be painted as the open space between the concrete panels on these levels allows for much more light than is available in the D Level. The ceiling on the D level was previously painted to try to enhance the amount of light on that level. Also, there will not be a need to vacate A, B and C level parking spaces to offsite areas while work is being done if the ceilings on these levels are not painted.

### 10-Minute Parking Discontinued

Effective July 7<sup>th</sup> the two 10-minute parking spaces in the circle in front of the lobby were removed as ordered by the Fairfax County Fire Marshall. The entire circle area is now designated No Parking/No Standing. This measure is required to allow the large fire trucks to negotiate the circle when responding to a Skyline House emergency. New signs have been installed as requested by the Fire Marshall. **Please adhere to the new regulation or risk being towed at your expense.**

### East Building North and South Façade Restoration

The removal of all form boards on tiers 4, 5, 6 and 7 was completed July 19<sup>th</sup>. The brick installation and pointing has also been completed on these tiers. The concrete spandrel coating, cleaning, caulking and sealing has been completed on tiers 5 and 6 and completion is estimated on tiers 4 and 7 by the end of August 2006.

Work on the remaining tiers in this phase, 2, 3, 8, 9 and 10, will start during the second week of August 2006. Form boards were installed above the windows in each of the units in these tiers at the end of July 2006. Notices have been sent to each unit informing them of the procedures for this project.

Unfortunately, the repair process imposes a real inconvenience on the residents of units near the work area. The drilling is very noisy and occurs in two separate phases: first, to remove the concrete and, second to remove the brick above the spandrel in order to replace the existing flashing. The party rooms will be available between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm to escape the noise while the repairs are being done outside your unit.

Please keep in mind that the façade repairs also generate a high volume of dust and debris. Please keep your doors and windows closed while the work is being performed and do not access your balcony during that time.

The remaining East Building tiers, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 01 will be completed during the fourth phase of the project, scheduled to start in March 2007.

### **A Resident Tip For Those About To Undergo Facade Repairs**

The drilling and hammering work on our facade produces a very fine dust – so fine it gets through the closed windows. We were told about the dust by residents of the West building and, therefore, we taped the windows closed. Net result: no dust. Well worth the cost of some masking tape and a half hour's work. **Submitted by Jean Orben 205 East**



# **PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS**

**Chair, George Beams**

The Physical Plant and Operations Committee met on July 13<sup>th</sup>. The main item of business was consideration of a proposal to perform a structural inspection on the Skyline House garage. The last inspection was done in 2002. The estimated cost of the inspection is \$16,835 based on the firm's schedule of estimated hourly costs for the three inspection tasks presented in their proposal.

After some discussion, the following motion was passed:

It is recommended the Board award a contract for the structural inspection of Skyline House Parking Garage to [WDP] Whitlock Dalrymple Poston & Associates, Inc for the estimated cost of \$16,835.

A brief discussion was held concerning Jean Orben's proposal for the possibility of installing solar panels to cut electricity costs. Jean is still investigating the subject and plans to submit her proposal and information at the next PPOC meeting.

Too few residents took advantage of the July 20<sup>th</sup> PPOC walk-around of the penthouse facilities (party rooms and kitchens) in both buildings as well as the passenger and freight elevator mechanical rooms and the rooms containing the building's central air handlers (all located on top of the buildings). General Manager Silva and Chief Engineer Grimm fielded many questions and conducted a fascinating and informative tour. Future PPOC walk-arounds will be planned and posted. Everyone is invited to join in. Don't miss them.



# **COVENANTS**

**Chair, Joseph Livingston**

The Covenants Committee met July 19<sup>th</sup>. Management informed the Committee that letters had been sent to several residents and/or Unit Owners, concerning alleged infractions of the Association's Rules and Regulations. Management considered the respective responses, and all matters were closed, except one case, which is pending.

This appears to reflect a significant increase in reported infractions from the last reporting period in which there was only one reported infraction.

Following discussion of the incidents, and with due regard for privacy, it was agreed that in this issue of the House Special, residents would be reminded that generally, there has been wide support for and adherence to our Association's Rules and Regulations. However, there have been exceptions, and as you guessed, it is the exception that gets the attention, e.g. tailgating and/or speeding in the garage (5 miles per hour is the speed limit); disposing of trash improperly; using the balcony for storage, and a few others.

In the rush of things, we sometimes forget. That cannot be the acceptable answer when there are express rules and regulations addressing these activities. So as a favor to yourself and your neighbor, please take a few minutes to review your copy of the Association's Rules and Regulations. If you have misplaced your copy, you may obtain a new copy in the Management Office, and if you wish to engage in meaningful discussion of these rules and regulations, please feel free to attend the Covenants Committee meetings. Always check the bulletin boards or the House Special newsletter for time and place. There will not be a meeting in August. The next meeting will be September 24<sup>th</sup>.



# FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chair, Wynfred Joshua

The Financial Management Committee met July 24<sup>th</sup>. Total income in June was \$293,768 with expenditures of \$183,785. Total income less expenditures amounted to \$109,983. The monthly Reserve Contribution was \$96,167, leaving a net income before taxes of \$13,816. Responding to FMC comments that water usage remained high, the General Manager explained that some leaks in the irrigation system were discovered and repaired. Next month's bill should indicate whether water usage has returned to a more reasonable level. There were no other expenditures that triggered questions.

A review of the June financial statements indicated that the Reserves had declined to slightly below \$1 million largely because of the increased façade repairs. We are expecting major reserve expenditures in the next few years if we launch, as currently planned, the circular driveway project in 2007 and the balcony remediation and balcony railing replacement in 2008. We plan to go over the figures during our August Reserve Budget meetings, establish priorities and consider options.

We will submit the proposed 2007 budget to the Board at its September session. We expect to provide recommendations that will ensure the sound structure of the buildings and, if necessary, a reasonable raise in the condo fee.

The FMC endorsed the PPOC's recommendation to the Board to accept the proposal of WDP Associates in the amount of \$16,835 for the regular structural inspection of the garage. The amount this year is some \$1800 more than budgeted, but the inspection is a critical element in ensuring the structural integrity of the garage. For your information, at the advice of WDP, who performed the previous tests for us, we have been budgeting some \$30,000 a year for potential repairs. Thus, if the outcome of the WDP test indicates needed repairs, we will most likely be able to cover these.

The FMC established the budget subcommittees (Reserves and Operations) that will meet in late August and early September to develop the proposed 2007 budget. We will not have our regular Committee meeting in August, but will reconvene as a full committee for our monthly meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup>. During that meeting, we hope to formulate recommendations to the Board for the 2007 budget. We welcome all interested residents. The Committee and your Association need your ideas and your involvement.

## GOOD NEIGHBORS

Good Neighbors are available to assist all residents in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency.

### AUGUST GOOD NEIGHBORS\*

**JUDITH YORK 703-671-2267**

**TOSCA PRATHER 703-379-7849**

(\*GOOD NEIGHBOR CONTACT INFO CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON THE CALENDAR PAGE)

Good Neighbors always welcomes new members to assist those in need. If you are interested in serving your neighbors, please call one coordinator Tosca Prather or Ernest Loyola. Their contact information is listed in the newsletter directory on the calendar page.



# SECURITY, FIRE, & SAFETY

**Chair, Robert De Mayo**

The Security, Fire and Safety Committee met July 11<sup>th</sup> and was chaired by Mr. Robert “Bob” De Mayo, who was recently approved by the Board for this position. Bob and his wife, Linda, moved into the East building in mid-December 2005. Bob is a retired Air Force officer and now a government civilian with almost 40 years of experience in the security and safety arena. He is very familiar with community activism and is currently a Fairfax County Reserve Deputy Sheriff.

The Neighborhood Watch Committee announced Skyline House and related neighbor participation in “National Night Out” during the evening of August 1<sup>st</sup>. Hats off to Judith York and the stalwart members of the Neighborhood Watch for keeping Skyline House involved in this worthwhile show of support and also to the Skyline residents who “walked the walk” that evening.

Management noted that vendor proposals, concepts, and pricing had been solicited for the pending change to an electronic access control system (swipe cards instead of keys) for common area doors. Resident views of the proposals and open discussion of the change will be solicited by the Committee in coming months.

Concern about speeding in the garage was expressed by some residents. The garage speed limit (5 MPH) is well posted and CONFIDENTIAL reporting procedures are in place and covered under existing covenants. Residents are urged to report violations to management or the front desk. Security will be instructed to keep a sharp eye out for speed violators.

Some residents asked about criminal gang activity in our area. The Chair noted that during Deputy training, he attended a presentation on Northern Virginia criminal gang organizations and activities. He will contact Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy trainers to explore if they are willing to make a presentation to our residents in the Fall.

The Committee’s next meeting is September 13<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to attend and help us maintain and improve security and safety for all.

**Our motto: “Security and Safety at Skyline House is Everyone’s Business”**



# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

**Coordinator, Judith York**

There were several reports of unsecured doors in both the buildings, and locks in need of maintenance. We ask everyone to help maintain a secure House by ensuring doors are closed and locked after you pass through them, and, if you notice an item in need of maintenance to please report it immediately. Volunteers also notified Management of items left outside several units and door decorations that needed to be removed. Vehicles parked in the garage without the required Skyline House decal were also reported.

Mason District police officers recently conducted a two-phase pedestrian enforcement campaign near Route 50 and Seven Corners. The first phase involved distribution of educational materials to pedestrians and warnings issued. The second involved actual ticketing of pedestrians violating pedestrian safety laws. Last year there were 284 accidents involving Fairfax County pedestrians and, three have died in the targeted location in just the last few months. We all know it is rare to drive in our area and not see pedestrians crossing busy highways, many times not at the traffic lights. **Stay alert!**

Our community police officer informed us of a shooting in the Bailey's Crossroads area, a man stabbed in the Falls Church area and a home invasion in the Fairfax area.

There will not be any Neighborhood Watch meetings at the Mason District Police Station in August. The first meetings after the August break will be:

Tuesday, September 5 <sup>th</sup>	6:30pm	Neighborhood Watch Coordinators
	7:00pm	Neighborhood Watch Training
	7:30pm	Citizen's Advisory Committee

If you know of anyone interested in a law enforcement career, the Fairfax County Police Department is seeking qualified applicants to become part of the largest local law enforcement agency in Virginia. Starting salary is \$44,443 for officer applicants at least 21 with a high school diploma or G.E.D. Starting salary is \$26,584 for cadet applicants 18 to 20. For more information, phone Detective Annie Mack-Evans in the Personnel Resources Division (703-246-2448), or recruiting (703-246-7563).



## RECREATION

**Chair, Tony DiSalvo**

Just one more reminder - looking for a new chairman for the Recreation Committee.

July 7<sup>th</sup>, was another great **TGIF\*** gathering. I have been saying that since the first of the year. Thank you all residents who have been attending the monthly TGIF. It was a wonderful group. I am sure all who were present enjoyed themselves. Join us again on Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, in the West Party Room at 6:30 PM. Please also note on your calendar that the September TGIF will be held Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, in the East Party Room.

If you are a resident and have not attended a monthly TGIF, make August 4<sup>th</sup> your first and meet your neighbors. To make it easy, you are requested NOT to bring a plate of hors d'oeuvres, just your own liquid refreshment. Come and enjoy.

See you all on Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, in the West Party Room for another great TGIF.

\* **"Thank Goodness It's Friday"**

### **Magazines For Alexandria Hospital**

Just a reminder and a thank you for all those who contribute to this worthy cause. Just drop the magazines at the front desk and I will pick them up. I make a trip at least once a week with all the magazines that I receive. Thank you.

## **BALCONY ETIQUETTE**

### **PLANTS**

Keep in mind, when watering your plants, the water that runs out of your pots rains down on all the balconies below. Not only does that stain and damage balconies and furniture, on occasion, it might even drench a neighbor. Please use saucers under all your plants.

### **BIRDS**

Feeding birds from your balcony might seem a nice thing to do but Skyline House Rules and Regulations prohibit doing so because it creates major problems for your neighbors and the Association. Do not feed birds and if you have a bird feeder please remove it.

## **MOST IMPORTANTLY**

**No matter how small, never throw anything off your balcony (especially cigarettes).**

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





# AUGUST 2006

(no business meetings in August)

## WWW.SHUOA.ORG



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4 TGIF 6:30 PM W. Party Room	5
6	7 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 East Penthouse	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 East Penthouse	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 East Penthouse	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 East Penthouse	29	30	31		
GOOD NEIGHBORS: JUDITH YORK (703-671-2267) and TOSCA PRATHER (703-379-7849)						

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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 inappropriate statements. Information for THE HOUSE SPECIAL may be sent by e-mail to the Editor, dropped off at the Management office or the front desk attention EDITOR.

**ACTING EDITOR** --- Norman Baker 915W nbaker@fjc.gov 671-6759

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