



A Condominium
Management Co. Inc.
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QUICK TIPS



Instead of wasting your pumpkin seeds, clean them, salt them, and bake at 350 degrees until golden. Then have a contest with your neighbors for the best jack-o-lantern!

Burlap is an inexpensive covering for tender plants such as rose bushes and other shrubs that you want to protect from harsh salt and snow.



A Condo News

Volume 2, Issue 9

Fall Gardening by Brandi Lane



In some Associations, owners are still allowed some individuality by having small flower beds or landscaped areas.

You may also be allowed to in your community. Although winter is fast approaching, there are still a few loose ends and plan for next Spring.

- 1) **Plant fall bulbs.** Early Spring flowers like tulips should be planted in the fall. I go up to the Grand Hotel in mid-October and their grounds crews are always hard at work planting bulbs.
- 2) **Cut back perennials.** Many perennial plants come back heartier when they are cut back in the fall. This includes plants like iris, hosta, day lilies, grasses, and daisies. Check with your local nursery for tips and plant varieties requiring pruning.
- 3) **Some Flowers love autumn.** Items like mums, aster, pansies, grasses, and ivy can bring some color back to your yard or planters.
- 4) **Fall fertilization is key.** Even though your grass is about to go dormant it doesn't mean it doesn't need help for the next year. Most Association's have a lawn fertilization company but if you are in charge of

your own lawn consider either hiring someone or using a good fall mix or even lime formula on your grass.

- 5) **Make sure leaves are gone.** Again most communities have landscaping companies who will come through for fall clean-up. However, your neighborhood only has so many trips through per year and although your vendors try to time the leaf drops perfectly, sometimes a little leaf removal in your beds can help insure a good start for Spring.
- 6) **Winterize sprinklers.** This is the busy time of year for sprinkler companies. For our association's where this service is offered as part of your dues, the sprinkler companies should be out by mid-October to clean out the lines and shut down the water. If you have your own system make sure you call and get an appointment.
- 7) **Design for Spring.** Take the time to get together with your Beautification committee to think about 2011 budgets and plan out for next year. Now is the time when the nursery's are winding down and willing to help you get a handle on proper plants for your area.



Water Heater Maintenance

By Brandi Lane

While looking for worthwhile subjects for the newsletter I came across a pretty good article by Roto-Rooter with tips regarding water heater routine maintenance.

- **Your water heater works harder during winter months. Flush it out and remove sediment build-up, which causes corrosion, shortens life span and reduces heating efficiency. Drain several gallons from the faucet near the bottom of the tank. Connect a hose to the faucet and direct water to a nearby drain. (Or laundry tub)**
- **Carefully test the water heater's pressure relief valve (Danger: Water is very hot) by lifting up on the lever and letting it snap back. The valve should allow a burst of hot water into the drainpipe. If not call a professional to have a new valve installed.**
- **Check the temperature setting on your water heater's thermostat. Set at 120 degrees for optimum performance.**

Courtesy of www.rotorooter.com

HALLOWEEN FUN & PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST

by Brandi Lane



Its October! I love October because it means its time for the MSU/UM game and HALLOWEEN!!

I'm one of those fanatics about pumpkin carving and even bought myself the Dremel saw for detail...yeah I get into pumpkin carving. So, we are going to have the 1st Annual A Condominium Pumpkin Carving Contest.

RULES

- You must carve it yourself. You can do the etching style but painted pumpkins are not allowed.**
- All entries must be emailed to BLane@ACondoMGT.com by midnight October 30, 2010. The winner will be announced in our November issue.**
- It must be tasteful, non-offensive, and be able to be featured in our next edition.**
- PRIZE: The winner to be chosen by our staff will receive a gift card to AMC Theaters!**



Now if you are looking for some fun this Halloween season you have some great options close to home.

PUMPKIN PATCHES:

[Westview Orchards - Washington, MI](#)

[Blake's Farms - Armada, MI](#)

[Millers Big Red - Washington, MI](#)

HAUNTED HAYRIDES & CORN MAZES & HOUSES:

Both Blakes and Millers offer nighttime hayrides and haunted barns on the weekends. Additionally I visited <http://www.madmanmike.com> which lists a lot of Metro Detroit Haunted Houses, Mazes, Hayrides, etc. Be sure to check your local paper and community websites for other events. Many community groups will put on haunted events as fundraisers and it is always good to support your community.

TRICK OR TREATING SAFETY:

- Check for local community hours for trick-or-treating.
- Make sure your children only go out in groups or with an adult for safety.
- Purchase reflective strips or glow sticks for you and your children to make them more visible when crossing the street.
- Make sure that the eye holes and breathing holes in masks are large enough for your child to see and breathe properly.
- Make sure that you dress your child for the weather. Often you can layer them under their outfits.
- Make sure you inspect all candy before they eat it. Many hospitals and fire stations offer this service and will check the candy for metal and other dangerous objects.
- Make sure that your children only go to houses with their exterior lights on.



My dog Beckham dressed as a fire truck!

County Events & Sporting Events

MACOMB COUNTY

MACOMB CENTER FOR THE ARTS

10/2 LEANN RIMES 8:00P

10/9 JEFF DANIELS 8:00P

10/16 LEGALLY BLONDE: MUSICAL
PARTRIDGE CREEK

10/23 HEALTHY HALLOWEEN: Parade,
live music 10:30-1:30

STONY CREEK METROPARK

10/1, 10/8, 10/15 MOONLIGHT HAY-
RIDES

OAKLAND COUNTY

PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS

10/13-10/17 DISNEY ON ICE (VARIOUS)

10/24 ROGER WATERS' THE WALL

10/30 PRO BOXING AT THE PALACE

MEADOWBROOK THEATER

10/6-10/31 DRACULA: A ROCK OPERA

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

10/3 BROOKSIE WAY HALF MARATHON
& 5K RUN & MILE FUN RUN/WALK

SPORTING EVENTS

DETROIT TIGERS (80-76)

9/30-10/3 @ BALTIMORE *SEASON END*

DETROIT LIONS (0-3)

10/3 @ GREEN BAY (1:00P)

10/10 ST. LOUIS (1:00P)

10/17 @ NY GIANTS (1:00P)

10/31 WASH. RED SKINS (1:00P)

DETROIT RED WINGS (0-0-0)

10/8 ANAHEIM (7:00P)

10/9 @ CHICAGO (8:30P)

10/12 COLORADO (7:30)

10/14 @ DALLAS (8:30P)

10/21 CALGARY (7:00P)

MICHIGAN STATE FOOTBALL (4-0)

10/2 WISCONSIN (3:30P)

10/9 @ MICHIGAN (3:30P)

10/16 ILLINOIS (12:00P)

10/23 @ NORTHWESTERN(12:00P)

10/30 @ IOWA (TBA)

UNIVERSITY OF MICH. FOOTBALL (4-0)

10/2 @ INDIANA UNIVERSITY (3:30P)

10/16 IOWA (3:30P)

10/30 @ PENN STATE (8:00P)

CENTRAL MICHIGAN (2-2)

10/9 @ VIRGINIA TECH (12:00P)

WESTERN MICHIGAN (1-2)

10/16 @ NOTRE DAME (2:30P)



ABOVE AND BEYOND : TOM BERRY

by Brandi Lane

The October recognition for the A Condominium Management “Above & Beyond” award goes to Tom Berry of Village Place Condominiums. Tom is one of the original owners in the community. He’s been dedicated to his Association for over ten years and on the Board for nearly as long.

Tom knows every square inch of Village Place, he is familiar with every resident, and I’m sure there is not a resident in the community who hasn’t been thankful when Tom stops by with extra salt for the walkway or to update them on community business.

All associations benefit from this type of dedication and genuine concern for their home and neighbors. Tom is very hands on, coordinates the Board, and provides excellent communication to our office. This level of teamwork is unrivaled and

not easily duplicated.

After a decade of loyalty to Village Place, we are pleased that Tom is considering a very well deserved, and very earned vacation with his lovely wife Linda. May you enjoy your time away from the stress of Board Member life!!!

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.



Ways to Green up your Neighborhood!

Use fallen leaves as compost, they will enrich your soil and provide nutrients for the flowers of the Spring of 2011!!

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

The Human Side of Association Living by Brandi Lane



I’d like to recognize Ray Keller of Harbor Oaks Condominiums for the idea and internet link that is in this article. Our newsletters are often so dedicated to the buildings themselves that we have not considered what happens if something goes wrong with one of its inhabitants.

The people who tend to live in condominium associations tend to either be the very young who are just starting out, or the people who have paid their dues for years and want to enjoy life without the hassles that come along with owning a home; like yard work and shoveling snow.

Association life means that you are all very closely tied together whether you are friends with your neighbors or not. You pass in the morning walking to cars, you share the same pool, and share the same walking paths. So what happens if you witness someone collapse or injured? FIRST ITEM EITHER CALL 9-1-1 OR HAVE SOMEONE CALL 9-1-1!!

However, Ray forwarded to our office a link to The University of Arizona’s College of

Medicine website. Specifically in regards to a new, less evasive form of CPR called Continuous Pressure CPR. I found it interesting because there was a lot less to remember and according to their video at <http://medicine.arizona.edu/spotlight/learn-sarver-heart-centers-continuous-chest-compression-cpr> for every minute a person goes without CPR they decrease their survival rate by 10%. Although I am not suggesting that everyone run out and start this method of CPR on someone I do think that looking into this form and any other basic First Aid is a good idea for anyone.



How many times do we pass an accident and wonder if we could’ve helped? How many times have we heard about someone choking in a restaurant and thought it was a good idea to learn how to do the Heimlich maneuver? How many times have some of you watched the news about some freak accident and that quick thinking of one person saves someone’s life? Some of you live by lakes,

can you help someone if they fall in?

You may not know the woman next door or the family upstairs but you all may need each other one day. No matter what our age, or how healthy you think you are...you may need that woman or family to save your life.

Many community centers and even local hospitals offer basic first aid and CPR classes. Some are even free courses just to provide community awareness. Sometimes it is a lot easier to attend with a friend or family member. Perhaps take the time to meet a neighbor and ask them to join you. Not only will you make a new friend but you may meet the person who will save your own life one day.

Some other links to First Aid websites include:

[Mayo Clinic](#)

[American Red Cross \(Lists Courses In Area\)](#)

Also, if you want to help save lives, consider giving a pint of blood. That one pint can save several people.



PEARLS OF WISDOM

provided by Community Associations Institute of Michigan (CAI)



I try to construct this newsletter to be both informative and fun. While scanning the CAI website I came across their 116 "Pearls of Wisdom." They apply to everyone and some I found very funny so for the next two issues, I am going to share some "Pearls of Wisdom" and hope we can all see both the usefulness and humor in community living:

H. Jackson Brown, Jr., wrote Life's Little Instruction Book to provide his son with wisdom he could refer to as he lived his life. In that same spirit, CAI editors have combed through 20 years of CAI publications and periodicals to offer similar instructions for community association life. Here then are 116 pearls of wisdom to guide you and ensure that your community association experience is a happy one.

Be a Good Homeowner

1. Review the documents before you buy your unit.
2. Read them again when you move in.
3. Pay your assessments.
4. Attend the annual meeting.
5. Read the newsletter and the minutes.
6. Follow the rules.
7. Serve on a committee.
8. Serve on the board.
9. Don't expect someone else to do it for

- you.
10. Remember that you are a member of the association. What is good for it is good for you.

Be a Good Neighbor

11. Love thy neighbor.
12. Respect thy neighbor.
12. Curb thy dog.
13. Don't play the stereo too loud.
14. Park in your own space.
15. Don't be a six-car family.
16. Clean up after yourself.
17. Take care of your property.
18. Help form a neighborhood watch.
19. If there is a problem, talk about it—direct conversation is more effective than sending a letter or banging on a wall.

Be a Good Board Member

21. Serve because you care, not because you have a hidden agenda.
22. Use CAI courses and information to learn how to run a community association.
23. Study the documents before you enforce them.
24. Don't go on a power trip.
25. Remember your fiduciary duty to protect, preserve, and enhance the value of the property.
26. Conduct a reserve study.
27. Let the manager manage.
28. Focus on policies, plans, and objectives.

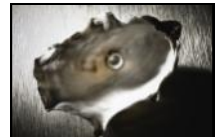
29. Communicate, communicate, communicate.
30. Communicate some more.

Be a Good Leader

31. Establish clear goals.
32. Articulate them.
33. Don't put things off.
34. Set high standards.
35. Make decisions.
36. Do what is right, not what is popular.
37. Be positive.
38. Ask others for input.
39. Plan and save for the future.
40. Send thank you notes.

Have Productive Meetings

41. Distribute materials—financial reports, agendas, bids—to board members a few days before the meeting.
42. Study this material.
43. Prepare an agenda.
44. Follow it.
45. Follow the rules of parliamentary procedure.
46. Act professional—don't let the meeting turn into a social event.
47. Don't serve alcohol.
48. Don't call people names.
49. Open the meeting to other owners.
50. Allow questions.



COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION by Brandi Lane

I am fortunate that I have a boss who believes in education us to make ourselves better managers. We recently took a class and the big emphasis was on communication. There is a symbiotic relationship between the owners, the Board, and the Management Company. One failure to communicate can send the whole process out of whack.

The Management Company's role is to listen to the needs and wants of the home owners and Board. Based on the contract set-up and the direction of the Board, maintenance is performed and letters are sent out. The Manager does not decide who is in violation nor do they have the power to fulfill every request that comes

across from the homeowners. Many decisions must be made by the Board and for the good of the entire community not one just one homeowner.



Similarly, the Board must communicate with each other, with their residents, and with the Management Company. Board to h o m e o w n e r communication can be accomplished through open meetings, through your Annual Meeting, through minutes and through newsletters. The Board communicates with each other and the

Management Company through regular meetings and via email and telephone calls. There is very much a team atmosphere needed to make community communication work.

As owners, please be understanding that the Board and Management are working as hard as we can to make your community a better place to live. Boards, please understand that the more transparent the business of the community can be, the more your residents will understand and support the choices being made. The stronger the team the better chance you have of a living in a successful association!!

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RESTAURANT ROUND-UP: LAKEVILLE INN by Brandi Lane

Ahh Michigan, where you drive “Up North” to play on a different lake than the one a half mile from you. For you A Condo News readers, you should try driving “Up North” to Leonard, MI and visiting the Lakeville Inn. Within the past year and a half the ownership has changed but the ambiance has not. Its getting a little to chilly to sit out on their second floor deck but the view at sunset over Lakeville Lake is amazing. They have one of the best wine lists I have seen for a small town restaurant and have a very ambitious menu. Their menu is seasonal and they change it daily based on what is fresh. Although they have your traditional pub grub they also have simple al dente pastas with sautéed chicken and artichokes in a lemon butter sauce and fish so fresh you would think they walked across the street and caught it to order. The interior reminds me of a cozy log cabin and although Leonard is about 20 minutes North of Rochester on Rochester Rd, you’d swear you were up near Torch Lake. The Inn definitely has its “locals favored” flair and you’d swear that if the non-locals wouldn’t stare they would yell out “Norm” or “Steve” when they walked in for a cold beer and to catch the current sporting event. Lakeville Inn is one of those places you walk in the first time and feel like you’ve been coming for years. The staff is friendly, the beer selection is incredible and you don’t have to worry about missing the Wings game.



CALL 248-628-4460.

<http://lakevilleinn.com>

A CONDO’S FINAL WORD

There is definitely a chill to the air now. I love to see the fall colors, and that October means my annual trip to the Grand Hotel and the annual University of Michigan vs. Michigan State University game. This year proves to be an excellent year for both events but I’m still sorry to see the warm temperatures and the sun go away.



Please be aware that the change in seasons means that it is darker when you leave in the morning and often getting dark as you get home. Please be aware of your surroundings and on the lookout for suspicious vehicles and people.

If you don’t think it belongs in your community please call the police immediately. It is better to err on the side of safety.

CAN’T WAIT TO SEE YOUR JACK-O-LANTERNS!!!!

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, Go Green! Go White!

Brandi Lane