

HUNTERS SQUARE AT CEDAR CREST COMMONS NEWSLETTER

November 2013

Please be sure to visit the Hunters Square Website!

The Hunters Square enables you to access your newsletters, Resident Handbook, Board meeting minutes as well as news and happenings in our neighborhood. Please be sure to visit at www.hunterssquarehoa.com and let us know if there is anything you would like to see on our website!

Board of Directors

Frank Zirkle	President
Donna Miller	Vice-President
Blase Morgan	Treasurer
Nancy Creel	Secretary
Lisa Clements	Member at large

Message from the President

During 2013, the Board focused on additional roof replacements on Buildings 2 and 3 on Niki Place and contracted with S C Companies as our new cleaning contractor for the halls and common grounds. The tot lot on Niki Place was updated with new mulch this summer.

Sometime in the next year, the Board will also be contracting for a reserve study and continue to tackle ongoing maintenance items such as front door replacements, hall window replacements and hallway renovations.

The Board strives to keep residents and owners up-to-date on community concerns and issues and we continue to encourage your participation by attending the monthly Board meetings.

The Board encourages all owners and residents to purchase a Condominium Owners policy for those who own a unit and Renters Insurance for those who rent a unit which are critical to you and your family's financial well being. In the coming weeks, the community will have a special meeting to update our By-Laws to cover this ongoing issue with regard to who is responsible to damages to individual units in case of fire, flood or other damages.

Do You Currently Have a Condensation Trap on Your A/C System?

When installed onto the a/c unit, the purpose of these traps is to use a column of condensate in such a way as to prevent air movement into or out of the equipment casing, while still allowing the condensate to drain away. If this trap should become clogged, a safety feature of this trap will stop the a/c unit from operating thus preventing a water leak or overflow. When the condensation has drained away, the a/c unit will turn on and continue to cool. This safety feature prevents water damage to your home when you are not around. Management has made arrangements to have the traps installed, parts & labor, at a special rate of \$100 each at the unit owner's expense. If you would like more information or to have a condensation trap installed on your existing a/c equipment, please contact Management at 703-361-9014. Please check with your equipment manufacturer to determine if this could void your warranty.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR HOMEOWNERS

A few months ago, the Board was advised by the Association insurance representative that our insurance carrier required clarification of the Association by-laws with regard to whose responsibility it would be to repair/rebuild a unit in case of unit damages due to fire, flood or other damages.

Our insurance carrier requires that the by-laws be clarified and updated. The Board has referred this matter to the Association's attorney for review and comment and he will be advising the Board on how to rewrite the by-laws to accomplish this resolution.

Management will be contacting unit owners for a special meeting on November 19, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. so that unit owners can vote on the new by-laws. Hunters Square insurance coverage is to be renewed in March 2014. The insurance carrier expects Hunters Square to have this matter resolved by then or at least in the process of being resolved.

Once again, we encourage all unit owners to have a HO6 policy and all renters to have renters insurance. It is time that we all take this responsibility seriously.

COMMUNITY REMINDERS

1. You will soon be receiving notice that Management is re-issuing parking passes. The new passes will be issued in a new color and only to vehicles registered to owners at Hunters Square. Once again, each unit owner will receive two guest passes in addition to the pass for each registered vehicle. New parking passes should be issued by December 1, 2013.
2. As winter approaches, we ask that third level residents please remember to close the hall windows during inclement weather. This will prevent water intrusion into the halls and preserve the wallpaper and carpet. Also, please remove all flower pots from the front porch of your building. This will aid in the removal of snow and ice during the winter season.
3. Notice to all smokers that cigarette butts should be disposed of properly. Please do not throw cigarette butts into the yard or plant beds, particularly the mulch.
4. Hallways must be kept open and clutter free. Storage of trash, furniture, tools, etc. is prohibited.
5. Patios and balconies must be kept in good appearance. Trash and other litter is not permitted. Bicycles must be in operating condition and storage of motorcycles, indoor furniture or appliances on patios is prohibited.
6. Recent marketing of "flushable cleansing cloths" has been blamed for escalating clogs and backups in sewer systems around the country. Wastewater authorities say wipes may go down the toilet but even when labeled flushable, these wipes are not breaking down as they course through the sewer systems. Please be reminded not to flush these wipes, paper towels, feminine hygiene products or disposable diapers down your toilets.
7. Please make sure that your trash is deposited into the dumpster and not on the surrounding walkway/concrete that accesses that dumpster. If you block the walkway, others cannot access the dumpster. Any trash that is not put in the dumpster will **NOT** be picked up by the trash company. Sometimes the dumpster will be put back by the truck on top of trash which causes odors and attracts vermin. Please do your part to make sure we keep Hunters Square clean. Place your trash as far back as you can into the dumpster to allow others to deposit their trash into the dumpster. We appreciate your consideration.

Large item pickups are once each week on Fridays. If you have large furniture items to dispose of, please do not put those items in the dumpster area before Thursday. Please do not place or store trash on patios or in hallways.

During recent roof replacements, satellite dishes were removed for the work to be performed and then replaced when the roofing was completed. Please be reminded that the satellite dish for TV reception is the responsibility of the individual owner. Management and Hunters Square is not responsible for the upkeep or any damages to the equipment.

The Board will again be sponsoring a Holiday Door Contest in December. So join in the fun and decorate your unit door for the Christmas holidays no later than Saturday, December 14, 2013. Judges will make a decision on the best decorated door on Saturday, December 14, 2013. The winner will receive a \$75 gift card and the runner-up a \$25 gift card.



Hunters Square would also like to consider those that may not have as much as we do this holiday. We will be sponsoring a holiday food drive in December to benefit the Trinity Episcopal Church food bank in Old Town Manassas. We will also take donations of slightly used, warm coats, hats and gloves. Collection will be on Saturday, December 14, 2013.

The Board will be posting flyers in the coming weeks about both events.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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| Board Meeting | December 17, 2013 |
| Annual Board Meeting | January 2014 (To Be Announced) |
| Board Meeting | February 18, 2014 |
| Board Meeting | March 18, 2014 |
| Board Meeting | April 15, 2014 |
| Board Meeting | May 20, 2014 |

Schedules are subject to change. Please contact Management at 703-361-9014 to confirm date, time and location or check on our community website.

Unit owners are encouraged to attend the monthly Board meetings and participate in the 30 minute Open Forum to share your concerns and issues. To be included on the Agenda, please contact Management.

We would like to take this opportunity to include a recent article authored by Michael Youlen, Manassas Housing Police Authority, in which he shares his views on What Makes a Neighborhood Watch Successful.



By Michael S. Youlen

Michael S. Youlen operates the Manassas Housing Police Authority, a private nongovernmental criminal justice agency in the commonwealth of Virginia. He is a certified law enforcement officer in Virginia and a former municipal law enforcement officer in the commonwealth of Virginia and the state of New York, in addition to being deputized as a Special Deputy United States Marshal in the 4th Judicial Circuit of the District of Columbia.

What Makes a Neighborhood Watch Successful?

Neighborhood watches have been, and continue to be, an integral part of our communities. It doesn't matter if you live in California or Virginia, the basic fundamentals and building blocks to a successful program are virtually the same. If you're a community member or leader wondering how to start a successful program, or are wondering how to find other community members who are willing to dedicate their free time to ensuring their neighborhood continues to be a safe place to live, a great starting point is your monthly or quarterly community association meeting. If you live in an apartment complex, then bring the issue to your community manager or management company with a set plan of goals you intend on achieving.

The most important philosophy in any neighborhood watch is effective communication. This includes, but is not limited to, neighborhood watch volunteers, neighbors, community association board of directors, property managers and ultimately the local law enforcement agency. Many communities always like the idea of having a neighborhood watch, but they eventually struggle to survive due to the breakdown in communication, which can be caused by many factors such as a change in management or leadership and the very mobile society we live in today where people move with much more frequency than we did 50 years ago. This creates a "revolving door" effect, which makes it hard for associations or management to garner community participation on an ongoing basis.

Another way to keep interest is to harness the continually growing popularity of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and others that provide for an almost instant communication between people. Social media allows for the free exchange of information and keeps the communication doors open between residents and community members 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Every community is unique in its own way. Some larger associations might require more volunteers to cover different areas of

their community versus small neighborhoods such as a single cul-de-sac might only require one or two people.

The most important aspect to operating a safe, reliable and effective neighborhood watch is the utmost importance placed on safety being paramount. Virtually every neighborhood watch is a volunteer organization of individuals that are vested with zero legal authority to stop people, arrest people, cite people or otherwise act in any way that resembles a law enforcement officer. A good neighborhood watch volunteer will observe from a safe distance, make notations and photograph where it is applicable all while notifying local law enforcement when a situation for police intervention arises.

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Neighborhood watches have many benefits including creating an atmosphere where community members and leaders can interact with each other in an organized, professional and friendly setting. All too often these days, I see many people who have no idea who their neighbor is due employment schedules, cultural differences, school activities and so on.

Breaking down barriers is a formula for a successful community. The police or any other governmental institution cannot, by itself, bring a crime/problem-ridden community out of the shadows all alone. It takes the community and its members to participate and work hand in hand with organizations such as neighborhood watch, police and regulatory bodies including management and community associations to achieve a successful outcome.

The biggest negative against neighborhood watches is the disorganization they succumb to over time. The breakdown of communication and lack of interest people may show in their neighborhood is ultimately their downfall.

Successful neighborhood watches establish a leader who regularly communicates with local law enforcement and management. Many local law enforcement agencies have officers who are designated to certain neighborhood "teams," which is usually a good

starting point for a person of contact for the neighborhood watch team leader.

Every community has a member or members who are willing to make a difference and if you are that person who is reading this article I couldn't stress it more, get involved! All communities suffer from petty crime in one form or another, but every community has its breaking point when it starts down that slippery slope whereas the uphill climb to get back to where it once was gets higher and higher.

It adversely effects everyone whether it be the drop in your home's value due to community blight or the litter scattered



throughout the street that blows up and down all day long. Only a community bonded together through well-organized communication and programs such as neighborhood watch and others will be the ultimate deterrent to those who seek to exploit a neighborhood for illegitimate purposes. Community leaders and management companies should always seek legal advice through counsel before forming any neighborhood watch to lay the parameters and rules that would govern such an organization. Nothing in this article shall be construed as legal advice. Remember to check all local, state and federal laws before forming such an organization. 