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MILL CREEK NEWSLETTER

October 2011

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TRASH – There have been some complaints about co-owners not tying trash bags when they are put out for collection. That is certainly a great way to give animals easy access. **We really hate to sound like broken records, BUT**, trash must be properly bagged (*no paper bags, no supermarket plastic bags*), put out at the right time and the bags must be tied. Once daylight saving time is over for 2011 and we return to eastern standard time, trash can be put out at 5:00 PM. **Sunday evening**. This time will stay in place until we return to daylight saving time in 2012. At that time your trash **can not** be put out prior to 7:00 PM **Sunday evening**. Rizzo (the trash collection company) will pick up special items such as furniture, computers and some appliances. Refrigerators, freezers and A/C units will not be picked up unless the Freon is removed by a company specializing in Freon (fluorocarbon) removal. This can be costly, so if possible, arrange to have these appliances taken by the company that delivers your new one. If you have a special item to be picked up, please call M.P.M. to arrange the pickup. Rizzo only provides this service twice per month.

Snow Removal

The snow removal contractor for the 2011/2012 winter season will be **Parkview**. As always, the snow can accumulate to 1 ½" before the contractor begins removal. 24 hours are allowed to complete the snow removal process.

Sump pumps - If the sump pump is in your unit, please be sure to check the pump to be sure it is functional. If there is no backup float system, check with the co-owners in your building to decide if they wish to consider purchasing one. *If you are unable to get down to the basement, please ask a neighbor to check the pump periodically.* No co-owner wants to have a flooded basement due to a non-functional sump pump. Those co-owners with pumps in their units may wish to check into an alarm system that will alert you when there is a problem. **For those of you who were not aware, the Association is responsible for sump pump replacement. This is only for the main sump pump, not the backup system.**

Repairs

All requests for repairs or issues with contractors must be directed to M.P.M. This can be done by telephone, regular mail, website, or e-mail. *Please be very specific about the problem you are experiencing.*

The Board Members (including those newly elected at the September 2011 Annual Meeting) are listed above. These members will serve in the positions as shown until the next election in August or September 2012. Officer Elections are held at the first meeting of the new Board following the Annual Meeting.

Limited Common Areas

It has come to our attention that some of the co-owners who are not the original owners of a unit are not always sure about what the Association is responsible for and what the co-owner is responsible for. **Limited common areas include courtyards and decks (or patios). The co-owner is responsible for all maintenance and repair of any additions/alterations in limited common areas. This includes plantings, pavers, epoxy aggregate, concrete (stamped or regular) and fences, gates and railings.**

One reason the Association has By-Laws and rules & regulations is to be sure that the buildings here retain their original look. That means that as doors (including garage doors) and windows are replaced, they must be the same style that was original to the units. The **color schemes must be uniform**. Patios, decks, awnings, decorative stone, etc. must conform to the rules of the Association. It is difficult enough to retain the value of property in today's world. It will be even more difficult if we don't all follow the rules. There are always those who choose to ignore the rules. Doing that only adds to lost value for yourself and all of the other co-owners in the complex. Be sure you find out what the rules are. They are readily available from the Management Company. For those of you that are new to condo living, it is more comparable to living in an apartment than it is to living in a house. Those of us who live in condos do give up some of the freedom that we had in a house.

If you are going south for the winter months, the electricity in your unit cannot be turned off. The furnace must be set at a temperature high enough to avoid freezing of water lines. The main water line in your unit (common water line) services all of the co-owners in your building. If the sump pump is in your unit, please leave a key with a relative or neighbor and give the telephone number of that person to the Management Company.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

At the recent Annual Meeting some questions were raised about violations of the Association rules. The procedure that is followed after the management company receives your complaint is:

A letter is sent to the co-owner that has been named as the rule violator that explains what rule has been violated.

The co-owner receiving the violation letter is given a specific number of days to correct the violation or to protest the violation.

There may be an occasion where the violator ignores the violation letter.

If this happens, we anticipate that the co-owner who made the initial complaint will send another letter to inform us that the violation has not been corrected.

At this point, some of you may be thinking why doesn't a Board member check to see if the violation was corrected. One answer is to think about it from the standpoint of cars not being parked in the garage. Since people drive their cars in and out at all times of the night and day, that would not be practical.

There are times when the co-owner that is an alleged violator may have a legitimate and lawful reason for the violation or the named violator may not be the cause of the problem.

We also have a system of fines for those violations that are not protested for a valid reason and are not corrected within the specified time period.

Sometimes a month or more can pass before the problem is resolved.

If any co-owner has a constructive idea about ways to change the system to make it better, please send your idea in writing to: Board of Directors c/o M.P.M.

QUESTIONS

A question was asked at the Annual Meeting about how something gets changed from being not OK to becoming OK.

The By-Laws allow the Board of Directors to make changes. There are some changes that require a vote of the co-owners and others that do not. Please refer to your By-Laws.

SUGGESTIONS

A suggestion was made at the Annual Meeting about a way to increase communication between the Board and those co-owners who are not on the Board. The idea was to select a co-owner within each court that the other co-owners in that court could submit their questions to. All of the questions from a particular Court could then be submitted to a Board member.

Questions can then be answered in the next issue of the Newsletter. If you like this idea, please talk to the other co-owners in your court and choose a person to submit your questions to. The chosen person in your court can then give all the questions to a Board member at the same time. We anticipate that we will receive similar questions from many of you.

A suggestion was also made to increase the number of Newsletters. This can be done. The Newsletters are written by a Board member. The Management Company only handles the copying and mailing.

SHUTTERS

Many of you have asked about the bowing shutters. This can be corrected by adding a third fastener in the vertical outside centers of the shutters. A decision was made to add this repair to the painting cycle.

ASPHALT PAVING CONCERNS

Asphalt paving throughout Mill Creek has been an ongoing concern for your board. The original installation was a builder's minimum specification which is part of the problem. We are faced with repairs which account for more than \$50,000.00 annually. The cost of replacing all asphalt courts areas within the community is a staggering amount in excess of one million dollars. If the Board were to approve this type of extensive replacement it would probably require an assessment as the Association does not have this amount of funding available for road replacement and even if we replace entire courts they still remain as road surfaces and require maintenance within five to ten years.

Your board of directors will be looking at several options in the next few months where we can address the problems of damaged asphalt and poor grading issues. We will provide updates in future issues of this newsletter.

ROOF REPLACEMENT

At our recent Annual Association Meeting a co-owner raised the issue of the removal of roof vents without properly sealing the holes in the plywood roof sheathing. MPM questioned the roofing contractor's project manager concerning this issue. They conducted an on-site investigation to confirm that heavy gauge galvanized sheet metal was attached over the hole where the pot vents were eliminated and 30 lb. roofing felt was placed over the entire roof. There is no potential for leakage with this installation.