

# *The House Special*



*Volume 28 Issue 10*

*Skyline House*

*October 2008*



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President, Norman Baker**

The Board of Directors met September 24<sup>th</sup> and approved two action items recommended by Management and the Physical Plant and Operations and Financial Management Committees.

First, the Board approved a contract with the firm “James Walls Contracting” at a price of \$76,420 for Roof Replacement of the Main Lobby and Connector Corridors. The project is to install a new 15 year roofing system which includes removal of existing roofing, installation of the new roofing along with metal flashing and a new roofing membrane.

Second, the replacement of all Guest and Reserved Parking signs on our property with new but similar signs as many of the current signs are weathered, faded and battered.

As most of you are aware, the September House Special Newsletter served as a Committee Membership Campaign issue. I regret that lack of attendance at the September Committee meetings confirms the ‘Campaign’ appears to have been for naught. Indeed, the loss of one member on three Committees due to his departing Skyline House means we actually realized a net loss in Committee membership in September.

I cannot stress enough the importance of our Committees and I will continue to plead with each and every one of you to get involved by attending Committee meetings and, even better, by joining one or more Committees. Our Committees are in dire straits and they desperately need new membership to survive.

The evening of Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup> is an important one. Not only because it is the night of the next Physical Plant and Operations Committee Meeting (an always important event) but also because that evening, there will be a presentation by representatives of our Reserves Study firm, Mason and Mason. This updated analysis of our Reserves is required by law every five years and the process confirms and advises on what we, the Association, must set aside in Reserves to meet our building’s and ground’s future infrastructure maintenance, repair and replacement requirements without having to resort to Special Assessments to do so. Of the many, many important projects, the Association, its Management and its Governing bodies take on, this is by far one of the most important – and I mean important to each and every owner and resident. The last Reserves Study was conducted in 2003 for the 2004 Funding Plan. The Plan resulting from

this analysis is for 2009. The current projected 2009 Cash Flow Reserves starting balance is \$1,261,865. The PPOC meeting will open at 7:00 PM on 9 October with the presentation by Mason & Mason and will continue with routine business thereafter. I encourage everyone to attend and be informed of our financial planning for the future.

Finally, every now and then, I like to remind residents and owners that there is more going on to care for our 'House' and homes than one might think. To that end, you should know that the Chairman of your Covenants Committee, three resident owners and a member of Management recently convened an Association Covenants Hearing Panel to hear from a resident who has (allegedly) consistently violated Association Rules and Regulations despite Management's efforts to end those violations. Hearings such as this one are, at best, extremely uncomfortable for all involved yet they are so very necessary to the quality of life we all expect and aspire to here at Skyline House. I thank those involved. And again, I remind all of those who are not involved at all, this is your home and community too and you really must decide it is time now for you to step forward and get involved.

### **PPOC Chair Appointment**

I and the Board are pleased to announce that Mr. Al Lambert recently accepted an offer I made some time ago to appoint him Chair of the PPOC as opposed to Acting Chair in which capacity he has served since April 2007. Al will open the important October 9th PPOC meeting (mentioned above) as its official Chair.

Al has lived at Skyline House since 1986 and is also an involved member of our Financial Management and Security, Fire and Safety Committees. Al is retired from the U. S. Army and currently employed by the U.S. Patent and Trademarks Office in the area of electronic forms and data processing. He is active in his Church and also serves as Webmaster for the Annandale Christian Community for Action.

We, and our Association, are very, very fortunate Al will continue to serve in this important role.



## **MANAGEMENT**

**General Manager, Gusbey Silva**

### **Cox Cable TV Agreement**

**The agreement for Cable TV with Cox Communications will be in effect on 11/1/08. If you currently utilize the Washington Cable TV services provided as part of the condo fee, you must have your unit wired by Cox during the in-unit wiring project described below or you will not receive Cable TV after November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, until you call Cox Communications directly to schedule the wiring of your unit at a later date.**

The replacement of Cox wires in the East and West Building common areas was completed the second week of September. The installation of the wires needed inside units began on September 15<sup>th</sup> on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor of the East Building. Two entire floors are completed within a day. The schedule is posted reflecting the dates for each floor. Notices are being sent to each unit a week in advance.

In-unit wiring in the East Building will be completed by Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Wiring in West Building units will begin Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> and will be completed by Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. The last day in each building is reserved to complete any units not wired during the original schedule.

Some residents have expressed concern regarding the type of wire installation that will be done by Cox inside their units. The crew supervisor for the in-unit wiring informs us that having your unit wired during this project will be the best option since they are installing the wiring hidden under molding. Installation done after this project is completed will be done above the baseboard.

If you already receive Cox Cable you can still request wiring of additional rooms in your unit for the same low rate as long as it is done the date the units on your floor are being wired. Cox is also inspecting the units currently receiving Cox Cable to ensure that all wiring is up-to-date.

The November invoice for residents currently receiving Cox Cable TV will be adjusted to reflect the savings for the TV channels paid for by the Association under the bulk agreement.

Cox brochures with the channel line-up for the bulk agreement will be distributed in early October at the Front Desk. Notices will be posted informing residents when we receive the brochures.

## **Reserve Fund Study**

Mason & Mason completed the Reserve Fund Study on time to be included in the 2009 Reserve Budget preparation. The Reserve Study contract includes a one hour presentation by Mason & Mason with the Board of Directors. It has been scheduled for Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the West Card Room, right before the PPOC meeting is held.

## **Responsibility for Conduct of Children/Minors**

Please refer to the Skyline House Rules and Regulations where it is stated that Unit Owners/Residents are, at all times, responsible and accountable for the actions of their children, wards, minor guests or any other children under legal age whom they sponsor within the premises.

We continue receiving numerous complaints regarding children running and screaming while in the lobby and galleries after they arrive from school and on their way to the passenger elevators. The Board of Directors has instructed Management to require the security guard to be posted in the lobby and galleries from 3:00 to 4:00 PM while the children come home from school in order to remind all kids to walk and not to run and/or scream while in the common areas.

Many times while the parents are walking with the kids from the lobby towards the passenger elevators, the children start running and/or being boisterous while the parents continue without acknowledging the misbehavior of their children. We have received complaints from parents who were offended by the security guard when their kids were reminded in a loud voice to stop running. Please take into consideration that when the kids are running and yelling some times they do not hear the warnings being made by the security guard forcing the guard to raise his/her voice in order to be heard. If you want to avoid this from happening, please ensure that your kids behave at all times while in the common areas. We have had situations when some of the kids have been very close to sending an elderly/disabled resident to the floor after colliding due to running and not paying attention, and sometimes even walking backwards.

## **Resident Interaction with Association Contractors**

Please report directly to the Management Office any concerns or issues you might have with any of the Association's Contractors. We encourage residents not to address or confront any of the employees of Association's contractors. Instead, please let Management investigate any situation that may have arisen involving contractors and take the proper steps to resolve the issue. Contractors are also requested to advise their employees not to interact directly with residents and guests. However, we have had a couple of incidents when residents have confronted the security guard after being advised by the security guard to follow the rules. This has resulted in unnecessary situations where there was yelling and/or loud arguments while in the common areas without any positive results. Please take into consideration that the Security Guards and Management Staff are here to enforce the Rules and Regulations set forth by the Board of Directors.

## **Improper Use of Recycling Containers**

Please refer to the posted signs on the walls of each building loading dock for the list of materials allowed in the recycling containers. There are some residents who constantly place their regular trash in these containers contaminating the recycling material. This not only forfeits the effort made by residents who voluntarily participate in the recycling program but also the funds paid by the Association to have this service. This situation also represents a possible health hazard due to the terrible smell generated by the spoiled trash that is left in these containers, some times for a total of four days taking into consideration that the recycling containers are only picked up twice a week on Fridays and Mondays.

Please be considerate of your neighbors by placing your household trash in the trash chute located in the disposal room of your floor by the service elevator. Bring to the recycling containers only the materials listed on the posted signs. Please do not leave trash on the floor of the disposal rooms.



# INFO FROM THE ENGINEER

**Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm**

## **WATER LEAK DETECTORS**

We still have water leak detectors for sale in the Management Office for \$15.90. These detectors work very well and should be placed on the floor (not in the water heater drain pan) of your utility closet. If you already own one of these detectors, keep in mind that when the battery gets low it will emit sound, indicating it is time for a new battery.

## **HEATING SEASON**

Heating season is almost here. Now is a good time to check that your unit operates properly in heating mode. You should turn on your unit in heating mode and let it operate ten to fifteen minutes, and call the office to arrange an in-unit visit if you encounter any problems.

## **UNIT DOOR DOORBELLS**

Newly designed unit door doorbells are available from the in-unit program. The doorbell portion on the inside of the unit door has been redesigned. The new bell looks much more modern than the current ones. The outer portion of the assembly is identical to the existing ones on the doors. The new doorbell is available for \$28.55 plus labor to install it. There is a unit available in the office for you to view.



# PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS

**Chair, Al Lambert**

Greetings! Not having a meeting in August meant a reinvigorated Physical Plant and Operations Committee (PPOC) reconvened Thursday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m. Awaiting the committee were three noteworthy projects for evaluation with subsequent recommendations to the Board. At the outset, the committee reviewed alternatives to reduce regulatory signage surrounding our buildings. There are numerous “No Parking Fire Lane” signs along with curbs painted yellow to designate “No Parking.” This ensures emergency vehicles gaining immediate access to entrances to assist those in need when responding to the situation. However, the number of signs creates a cluttered appearance and distracts from the landscape. The fire department approved an alternative allowing removal of all fire lane signs with the replacement of three large rectangular signs. One of the signs would have to be located in the circle facing the driveway entrance and the size (2’ x 3’) of the sign obscured the centerpiece (urn) and ruined the aesthetic appearance. For this reason, the committee elected not to replace the fire lane signs.

On the next agenda item, to replace Guest and Reserved Parking signs, the committee voted to recommend purchase of new signage. As you may have noticed the brown colored signs around the West Building are faded, deteriorated and a few are missing. Likewise, in the rear of the East Building the signs are a different color (blue/white) and have similar maintenance issues regarding functionality and aesthetics. It was pointed out that the corrugated sign posts are to some extent unsightly, in need of repair and do not complement the existing signage or surrounding landscape. Hence, the committee voted to recommend new Skyline House parking restriction signage be installed around both buildings. In addition, to replace the corrugated sign posts to include regulatory sign posts (fire lanes, stop, neighborhood watch, and so forth) with aluminum pre-painted (green) posts. Additional research on compliance with fire code regulations will be undertaken before a final decision is made on replacing regulatory signs. Replacement signs will be fewer in number and the aluminum posts will reduce upkeep and provide a nicer appearance. Approximately 25 signs (\$1,250.00) and 38 sign posts (\$2,800.00) will be replaced. The total purchase cost for the signs and posts should be approximately \$4,050.00 and in-house personnel will install the signs.

The last order of business was to review Roof Replacement Bids for the Main Lobby and Connector Corridors. The project is to install a new 15 year roofing system which includes

removal of existing roofing, installation of the new roofing along with metal flashing and a new roofing membrane. Adequate funds have been budgeted for this scheduled maintenance replacement and there were three contractors submitting bids at approximately \$71K, \$76K and \$123K. The firm "James Walls Contracting" at a price of \$76,420 was recommended to the Board for installation of the roof replacement. The firm was selected because they had previously performed installation of the Mezzanine Roof and waterproofing of the Garage Deck Planters. These projects had all been accomplished successfully and the quality of work was excellent. Additionally their proposal included an outstanding description on the scope of work.

Thereafter, the committee engaged in an open forum on the state of planning for refinishing the balcony railings. This is a project that is scheduled for implementation next year and is expensive (\$\$\$) and consists of many facets. Because of the significance and impact of this project I will attempt to provide an overview:

- The issue of paint peeling from balcony railings surfaced about 5 years ago. Management was tasked to explore alternatives because of unattractive aesthetics and potential negative impact on resale value. The desired outcome was to restore railings to their original condition.
- It was determined that to accomplish the desired outcome the railings would have to be removed, sent back to the manufacturer and recoated or anodized. It was also learned that if the railings were removed then upon reinstallation they would have to meet current building code which required the vertical pipes in the railing to be closer together. Hence, the total maintenance and repair cost exceeded a projected purchase price for new balcony railings. It was decided to install new balcony railing and the projected cost (\$1.7M) was included in the reserve budget for implementation in 2009.
- Another piece of information worth mentioning is the rail design and color of new railings could possibly have to conform in design and color to other Skyline buildings. This outcome would possibly lead to new railings having to be custom made at a prohibitive cost.
- This year in planning for the project new bids from contractors were solicited and it was learned costs and warranty had dramatically changed from the original bid five years ago. The company providing the replacement cost inserted into the budget was no longer making custom railings. Instead they only offered to recoat the railings and provide either a 5 or 10 year warranty. The cost for the 10 year warranty to recoat the balcony railings has now been included in the ongoing Reserve Budget review and monies removed from the budget for replacement of railings. One other company was identified that made custom railings and they provided a 2 year warranty with a projected cost of \$4M.
- A further issue associated with the balconies is the recurring deterioration of concrete associated with the hollow railing posts (about 8 per balcony) embedded in the concrete slab. Water and condensation gain access within the interior of the railings and ultimately puddles at the bottom inside each rail post causing corrosion. Performing maintenance and repair every few years is expensive and does not resolve this systemic issue. It appears the Association can stay in compliance with County Building code by separating the posts from the concrete and offsetting the railing to permit sealing of the post pockets. If this solution is undertaken the railings could be reinstalled with anchor bolts into the concrete façade and the posts connected with screws in the concrete base. This introduces a new unknown, which is, 'will the creation of screw holes have the same drawbacks as the existing railing posts with water seepage?' Hence the problem is two fold: 1) Access of water into the interior of rail posts. 2) Deterioration of the concrete at each post pocket from water seepage.
- One final area of investigation will be to determine the feasibility of removing from the railings the peeling exterior paint applied several years ago. Restoring the railings back to their original finish would permit a reevaluation of the current condition and appearance.
- The aforementioned courses of action are conjectural and alternatives with pros and cons will not be known until submission of the statements of work and recommendations from our consultant engineer. A likely undertaking will be to obtain a supplemental repair investigation by one or two consultants before a fix is undertaken.
- Hence, it appears there is no "silver bullet" undertaking that will completely resolve all ancillary issues. Instead the final solution will likely involve trade-offs and a lengthy maintenance and repair project. The committee will need your participation on courses of action

and having a technical background on the type of repair or construction materials would be wonderful but is not necessarily required. The General Manager and our consultant engineer are capable and will address technical specifications along with select committee members. What is sought and needed is resident input on the non-technical aspects of project. That is and always will be the most important ingredient in selecting a reasonable course of action.

By the time you read this article we will be about one week away from the PPOC meeting (Thursday, October 9). The main event will be a briefing on the revised Reserve Fund Plan for the next five years by the firm Mason & Mason. The plan is required by the Virginia Condominium Act and will be presented to the Board in October for approval. This presentation is an opportunity to understand financial planning for the buildings infra-structure and the impact on the condominium fee.

Lastly, on behalf of the committee I would like to issue a "Thank You" and express appreciation to Mr. Salem Omeish a PPOC member for several years who is moving from Skyline House. Mr. Omeish was a member of several committees and brought to these meetings insights and mindfulness of residents. He participated and made a difference!

As always, I welcome your feedback on this article or any other issue pertaining to the PPOC. This is your home! Thank You!

**The PPOC will next meet on Thursday, October 9, 2008 in the W. Card Room.**



## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

**Chair, Wynfred Joshua**

The Financial Management Committee (FMC) met on September 22, 2008. Total income for the month of August was \$307,704 with expenditures of \$174,163. Total income less expenditures amounted to \$133,541. The monthly Reserve Contribution was \$100,789, leaving a surplus of \$32,752 before taxes.

The Physical Plant and Operations Committee (PPOC) forwarded bids and a recommendation for the main lobby and connector corridor roof replacement to include installation of a new 15 year roofing system. The PPOC recommended James R. Walls Contracting because of its previous excellent work at Skyline House. Money has been budgeted for this year, and the recommended quote is within the budget. After discussion, the FMC approved recommendation of the James R. Walls Contracting bid which is projected to be \$76,420.

During August, the FMC formed two subcommittees to review and recommend the 2009 Operating and Reserve Budgets. These subcommittees met several times during the month of August. Our thanks to General Manager Silva and the subcommittee members for their hard work and dedication in preparing the recommended budgets. In addition, we thank those Board members who joined us for their attendance and advice.

The final business item was approval by the FMC of the draft 2009 Operating and Reserve Budget for submission to the Board.

As always, we welcome interested residents to attend our meetings and join in to help with the financial oversight of our Association.

**The FMC will next meet in the W. Card Room at 7:00 p.m. Monday, October 20, 2008.**



## **COVENANTS**

**Chair, Joe Livingston**

In the last issue of the House Special your attention was invited to some of the activities of the Covenants Committee and the responsibilities of its members. If you read that issue, perhaps one of those responsibilities may be just the activity to get you involved in the governance of the Skyline House community. If you missed it, don't worry; just join us at the next Committee meeting.

At our last meeting on September 18, 2008, the Committee was informed that the proposed revisions of the Association's Rules and Regulations, as well as a proposed amendment of Rule 18, pertaining to parking are pending before the Board

The Committee has been requested to review the Guest Parking Regulation (Rule 18.C), specifically with respect to guests of the owners/residents of commercial units (spaces). We expect to present a recommendation to the Board. The intent of language of the proposal is to clarify coverage of guest parking as it pertains to all persons visiting the occupants of commercial units (spaces) including the owners, residents, and persons employed in such commercial units (spaces).

Lastly, the Committee was informed by Mr. Salem Omeish that he and his family are moving from Skyline House. We extend our thanks to him for his work with the Committee and our best wishes to him and his family.

**The Covenants Committee will not meet in October. It next meets November 19, 2008**

## **OCTOBER GOOD NEIGHBORS**

**Good Neighbors assist residents in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency. Services provided are typically short term and in the local area. For example, picking up mail or prescriptions or making small grocery purchases.**

**Anyone experiencing a medical emergency should call 911 immediately.**

**TOSKA PRATHER 703-379-7849**

**FRAN STAMM 703-998-8221**



## **RECREATION**

**Chair, Betty Turner**

The Recreation Committee (RC) met on Tuesday, September 9, 2008 as scheduled. We are pleased to have a new committee member: Sudha Sudanthi, East Building resident. Sudha, who teaches the yoga classes, reported that yoga classes are continuing on Thursday nights in the East Party Room. Attendance is about 10-12 each class. There was some discussion about a "Walking Group". This will be considered and details worked out for early next year.

Cindy Judy hosted the August 1<sup>st</sup> TGIF in the West Party Room and Hanna Jones hosted the September 5<sup>th</sup> TGIF in the East Party Room. Attendance has remained consistently in the 20s throughout the summer months. Our next TGIF is scheduled for 6:30 p. m. on Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> in the West Party Room. Mark you calendars and join us for fun and refreshments.

Wine Tasting events have been postponed due to concerns about the Association's liability and compliance with VA ABC laws. We are advised that if these events continue, they should be as a "Bring Your Own Bottle" arrangement rather than the Committee charging for or providing the wine/alcohol. We are working out details for an early November event.

We discussed the Children's Halloween Party. The Board of Directors has determined that this event must be confined to a room, i.e. no door to door "Trick or Treating." The West Party Room has been reserved for the evening of Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup> for this event. It was determined that we should post a request for parents to participate. The parents of each child who attended last year were contacted to ask for their assistance.

We will host a Thanksgiving Dinner. After much discussion, it was determined that the committee will provide the turkey and ask attending residents to bring side dishes.

The Annual Holiday Party will be on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> in the West Party Room. This will be a potluck event with residents bringing food to share.

Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month and are open to all residents.

**The RC will next meet at 7:00 p.m. October 14, 2008 in the W. Card Room.**





## CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN PARTY

The Recreation Committee will host a Children's Halloween "Trick or Treat" Party on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, in the West Party Room from 7:00 – 8:00 PM. We are able to hold this event only because some adults (parents and residents) volunteered to help. Our small committee could not take on this task without their help. All children under the age of 12 shall be accompanied by a person 16 years of age or older. There shall be one person of at least 16 years of age to be responsible for every two children under the age of twelve, who shall remain with the children during the entire party. This party is **FREE** of charge. However, pre-registration is required. Please sign up on the registration sheet at the Front Desk **not later than Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>**. On that date the signup sheet will be pulled and no others will be allowed to sign up. **Those who do not sign up will not be allowed to attend.** Please indicate the child's name as well as their age. Parents and teen volunteers are encouraged to come in costume.

A picture will be taken of each child as they enter and will be presented to them at the end as a memento of the evening. From 7:00-7:30 PM we will concentrate on games, crafts, and contests so we will need to know ages so that we can plan accordingly. At 7:30 PM we will begin a "Trick or Treat Walk" giving the children an opportunity to collect treats from the various tables setup to resemble individual "doors." The entire activity will take place in the West Party Room.

There will be **no food served** at this event.

**ALL RESIDENTS** are also invited to sign up at the Front Desk to indicate their willingness to **bring and/or distribute candy, toys, favors, etc.** from tables setup to resemble an individual door for "Trick of Treating". Some residents have indicated that they would like to make treats to bring. That's great -- whatever you would be handing out at your own door would be acceptable for this party. The more residents who participate, the more enjoyable it will be for the children. The "**Trick or Treat Walk**" will be from 7:30-8:00 PM so we're only asking that you be present for ½ hour. We only ask that you do whatever you can. If you can only provide a treat and cannot attend to distribute it, then do just that. We will find another person to distribute whatever you bring. We can all get enjoyment from seeing the children having fun.



## Ad Hoc Decoration Committee

Co-chairs, Alina Gonzalez and Maria Elena Schacknies

As reported at the August Board of Directors meeting, the Ad Hoc Decoration Committee (AHDC) sent to five potential bidders on Friday August 15<sup>th</sup>, a Request for Proposal. The Proposals are due back no later than close of business, October 1, 2008.

**The next Ad Hoc Decoration Committee meeting, to review and discuss the bids received, will be Monday, October, 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the West Party Room. As always, all residents are invited to participate.**





# SECURITY, FIRE AND SAFETY

**Chair, Robert De Mayo**

The Chair was unable to submit a report before this issue went to print.

**The SF&SC will next meet at 7:00 p.m. October 8, 2008 in the W. Card Room.**



## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

**Coordinator, Judith York**

I would like to acknowledge and thank Mr. Ernest Loyola for the time given to the Neighborhood Watch Program over the past seven years. Ernest has also been the House representative at the monthly Neighborhood Watch meetings held at the Mason District Police Station. Thank you Ernest for all the time you have donated and for the notes you have taken at the meetings. The notes have helped me greatly when I draft the monthly House Special article.

There have been various concerns raised this past month. Volunteers have reported lights out, phone closet doors left open and some without a door, penthouse doors left open, cars in the garage without House registration, and marble slabs in front of unit doors cracked. As the Neighborhood Watch volunteers walk the buildings and grounds, they make a note of items needing repair on their monitoring form so as not to forget the type of repair needed and the location of the item, and then they transfer this information to the Maintenance Log at the front desk. For example, when lights are out, the maintenance staff will replace these bulbs the following day. Another instance where Management follows up on items needing attention is the marble slab at the front door of each unit. These are the responsibility of the owner. If a slab is cracked, the owner can place a work order for repair but if the slab needs replacing, Management will notify the owner that a replacement is needed. The present replacement cost is \$125.00.

I'd like to give a "gentle reminder" about cars not having a Skyline House registration sticker. It's easy for residents to forget to get a new sticker for their cars when they replace their former car but it's a simple matter of asking the front desk staff for a new Skyline House sticker. It's important for cars to have a Skyline House sticker for several reasons but mainly because if lights are left on or doors are unlocked, the sticker information can be relayed to the front desk and the resident can be called—it saves a battery going dead or running the risk of items disappearing from the car. Another issue noted by several volunteers is the number of cable boxes in the disposal rooms that are either left open or without a door. These cable boxes belong to Cox and both residents and staff have reported those needing to be locked or have a door fixed on the cable boxes. Please continue to report these in the maintenance log so the information can be relayed to Cox for follow-up action.

At the last training session, Auxiliary Officer Mary Nugent gave us a very good hint. For those who would like to participate in keeping Skyline House safe but have trouble walking or participating in the Program, they can still help by keeping track of events unfolding outside their window. In other words, for those who would like to participate, but are not able to walk very far, just observing every day events by looking out the window helps keep our community safe.

Before the end of the year, we have Halloween late this month, Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday of November, and Christmas and other religious festivities in December. Please be observant, make sure everyone is safe – especially the youngsters and the seniors who are often more vulnerable. Also, when traveling or shopping, keep all items locked in the trunk of your car out of sight of temptation. If you would like to join the Neighborhood Watch Program, please give call me on 703-671-2267. Thank you, Judith York (Neighborhood Watch Coordinator).

## MAGAZINES FOR ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL

This is just a reminder to bring your magazines to the front desk so Tony DiSalvo can deliver them to Alexandria Hospital. Please do not hold the magazines for long periods of time before doing so as they become outdated. The magazines are much appreciated by the Hospital visitors and volunteers. Any questions call Tony at 703-824-1958.

# **NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS**

## **Alexandria Site [Mark Center off Seminary Rd.] Picked For 6,400 Army Jobs**

(The following is excerpted from a Tuesday, September 30, 2008 Washington Post article by Washington Post Staff Writers Sandhya Somashekhar and Amy Gardner.)

Army officials announced that thousands of jobs originally destined for Fort Belvoir will be moved to an office complex to be built off Seminary Road in Alexandria, despite objections from state and Fairfax County officials who said that the plan will worsen traffic in the area.

After a year-long study of three locations in Alexandria and Fairfax, Army officials decided to put 6,400 workers at the Mark Center, a private development near Interstate 395 but miles from the nearest Metro station.

"It's the best value for the Army when we take into account its cost, its schedule, getting people into secure office space sooner and saving the government some money," said Assistant Army Secretary Keith E. Eastin. "And we're talking about millions of dollars."

Army officials said they would purchase the Mark Center by December and begin construction in January. The final cost will approach \$1 billion, they said, about the same as the other sites.

Fairfax and state officials had been sharply critical of the Mark Center, which they said was the least preferable of the three sites. It is about five miles away from the nearest Metro stations. They, along with state and congressional leaders, had lobbied for the office complex to be built in Springfield, on federally-owned land within a half-mile of Metro and VRE.

Peter Scholtz, a senior vice president for Duke Realty, which owns the Mark Center, said the property offered several key advantages. Because the land is unoccupied, the Army can construct the offices to its own specifications. It is adjacent to a large hotel and convention center, and it is within walking distance of homes and restaurants.

The Mark Center is adjacent to I-395, and the Army, together with Alexandria officials, is planning for buses to ferry commuters from parking lots, the King Street Metro station and VRE stations in the mornings and afternoons. They also are planning for a new exit from I-395 to Seminary Road only for high-occupancy vehicles, he said.

Eastin also cited the ability of Mark Center's developers to turn over the property in time for the Army to meet its September 2011 deadline. That factor has drawn criticism from local and state officials, who say the deadline could have been shifted to accommodate the best site.

## **Friends of George Mason Regional Library USED BOOK SALE**

One huge sale in five areas of the library. Rare and unusual books, children's books, fiction and non-fiction books, audio books, recorded music, videos and much, much more.

Thursday, October 16, 5 pm to 9 pm

Friday & Saturday October 17 & 18, 10 am to 6 pm

Sunday, October 19, noon to 5 pm

George Mason Regional Library 7001 Little River Turnpike Annandale, Virginia 22003

## **Personal Papers Shredding Event**

Fairfax County, in partnership with Safeguard Shredding, will offer an ideal opportunity to securely destroy personal and sensitive documents such as old tax forms, credit information, expired contracts, etc. Up to 5 boxes of paper per resident will be accepted for shredding at NO CHARGE! The event is **Saturday, November 1, from 9 am to 2 pm** at the Mason District Governmental Center Parking Lot, 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Proof of residency is required (utility bill, driver's license, etc.). No business or commercial waste will be accepted!



# SKYLINE HOUSE CALENDAR

## October 2008

(WWW.SHUOA.ORG)



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3 TGIF 6:30 p.m. West Party Room	4
5	6 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	7	8 Security, Fire & Safety Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	9 Reserve Study Presentation & Physical Plant & Ops. Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	10	11
12	13 Library Closed	14 Recreation Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	15	16	17	18
19	20 Financial Mgt. Committee 7:00 pm W. Card Room Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	21	22 BOARD MEETING 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	23	24	25
26	27 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	28	29	30	31 Children's Halloween Party 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. West Party Room	
GOOD NEIGHBORS: FRAN STAMM (703-998-8221) AND TOSKA PRATHER (703-379-7849)						

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THE HOUSE SPECIAL is published by: Skyline House Unit Owners' Association, Inc.,

3711 South George Mason Drive, Falls Church, Va. 22041-3711 The House Special is printed by Dan Daniels Pioneer Press

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Falls Church VA 22041-3711**