



# MERIDIAN FIRS 1

## TOWNHOME COMMUNITY

April/May 2011

### Being A Good Neighbor . . .

Being on bad terms with your neighbor can make life frustrating, day after day. But taking the time to establish good terms with your neighbors has numerous benefits. The community will be friendlier, the neighborhood safer, and the area a nicer and more comfortable place to live in.

To be a good neighbor, you must respect the privacy of those around you. This means that if you have children or pets, you must make sure that they stay on their own property. See that your dog does not bark incessantly, and that your children enjoy their own yard, keeping their voices at a reasonable level.

Most importantly, good neighbors are respectful. They consider others who live around them.

### Board of Directors

President	Marilyn Kennedy
Vice Pres	Judy Berghuis
Secretary	Heidi Guthrie
Treasurer	Deb Camuso
At Large	Ron Knowlton
At Large	Karen Vaillancourt
At Large	Susann Haines

Property Manager  
Shelley Murray - 206-387-7177  
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### President's Message

Spring is a great time to do some spring cleaning of the outside of your home. After a long winter, there are bound to be old leaves, untrimmed plants, and bare spots in your yard. Few people do yard work throughout the winter. We encourage everyone to pick up debris and cut back overgrown bushes and shrubs.

In April, members of the board will be doing a property inspection. Letters will be sent to homeowners informing them of concerns that we have regarding the buildings and general clean-up issues. Please refer to your revised House Rules for the neighborhood standards.

We will be putting in the three new planter areas by the mailboxes toward the end of March, just in time for new plants to get off to a good start. A large order of beauty bark will be ordered at the end of April. This will give everyone a chance to get your yards in order and the planters established.

With full participation and a certain amount of enthusiasm, Meridian Firs should look fabulous this summer!

Enthusiastically,  
Marilyn Kennedy, HOA President

## Before the Quake

**Source: U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Institute for Business & Home Safety**

Before an earthquake strikes, take steps to protect yourself and your home. Earthquakes strike suddenly, violently and without warning. There is little you can do during an earthquake to protect your home and your possessions. But, you can take steps before a disaster to reduce the dangers of serious injury or worse from an earthquake. Follow these tips.

- Fasten shelves securely to walls.
- Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass, and china in low, closed cabinets with latches.
- Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds, couches, and anywhere people sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections. These are potential fire risks.
- Secure a water heater by strapping it to the wall studs and bolting it to the floor.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations. Get expert advice if there are signs of structural defects.
- Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products securely in closed cabinets with latches and on bottom shelves.
- Make sure all family members know how to respond after an earthquake.
- Teach all family members how and when to turn off gas, electricity, and water.
- Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1, police, or fire department and which radio station to tune to for emergency information.

## A Solution to Dryer Vent Problems

*by Ron Knowlton*

I purchased this dryer vent kit at Home Depot for roughly \$13.00. A heating contractor recommended it as a quick fix - as I had no way to properly exhaust the dryer to the outside without an expensive repair.

The plastic dryer vent box is great for use where there is no outlet to the outside. In some of the MF townhomes, the vent goes under a deck or up into the attic and stops. To repair these problems so that the dryer vent could properly exhaust to the outside of the unit can involve an expensive and time consuming repair.

A dryer vent that does not properly exhaust to the outside can pose a fire hazard because it blows and deposits lint - which is highly flammable. Also, the air is moisturized and when blowing against woodwork, can encourage decay.

The indoor dryer vent kit is easily installed (see photo below). Add about an inch of water to the bottom of the plastic box, then attach the dryer vent hose to the top of the dryer vent box. It took me about 20 minutes to do all of this.

The aluminum hose from the dryer then blows down into the plastic box when the dryer is in use, and lint is deposited in the water in the base of the plastic box. This water should be emptied and refilled from time to time as needed. The air from the dryer helps to warm and humidify the air. It was hardly noticeable to me while running the dryer, and it was also nice to be near it as it did blow warm air into the room (coming out of the plastic vent holes at the top of the box).

I found that the dryer vent box easily solved my dryer venting problems. Wet lint (trapped in the water) will not easily burn, and no moisture is hitting or damaging woodwork inside the walls or attic area. Cleaning out the plastic box of lint and refilling the box is easy - and takes maybe 10-15 minutes of your time perhaps every two months or more (depending on how often you use the dryer).



*Here is a photo of what the vent kit looks like, it's not large and doesn't take up much space*

# The Secret to Garage Sale Success

<http://www.realtor.com/home-garden/home-maintenance/spring-maintenance/secrets-to-garage-sale-success.aspx>

A garage sale is a beautiful thing. You not only clear out stuff you consider junk, but recycle it and give it a second life for somebody else's use. And you can make some significant coin while you're at it.

## Pre-sale preparation

Someone should be present to staff your sale at all times—preferably two people, to discourage shoplifters. (Some people come to garage sales to find out what's worth burglarizing later.) Kids of any age can help with straightening items and bagging and toting purchases. You'll need a stock of startup cash in various denominations for making change, but keep as little as possible at the sale site and keep it secured.

## Presentation is key

The better shape things are in, the more likely they'll sell. Check the condition of the merchandise in your for-sale pile: a minor repair or a few stitches can make the difference between a sale and a leftover. Consider bundling items that go together, such as pots and potholders. If clothing is for sale, clean and hang or fold it.

## Determine prices for each item

Make them appealing, and allow room for dickering. Small self-stick labels or snippets of masking tape make dandy price tags. Remember, it's called a garage sale for a reason: People are here for bargains, you're trying to clear space, so price things to move!

Similar to a retailer's approach to merchandising, presentation cannot be underestimated at your sale. Make your wares appealing to shoppers, starting with these display tips:

- Whether you use folding tables or lumber over sawhorses, allow room in between for browsers.
- A clothesline works well for hanging clothes.
- Display books so their titles are easily read.
- If selling electrical appliances, be sure there's an accessible power supply for testing.
- Use boxes or baskets for smaller items.

## Reduce prices toward the end of your sale

Remember making a few dollars is secondary to getting rid of the stuff.



## Block Watch Program for MF1

*By Judy Berghuis*

The City of Kent held a Block Watch 101 meeting at City Hall on Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. Marilyn Kennedy, Judy Berghuis (represented the Board of Directors) and Pauline Schoeneman who is relatively new to MF1 attended the meeting.

In the past when we tried to start a Block Watch for our complex the rules of Block Watch were stringent on having everyone use an engraving tool to mark their valuables with your driver's license; another rule was that we had to have a certain percent of the residents participate before the City of Kent would bestow the official title of "Block Watch" onto MF1. We missed that criteria by a long shot and we just never were able to pull it together.

We learned at the meeting, the City of Kent has simplified the rules and now you aren't required to engrave your valuables (although still highly recommended) but you can also do it online making it much easier. They also have eased up on the number of participants so qualifying is now simplified as well.

At our March Board Meeting we discussed in detail the sort of information we need to participate (we need to have our email address updated so we can contact people in an emergency), post new signs in the neighborhood, pass out information for participation in Block Watch and have residents post Block Watch stickers in their front window visible to the street. Watch for more Information posted at mail-boxes on Block Watch.







## Community Notes

by Judy Berghuis

### Consider This:

Using the permastaple cycle will save wear and tear on clothes and also save electricity. It may take a little longer to dry items, but prevents overheating that may also cause fires.

### Protect Your Vehicle

This past week there were 15 vehicle prowls on Kent Easthill. With several, entrance was gained through smashing a window and items stolen included tires or license plates. Other items stolen from inside the car were purses, stereos & jewelry. Please be sure that all windows are up and doors are locked when you park. Also, at night park in well-lit areas and park as close to the building as you can. It is IMPORTANT to remove all valuables from your car. Anything left inside, provides the prowlers a reason to break in. If you see anything suspicious or are a victim of vehicle prowling, please call 911.

### Car Stolen from Upper Parking Lot

A 1989 Toyota Camry was stolen from the upper parking lot across from the mailboxes, the owner was visiting relatives in the complex when the theft took place sometime during the week of March 7th. Even though the owner of the vehicle did everything right (according to above article from Kent Police) i.e. parked in a well lit area, door was locked and windows rolled up, the car was still at risk. Anyone witnessing someone around the vehicle is asked to call Police immediately.

### Know Who to Call in a Non-Emergency – Links By Zip:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/safety/E911/linksbyzip.aspx>

### We're on the web:

[http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/Meridian\\_Firs\\_1/home](http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/Meridian_Firs_1/home)

### Monthly Board Meetings:

Windermere Office Building  
15215 SE 272nd Street, Suite 204  
Kent WA 98042 - 253.638.9811  
Meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday (eight months out of year) @ 5:00 PM



## Crime Stoppers from Kent

Excerpt from Kent City Police Reports

### **Where Are Your License Plates?**

Hopefully on your car! Last week's crime stats showed a continued trend of license plate thefts from vehicles. A thief will take the license plates from a victim car and switch them with the license plates on a car that has been stolen. Kent Police has also recovered stolen vehicles with several stolen license plates inside of the car. As you get into your car to leave each location, take a glance at your license plates. Make sure they are there. And make sure the plates are tightly secured to your vehicle.

### **Save the Date - Community Police Academy**

The next session of Kent's Community Police Academy will begin on April 20 through May 25th. This six week course, which provides an overview of the Kent Police Department's operations, will be held at the Kent Police/Fire Training Center on Wednesday evenings starting with a question/answer period at 6:30pm. Each session will conclude by 9:00pm. Registration information and this session's application will be available very soon at [www.ci.kent.wa.us/police](http://www.ci.kent.wa.us/police). You must complete the application to be eligible. So, save the date! We hope you'll join us!!

### **As Metal Prices Go Up...**

So do metal thefts. Most of the time, metal thieves target businesses due to the available copper and metal kept around the property. Kent Police wants to remind anyone to keep an eye out for unfamiliar vehicles in and around your company. Sometimes, metal thieves pose as legitimate people doing business or even drive a vehicle associated with a business to remain inconspicuous. Remember to inventory the metal and copper kept on your property. Secure and lock up any metal you can. Surveillance systems are also a great help to our officers solving these types of crimes. If you have a camera system, make sure it points to your high profile areas and if you don't currently operate a system, consider purchasing one today. For more information, visit [www.kentpoliceceu.com](http://www.kentpoliceceu.com).

## Safeguard Painting & Maintenance Offering Crawlspace Service

**Homeowners are responsible for the inside of their homes from the dirt to the inside of their roofs.**

Jonathan Stewart @ 360-359-5318 is offering a Crawlspace Inspection @ the low cost of only \$55.00 which will cover the following items:

- **Plumbing Component Issues**
- **Floor Framing Issues**
- **Mold Problems**
- **Ventilation, Insulation, and Vapor Barrier Inspection**

Jonathan will give you a report and a bid for repairs. He is licensed and bonded and highly recommended. Give Jonathan a Call!

# Calendar of Events

by Judy Berghuis

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APRIL 2011						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Garbage	8	9
10	11	12 Board Meeting 5PM ★	13	14 Garbage	15	16
17 Palm Sunday	18 Tax Day	19	20	21 Garbage	22 Earth Day	23
24 Easter Day	25	26	27 Administrative Professional Day	28 Garbage	29 Arbor Day	30

MAY 2011						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5 Cinco de Mayo Garbage	6	7
8 Mother's Day	9	10 Board Meeting 5PM ★	11	12 Garbage	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Garbage	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Garbage	27	28
29	30 Memorial Day	31		Garbage		



Board Activities



Recycle Day Pickup



Yard Waste Pickup

## ACROSS THE STREET

Something that amazes me,  
is the constant beauty of a tree.

Summer comes in a wonderful rush,  
trees full of leaves green and plush.

Then fall comes in slowly to render,  
scenes of fabulous colorful  
splendor.

And now in winter with all the  
leaves gone,  
the trees show us their naked  
brawn.

Standing tall; some twisted - some  
straight,  
waiting for their wintery fate.

Branches will break in the harsh  
strong wind,  
then the woods will be pruned and  
thinned.

Torrents of rain will soak their  
roots,  
but will also feed the new little  
shoots.

The coats of moss that adorn the  
trees,  
look warm enough to stop the  
freeze.

They bide their time and accept  
their fate,  
for spring to arrive they silently  
wait.

A lifetime of wonder my eyes do  
meet,  
when I look out the window across  
the street.

*Pauline Schoeneman is new to  
MF1 and was inspired by a tree  
out her window*