



A Condominium
Management Co. Inc.
(248) 650-8983
www.ACondoMgt.com



Inside this issue:

Lagniappe & Big Bright Lights	1
Pumpkin Contest Winner	1
Quick Tips	1
Events & Sports	2
Holiday Decoration Contest	2
Above & Beyond: Linda Clark	2
Annual Budget Battles	3
Pearls of Wisdom, Part II	4
Round-Up: Melting Pot	5
Final Word	5

HOLIDAY HOLIDAY

QUICK TIPS



Wrapping paper...it takes 20 minutes to apply beautifully and a half-second to tear off in a heap. Since there is absolutely nothing green about this tradition, why not make it something positive. Most of us have household shredders so protect our identities. Instead of bagging up your mounds of colorful paper, shred it and donate it to your local animal shelter or clinic.

A Condo News

Volume 2, Issue 11

Lagniappe 2010: Another great year!

by Brandi Lane



Well, the weather cooperated with for the 2010 Lagniappe celebration. Santa was cleared for landing and the local businesses were out in full force to help ring in the holiday season. I'd have to say that this year was a lot better than 2009. First, we raised twice as much money for the Jaycee's Christmas Shopping program that benefits underprivileged youths. Second, people were actually waiting around for hot chocolate because we ran out twice! Third, but best of all for almost an hour we had twenty or thirty people congregated around our tent smiling and taking pictures of our building and the 6'2" elf (that would be me in an elf hat) and this impromptu party

spurred a quartet to break into a jovial Christmas carol. The night was heart warming despite the chilly temperatures!

A Condominium Management would like to thank all of our Board Members, vendors, and residents who stopped by for a visit and supporting the Jaycees. Thank you to Diane Reeve for volunteering your time!! We look forward to seeing you all again next year!



When It Snows, It Can Pour

By Brandi Lane

Drip, drip, drip...its not the sink...drip...oh no my ceiling! We are entering ice dam season. This is an all-to-common occurrence that can lead to costly repairs. The leading cause of ice dams is lack of insulation which allows warm air to meet a cold roof line. This melts the snow, and then when temperatures dip at night it re-freezes. The continual melt and re-freeze leads to ice dams. Since water is opportunistic, this process



can produce the same affect that water does on pavement cracks. The water works its way in and the ice that forms then expands the cracks larger and larger. The next thing you know you have water dripping inside your home. Our office takes preventive measures by roof raking known problem areas. However, we need a team effort especially in these harsh winter months. If you suspect that you are facing an ice dam issue please call us immediately. Together and with maintenance we can keep the dripping confined to the coffee maker!! Our number is (248) 650-8983.

DECORATION CONTEST



Oh yeah!! If this house doesn't get your decorating excitement going then nothing will! We are having a two category contest: (1) BEST HOLIDAY DECORATIONS (2) WORST HOLIDAY DECORATIONS. Send your entries into our office before

January 1, 2010. The winning pictures will receive prizes!!!

[HOLIDAY CONTEST ENTRY](#)

HAPPY HOLIDAYS by Brandi Lane

This is the last 2010 edition of the "A Condo News". It's hard for me to believe that we've done almost two years worth of these publications. I'd like to personally recognize all of the wonderful co-owners who have contributed recipes, ideas, and commentary on this newsletter. We write this for you and we hope that we can continue to keep the articles fresh, light-hearted, and informative.

As the holidays approach we at A Condominium Management would like to remember the ones we've lost this year, give thanks for those of you who continue to go the extra mile to make your Association's great, and welcome the new members of the communities to our A Condominium family.

From Jason, Dee, Devlin, Reighvyn, and Brandi we'd like to extend to everyone a safe and happy holiday season. We look forward to continuing with all of you in 2011!! Enjoy your time with your friends and family!!



ABOVE AND BEYOND : DIANE REEVES by Brandi Lane

It is very rare where you meet a person who genuinely just wants to offer their time and enthusiasm just for the sake of making the world a better place. At A Condominium Management, we are fortunate to have a Board Member who fits description and her name is Diane Reeves of the Rochester North Condominiums.

Even before Ms. Reeves was on the Board, she volunteered her time in 2009 for the A Condominium Management Lagniappe tent and helped pass out free hot chocolate. In addition, Ms. Reeves volunteers a tremendous amount of time at the Older Person's Commission (OPC) including assisting at the Health & Wellness Dept., the pool, and with the Michigan Senior Olympics. Her dedication lead to an official role as the trainer of new volunteers at both the Health & Wellness and pool desks.

Ms. Reeves joined the Board of Rochester North Condominiums this year. She has been an excellent addition helping with coin retrieval, hanging Board notices, and assisting the Board President with financial

matters.

Ms. Reeves compassion and spirit are unrivaled. Please take a moment to thank Diane Reeves for her continued work and inspiration to the Rochester community and her peers with her association. Thank you so much for all of your help!



NOMINATIONS???

Know of a neighbor that goes above the call of duty for the betterment of your Association? Send us your nominations. It is important for us to recognize that there are still people willing to go the extra mile and make a difference in your community. Please send your nominations to BLane@ACondoMGT.com



County Events & Sporting Events

MACOMB COUNTY

MACOMB CENTER FOR THE ARTS
12/11 SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS 3:00P
12/13 HOLIDAY BRASS 7:30P
WOLCOTT MILL METROPARK
12/3-12/18 HERITAGE HOLIDAYS
12/25 CHRISTMAS APPRECIATION
STONY CREEK METROPARK
12/12 LUNCH WITH SANTA 1:00P

OAKLAND COUNTY

PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS
12/18 MMA CAGE FIGHT (7:00P)
12/22 CARRIE UNDERWOOD (7:30P)
12/30 TRANS SIBERIAN (3:00P & 7:30P)
MEADOWBROOK THEATER
11/20-12/23 A CHRISTMAS CAROL
MEADOW BROOK HALL
12/1-12/22 MEADOW BROOK HALL
HOLIDAY WALK (VARIOUS)

SPORTING EVENTS

DETROIT LIONS (2-10)
12/12 GREEN BAY (1:00)
12/19 @ TAMPA BAY (1:00)
12/26 @ MIAMI (1:00)
1/2 MINNESOTA (1:00)
DETROIT RED WINGS (17-6-3)
12/13 LA KINGS (7:30P)
12/17 @ CHICAGO (8:30P)
12/19 DALLAS (5:00P)
12/27 @ COLORADO (9:00P)
12/31 NY ISLANDERS (7:00P)
DETROIT PISTONS (7-16)
12/14 ATLANTA (7:30P)
12/17 LA CLIPPERS (7:30P)
12/22 @ TORONTO (7:00P)
12/29 BOSTON (7:30P)
MICHIGAN STATE FOOTBALL (10-1)
1/1 VS ALABAMA (CAP. ONE BOWL)
UNIVERSITY OF MICH. FOOTBALL (7-5)
1/1 VS MISS. STATE (GATOR BOWL)
MICHIGAN STATE BASKETBALL (6-3)
12/18 PRAIRIE VIEW A&M (6:30 P)
12/22 TEXAS (7:00P)
12/31 MINNESOTA (4:00P)
MICHIGAN BASKETBALL (6-2)
12/14 NC CENTRAL (7:00P)
12/18 OAKLAND UNIV. (12:00P)
12/23 BYANT (6:00P)
12/28 PURDUE (2:00P)

Seven Stupid Things People Do That Ruin Plumbing by Philip Schmidt



If you're looking for a career change and want something with rock-solid security, you might consider becoming a [plumber](#) who makes house calls. This advice is based on two truths:

1) People will always need plumbing — or more specifically, plumbing that works — and, 2) people will always do stupid things that stop their plumbing from working.

Keep in mind that the service side of plumbing often requires a strong stomach and the will to suppress amusement with other peoples' self-imposed misfortune. But rest assured that the two truths mentioned above will always keep you in business.

The items below are just a small sampling of what you might expect on an ordinary day in the field.



1. Leaving hoses connected during winter

This is a classic plumbing error that one must assume is caused most often by extreme laziness. Unlike holiday lights, hoses can cause damage when left out all year: They can lead to freezing of the sillcock (outdoor faucet) or its water supply pipe. It's terrible for your hose, too.

2. Using too much drain cleaner

When used judiciously and as directed on the right kind of clog, drain cleaners can be effective and relatively safe for drains.

When used with abandon, they can corrode some drain materials, and they can actually make clogs worse. It's also not very nice for the plumber who eventually comes out to [clear that clog](#).

3. Pouring household chemicals into a septic system

If you're used to living with a ["private" sewage system](#), you probably know how

to take care of it. But if you just bought a house with septic, or maybe you're renting a rural cottage for the summer, you might not think twice about using chemicals like drain cleaner, chlorine bleach, paint, and even anti-bacterial soaps.

These chemicals kill the essential waste-eating bacteria in the septic tank, and you can guess the result. Also, be careful about grease (see below) what else you put into a septic system.

[**Related:** [Things plumbers won't tell you](#)]

4. Screwing, nailing, or cutting into a wall with hidden plumbing pipes

Now we're into the realm of "Oh, yeah. I did that once." Do this with a screw, and you might hear a fine spray of water hitting the back of the drywall. Do it with a reciprocating saw, and you're in for a gusher.

5. Pouring grease down the kitchen drain

If you're in the habit of pouring bacon grease down the kitchen-sink drain, you might as well try to stuff the whole pig down there.



Grease is one of the best things for clogging drains. (So is all the soap we use in the bathroom, but that's a harder habit to break.)

6. Abusing the garbage disposal

Even if you're not drain grease in the sink, you might be one of those folks who thinks a [food disposer \(garbage disposal\)](#) is the equivalent of a space-fantasy ray gun. It's not.

It's a motor with a spinning wheel that has two metal teeth thingees, and it does very little to stop the following from clogging your drain: flour, rice, potato

peels (and some other veggie peels), and many fibrous foods such as asparagus and chard.

7. Using the toilet as a trash can

We all know it's stupid, and we all do it anyway. It's as though, at the back of our minds, each of us believes that if we can just get it to flush away, it will be magically out of our lives forever.



As if, at the other end of the toilet, there is nothing but a black hole, a portal to a subterranean outer space that swallows up everything we discard and whisks it off into oblivion. Unfortunately, that oblivion is a 3-inch drain pipe that leads into another drain pipe, which is THE drain pipe to your entire house.

In other words, flushing one improper item down the toilet ultimately [can stop up everything](#) in the house. But we do it anyway. And the bottom line is, if it ain't toilet paper (or you-know-what), it doesn't belong there.

This article appears courtesy of Yahoo! Green. The article may be found on the web at:

http://green.yahoo.com/blog/guest_bloggers/74/seven-stupid-things-people-do-that-ruin-plumbing.html



5 Ingenious Ways to Unclog a Toilet: How to prevent catastrophe, at home or away. By Philip Schmidt



Of all the misfortunes that can befall us in our everyday lives, few come with the same blend of horror and indignity as staring

down into a toilet that refuses to flush. As the [water level in the bowl rises](#) ominously, we plead, we pray, we hope against hope that the problem will somehow miraculously resolve itself and we will be spared the mortification (and mess) of a spillover. And when you're a guest in someone else's house, you plead and pray at least 10,000 times harder.

The only consolation in this dreaded scenario is that it happens to all of us. And, in the end, it might make for a good story for your closest friends to enjoy. But take heart, there are some simple solutions for this always-untimely event. The following are 5 time-tested tricks that have worked wonders for many a poor soul, listed here from the easiest to the hardest.

1. Do nothing but wait, then flush.

[Toilets](#), like all plumbing drains, work by the force of gravity. A full bowl of water exerts its own pressure on the clog and, over time, often will clear the clog for you. So if you have more than one bathroom in the house, just wait it out overnight, or as long as you can. Then, try to flush again. If it's a standard clog (too much paper, in most cases), this passive solution is surprisingly effective.

Warning: When you do the test flush after the waiting period, be ready to stop the water flow to the bowl (see [Top Toilet Tip](#), below), just in case this method didn't work.

2. Pour in some hot water. Wait. Flush.

If you don't have the time to wait out the clog, or if you'd like to increase your chance of success by giving gravity a helping hand, you can pour a few cups of hot water into the bowl. Proponents of this technique believe that the hot water helps to break down the waste, thereby loosening the clog. Can't hurt to try.

However, this doesn't mean you should be pouring pots full of boiling water into a cold, brittle, china toilet bowl, which could crack it.

3. Add soap. Wait as long as possible. Flush.

This is clearly the preferred method when you're not at home and would do anything to avoid having to break the news to your hosts. A few good squirts of [dish soap](#) is perhaps the most popular method, but again, if you're a guest and not alone in the house, it can be hard to explain why you have a sudden need for Palmolive in the bathroom before you're ready to join the party again. Other lucky souls have reported that liquid hand soap or shampoo have done the trick nicely, too. The theory here is that the soap breaks down the waste faster than water alone. When it's time to flush, be ready to stop the water to prevent spillover.

4. Plunge like a pro.

First of all, standard cup-type plungers don't work well on toilets because they can't provide a good seal over the drain hole. Instead, use a flange plunger, which has a rubber sleeve that extends down below the domed cup, or boot, section. Flange plungers with accordion-like boots work well, too. Make sure the flange is extended (it can fold up into the boot), then lower the plunger into the toilet at an angle so the boot fills with water and isn't trapping air. Insert the flange into the drain hole and press down so the boot seals tightly around the hole.

Make the plunge action count on both the downstroke and upstroke, since both forces will help loosen the clog, and maintain a good seal at all times. If you have no success after several tries, let the clog sit and try again. Still no luck? Time for an auger.

5. Use a closet auger.

A closet auger, or toilet auger, works just like a standard drain snake but is specially designed to accommodate the sharp turns of a toilet trap without damaging the bowl (which standard snakes can do). Work the business end of the auger into the drain

hole, with the bend in the handle pole pointed toward the drain route. Crank the tool's handle clockwise and work it in and out a little to break up the clog. If a solid object, such as a sponge or rag, is creating the clog, crank the auger clockwise to snag the obstruction, then pull it out of the toilet.

Top Toilet Tip:

Instead of standing by feeling helpless as a clogged toilet threatens to overflow, take action: Quickly remove the tank lid, reach into the tank and close the flapper—the round, rubber trap door that seals over the big hole in the bottom center of the tank. This will stop the flow of water into the bowl. Alternatively, you can close the shut-off valve to the water supply line. It's on the wall behind the toilet, near the handle side and several inches above the floor. It has a football-shaped handle that you want to turn to the right, just like a faucet. Be warned, however: Old valves can be stuck and corroded, and turning them may cause some leakage.

Something practical but humorous to end the year. This article appears courtesy of [Networx.com](#). This and other articles can be found at: <http://www.networx.com/article/5-ingenious-ways-to-unclog-a-toilet>



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A REFERENCE? DO YOU KNOW A COMMUNITY IN NEED OF OUR SERVICES?



Contact Jason Carey
(248) 650-8983
JCarey@ACondoMgt.com

PO Box 81561
Rochester, MI 48308-1561

Phone: (248) 650-8983
Fax: (248) 453-5771
E-mail: Info@ACondoMGT.com

www.ACondoMGT.com



Meet Your Managers

Jason Carey—Owner

JCarey@ACondoMGT.com

Newsletter Editor

Brandi Lane—Property Mgr.

BLane@ACondoMGT.com

Primary Newsletter Author & Editor

Devlin Carey—Property Mgr.

DCarey@ACondoMGT.com

Contributing Newsletter Author

RESTAURANT ROUND-UP: ROJO Rochester, MI by Brandi Lane

Well, there is a first time for everything. I'm actually doing a review of a restaurant that I wouldn't send you to sit down at. Initially I was excited that there was a Rojo Mexican restaurant opening just a block from our office. I had visited the Novi Rojo restaurant and had an amazing time. The fresh table-side guacamole can be customized to your palette (but its \$9.00 for two!) and the salsa is also customizable with two distinct hot sauce additions. Now, I'm not saying the food is bad...it isn't. I think it is both imaginative and fresh. If you do brave it, I'd suggest the scallop tacos with tender Swiss chard and caramelized onions or even the chunky beef burrito. But be prepared, the portions are small and over priced as compared to other authentic Mexican restaurants I've been to. The biggest problem with Rojo Rochester is their lackluster customer service and snooty wait staff. The three visits I've made to the restaurant have all been nightmares. No one took our drink orders for at least 10 minutes and then two out of the three times a separate person was our actual server and walked by as we stared at each one hoping someone would realize that we were hungry! At dinner with one of my friends, the wait staff didn't clear any of the empty plates and soon I was balancing my dinner plate on one hand to keep it from dumping in my lap. I hope they will get their act together because the tequila selection alone is impressive and I'm a tequila girl. However, I'm going to wait a few months before going back. At this point Taco Bell is better.



A CONDO'S FINAL WORD

Ok, goodbye 2010 and hello 2011!! As I enter into my second full year with A Condominium Management, I'd like to take a minute to thank all of our Board Members, Vendors, and volunteers who have made the past year wonderful.



Thanks again to all of you who donated for the Susan G. Komen 3-Day Walk. It was an amazing journey and I took each of you with me those three days. Thank you to Jason and Devlin who have taught me so much over the past year. Thank you in particular to my Board's for an excellent year.

My New Year's Resolution is to make sure I live each day to its fullest and appreciate the people who make that life a better place. Onward to bigger and better! **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

PS...Our offices will be closed 12/24, 12/31 so we can be with our families! Not to worry the emergency line is available if you need it!

Please send article ideas, suggestions, and comments to BLane@ACondoMGT.com. I will review all suggestions and will include as many as possible in future issues. Stay warm, and good luck to U of M and MSU fans during your bowl games!!! Go Green! Go White!