



# A Condominium Management Company

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

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## A Day at the Park! Detroit Tigers Game Hosted by A Condominium Management!

~ by Makayla Eckardt, A Condominium Management



**A** Condominium Management is proud to announce that we will be hosting our first “A Day at the Park” this year! A Condominium Management has reserved seats for the September 7th, 2014 Detroit Tigers game, Tigers vs. Giants, and is

inviting all of our community members to come out and enjoy “A Day at the Park” with us! Tickets are available to all community members for \$32.00/person. Tickets must be purchased online at ACondoMgt.com by July 31st to ensure seating within our group. Come out and enjoy “A Day at the Park” with your community and with the A Condominium Management Team!

**As an additional perk, A Condominium Management has purchased two tickets to be raffled off!** All community members may submit their name into the raffle and the lucky winner will win two free tickets! All submissions must be in by no later than May 31, 2014 at 11:59 PM. At that time all entries will be collected, and a winner will be chosen at random! The winner will be announced on our company website on June 1st, 2014. The winner will also be contacted in person that day and will receive their tickets on approximately August 30th. Please note only one submission per person is allowed, and all duplicate submissions will be removed. A link to the submission form is available at ACondoMgt.com or go to <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DqdRpVIKqX3czp3sWUcvp6ipn9psDqaBcdkW0Wu73Nk/viewform>.

We look forward to seeing you there!



### LOADING

In the last issue we announced the incoming new member to the A Condominium Management family! Property Manager and wife, Devlin and Reighvyn Carey, are expecting their baby girl, and it is getting down to the last days. While we would like to share the new baby photos, Miranda has not quite decided to come join the team yet. While Miranda enjoys her last days of relaxation, please join us in wishing the couple a safe arrival for Miranda. Photos to come soon.

## The Top Job

~ excerpt from *Common Ground* by Victoria Cohen

**S**erving on a community association board can be an enormous commitment for any person who doesn't have the experience, knowledge or education required to carry out the job effectively. Assuming the position of president takes the commitment to an even higher level.

The president must have a basic understanding of community association law, as well as the association's governing documents-the declaration, bylaws, and the rules and regulations. A president must view the association as both a community and a business-and lead accordingly-while making sure it's operating on democratic principles of government.

He or she oversees association operations-adhering to budgets, formulating and enforcing rules, conducting meetings, preparing agendas, and working with committees. The president also serves as the liaison with any experts the association hires to help-manager, attorney, reserve specialist and insurance provider.

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**"Send him our toughest collection letter, threaten him with legal action, and subliminally suggest some type of bodily harm. But put xoxoxo under my signature as Board President to show that we still love him as a neighbor."**

And while the entire board has a fiduciary duty to protect the association's assets, the president takes on the main role. He or she should ensure the budget reflects the community's values and wishes, and that reserve accounts are adequately funded, assessments are collected and insurance coverage is appropriate.

Leadership and mentoring are important too. A president can help ensure that current and prospective board members get the training they need to prepare for future roles. Often the best way to learn the ins and outs of a board

presidency is to serve as a board member for a few years first.

"By serving in other positions before becoming president, you have an opportunity to observe how the sitting president conducts the meetings and learn about the issues the association faces. This helped me prepare for my term as president," says Michael Ferguson, president of Yacht Club Condominium in San Diego.

Many presidents are particularly daunted by conducting meetings and how to communicate with members. Let the following tips help:

**Meetings.** Parliamentary procedure is meant to ensure meetings are orderly, fair and productive; it can be as formal or basic as the board wishes.

Association presidents can enlist the help of a parliamentarian familiar with association procedures to draft meeting rules. Enforce rules without exception.

Distribute written and published meeting rules to the membership with a copy of the agenda. When the association implements the new procedures, the president should explain the reasons behind the rules.

The Board meeting, which is different than that of a membership meeting, focuses on conducting association business.

The board is elected and entrusted to make informed decisions based on the facts and information provided to them. If board members or owners are disruptive to the extent that the association cannot conduct business, the board is prevented from fulfilling its fiduciary duties.

One of the most important parts of parliamentary procedure is creating a meeting agenda and sticking to it. Conversations about items that aren't on the agenda should be limited. If the topic is important, place it on the agenda for the next meeting. If it's a true emergency, call for a board vote. If majority favors discussing the matter, do so.

Board presidents should also insist that all motions have a second or the issue won't be discussed. This helps rein in rogue board members and must be enforced consistently.

**Communication.** As the official spokesperson for the board, the president is in charge of sharing updates with association members, management, the attorney, vendors, press and the greater community.

The president should strive to ensure that communication with members is frequent and done in a variety of ways-newsletters, bulletin boards, websites and e-mails. Effective communication goes two ways; presidents also need to listen to all ideas. Communication should be positive, honest and direct.

“Especially in times of construction defect or other major issues facing an association, remain open and forthcoming with the membership as much as possible,” says Jeran Binning, former president and sitting board member of Porto Siena Homeowners Association in San Diego. “Sometimes legal issues prohibit full disclosure, but do everything that is permissible within the law to keep your membership informed.”

The position of association president is a great honor and a tremendous responsibility. It isn't for everyone, but once you figure out what you're doing, it can be very satisfying.

## Above & Beyond: Lee Horton

~ by Makayla Eckardt, A Condominium Management

This issue, we have decided to revitalize our Above & Beyond section and have decided to do so with an amazing Board member. Lee Horton has served as the Vice President and President at Macomb Village Condominiums, and in accordance with his upcoming “stepping-down” from the Board of Directors, we would like to recognize his superior character, not only as a member of the Board of Directors, but as a great person. Lee has served on the Macomb Village Board since 2010, as well as for multiple years before hand. Lee has had many different occupations; Lee served on Western Electric and the AT&T union board for 30 years, and was also a Communications of America Representative from 1976-1997. In his younger years, Lee served in the 32nd Signal Battalion 5th Core in Germany from 1958-1961 as a Cryptographer. After leaving the service, Lee settled down with his lovely wife, Felicia, and it is no secret in their community, or in our office, how amazing they are, and how helpful both Lee and Felicia are in the community. Lee will be stepping down at the next annual meeting, and we wish him more time to himself, and more relaxing weeks to come. For all of these reasons, we have named Lee Horton as our community member going “above and beyond”. Join us in congratulating Lee Horton for his exemplary service!

Want to recognize someone in your community? Please send your nominations to MEckardt@ACondoMgt.com.

## How Much Noise Do You Make?

~ by Makayla Eckardt, A Condominium Management

Noise is an inevitable reality in condominium communities. Condominium dwellers live in such close proximity, it's essential that we consider the effect noise will have on our neighbors in particular when deciding on floor coverings, where to mount the flat-screen television or when to knock out a wall.

We—you *and* your neighbors—all have a right to enjoy our homes in peace and to furnish them as we like. But remember, how you furnish your unit may be a nuisance to your neighbors and theirs.

Hard flooring—wood, ceramic, stone, laminate—are fashionable and collect far fewer allergens than carpet, making it very popular. But it can be a problem for the folks downstairs, even if you make an effort to tread lightly or wear soft shoes. If you're considering installing hard flooring in your unit, first install a sound barrier—like cork—to reduce noise. And hope the people above you do the same.

Flat-screen televisions are becoming more affordable every year, and many of our residents have them. Please mount your screen on an interior wall—not a wall you share with a neighbor. Reverberations from wall-mounted televisions can be an annoyance for those on the other side.

How much noise does it take to be a nuisance? One definition says nuisance is a level of disturbance beyond what a reasonable person would find tolerable. But, sometimes the question isn't how much noise we make, but when we make it. You or your neighbor might find the raucous party next door entirely tolerable—until about 10 or 11 p.m. A noisy renovation downstairs might be intolerable if it's a holiday for you. Whatever you're planning, give some thought to the day, as well as the time of day for your activity.

If you have noisy neighbors, talk to them. They probably have no idea they're disturbing you. Maybe you work nights and their teenager—whose room backs up to yours—blasts the audio system after school each day.

The Golden Rule applies here: Treat your neighbors the way you want them to treat you.

## Solving Neighbor Disputes

~ by Makayla Eckardt, A Condominium Management

**B**ruised by a dispute with your neighbor? The occasional conflict is a natural byproduct of living very close to one another. It's possible to get your disagreement resolved before it escalates, and certainly before you end up in court. You should consider mediation—a process that can save you money and aggravation and lead to a more peaceful community environment.

In mediation, a neutral third party meets with you and your neighbor, often in an informal setting, to keep everyone focused on solving the problem. Mediation works particularly well by managing expectations; and, generally, the dispute is resolved within a day.

For example, let's say you're battling your upstairs neighbor about noise. She works until 2 a.m. and infuriates you by walking around her unit in the wee hours of the morning. Through mediation, each of you can talk, listen and learn about each other. She agrees to take off her shoes when she gets home; and you can call when there is a problem.

A mediator's first task is to understand how and why the conflict escalated. He or she is trained to search through highly charged responses to understand the crux of the problem. Mediation is about compromise. Be willing to learn and hear. Be open-minded. Mediation tends to fail when people can't get beyond their emotions.

If you go to court, one of you will win and one will lose. If you mediate your differences, both of you will find consensus-based, creative solutions to your problems. And that allows for more harmony in the community.

You can find a qualified mediator in our area by searching on "mediators" in your web browser.

## Virtual Tips

~ excerpt from *Common Ground* by Stuart Briers

Donna M. Reynolds, CMCA, AMS, PCAM, executive manager of the Innisbrook Condominium Association in Palm Harbor Fla., offers these tips for community associations running electronic meetings:

For all participants (physically present and calling in):

- Be professional, courteous and considerate.
- Don't rustle papers or create other noise if you are near a microphone.
- Avoid talking when others are speaking.

For participants calling in:

- Announce yourself when you join and rejoin a meeting.
- Mute your phone if you need to cough or speak to someone at your location.
- Mute your phone if there is background noise, such as in an airport.
- Turn off your television, radio and cell phone if it isn't being used for the call.
- When you speak, state your first name each time unless you are the only person who called in.
- If you need to "leave" the meeting, inform everyone.
- Smile when you speak; it comes through in your voice.



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### Your Management Team Members:

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### Upcoming Community Events

Date	Event	Venue Information
April 18-19	Bunnyville at the Detroit Zoo @ 9:00 AM-4:00 PM	The Detroit Zoo
April 19	Harlem Globetrotters @ 7:00 PM	The Palace of Auburn Hills
April 30	Tri-County Senior Day @ 10:00 AM-4:00 PM	The Detroit Zoo
April 4-6	Traverse City Boat & Outdoor Show	1213 W Civic Center Dr Traverse City, MI 49686
June 18	Bruno Mars @ 8:00 PM	The Palace of Auburn Hills
June 21	One Republic featuring The Script @ 7:00 PM	The Palace of Auburn Hills
June 21-22	Relay for Life 2014 @ 9:00 AM	Hart Middle School
May 14-18	Rochester Hills Public Library "Spring Used Book Sale" For Donation and Membership Information call (248) 650-7178	Rochester Hills Public Library 500 Olde Towne Road Rochester, MI 48307
May 24-35	Greater Rochester Heritage Days Saturday & Sunday 10:00AM-5:00 PM	Downtown Rochester For more information, look for "Greater Rochester Heritage Days" on Facebook.
September 7	Day at the Park! Detroit Tigers Game @1:00 PM Tigers vs. Giants	Comerica Park Order your tickets today at ACondoMgt.com