

Malibu East Dialogue

May 2007

Your Communication and Information Resource

Director Leon LeRoy lambastes ComEd

Testimony of Leon T. LeRoy before the Illinois Legislative Committee Hearing On Electrical Rates, James Thompson Building Auditorium, Apr. 12, 2007

Mr. Chairman, State Representative Osterman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Leon LeRoy and I am a member of the Board of Managers of the Malibu East Condominium Association. I am here today on behalf of my association and as the representative of ASCO, the Association of Sheridan Road Condo/Co-op Owners. Our organization represents the over 7,000 condo and co-op units on Sheridan Road between 5200 and 6400 north.

I have many people to thank today.

Thank you, members of the committee for giving me the opportunity to testify.

My thanks to Commonwealth Edison and the Illinois Commerce Commission for making this hearing necessary by their almost secret move to reclassify common elements of our homes as commercial. I say, almost secret, because it is obvious that commercial bulk electricity providers knew about this move before the legislators and even before the ICC voted to make it official.

Thank you to the many lawyers and accountants who thought of this scheme.

And thank you most of all to the officers of ComEd who gave new meaning to the old saying, "A House is not a Home."

I live in an association of 499 units.

When the resident of a single-family home goes to his garage and turns on the light, he pays at a residential rate. When we go to our garage, we pay at a commercial rate. The resident in a two-flat rental has lights to go upstairs. They pay at residential rate. When I get in the elevator, I ride and see at a commercial



rate. I could go on, but you get the message.

Recently the Chicago City Council held hearings on the same problem. ComEd insisted that they gave notice to

all the affected associations. Association representatives said, "No, we never knew." Well, we think we figured out what happened, at least in the case of larger buildings. You sent the notice to the bookkeeping departments of the management companies that pay our bills. You were too lazy to find out who the leaders and decision makers in our associations were. You just ran it through the Xerox and sent it to a bunch of data entry clerks. That is why our ASCO president had to provide you with a new list after the rate change went into effect. And that is when the real letters went out.

But that's OK. By that time we knew.

We knew because the bulk rate salesmen came calling and told us all about it.

Then, to add insult to injury, we, the residents of the all-electric buildings you lured developers into building, got our individual electric bills.

In our all-electric building the owner of a one-bedroom unit had an electric bill of \$150 in February, 2006. One year later she paid \$245 for February 2007.

In our all-electric building the owner of a two-bedroom unit had an electric bill of \$113 in February, 2006. One year later she paid \$211 for February, 2007.

These bills include heat and as the song

goes, "Some like it hot." So, the one-bedroom bill, which is a corner unit, is higher than the two-bedroom bill.

I did not major in math in college, but I do know that these increases are much more than ComEd's prediction of 24%. Thank goodness for global warming. What would the bill have been if this had been a really cold winter?

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, on behalf of the condominium owners and residents of Sheridan Road, I ask you to return our common elements to our home and return our electric bills to affordable.

Thank you.

Our condolences to the family and friends of our longtime "fix-it man" Howie Stahle on the passing of his wife, Evelyn Stahle.

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Board meeting notes by Elaine Winans

MECA board meeting Tuesday, Apr. 24, 2007

Attendance: 9 board members, 2 management representatives and 16 residents
Not present: Carol Beatty, Cass Buscher, Tom Vaughan

OPEN FORUM 1

Resident comments and questions:

- 1) Will the pool be closed during the day this summer due to construction? *No, proper cleanup during construction will enable the pool to remain open.*
- 2) Why were the lights out in the elevators for about 30 minutes without notice? *An electrician did it without prior approval.*
- 3) Resident passed out a letter on noise issues in the building to the board and read it to the residents present. The resident stated that he was measuring 84 decibels in his bedroom from a neighbor's sound system. *The board will discuss the issue in closed session.*
- 4) Resident commented on the laundry, proper resident use of the facility and the need for resident education and signage and more maintenance of the facility. Also, children are often present and improperly chaperoned. *The board welcomes comments and suggestions for better use of this facility.*
- 5) Can the new hallway carpeting be treated after cleaning to protect against future staining. *Not practical.*
- 6) Will we be fencing the "curbing" to keep dogs off the grass? *In our budget for this year.*
- 7) Resident stated that the dryers and washers are smaller. The dryers are not drying even after an hour. The location of the lint trap is awkward.
- 8) Who selected the new machines? Did they check the performance before installation? *The board dropped the ball on this one. We thought we were getting the same type of machines that we had before, including performance and size.*
- 9) Does Sudler have any responsibility in helping with this type of decision?

Neither the board nor management did its job in this case. "We all dropped the ball."

- 10) What is the length of the contract? *Five years. We have requested the names of condominiums that have had the same equipment installed. We need the input of an outside consultant.*
- 11) Can the dryers be cranked up to provide more heat? *We had 60 amps going into each machine prior to the change. They changed it to 30 amps.*
- 12) *Comments by Dean Lerner: We are going to do everything we can to make the machines acceptable to the residents.*
- 13) Many residents are having service problems with AWB (American Wireless Broadband), mostly intermittent outages. If you are using AWB, please contact Jo Gayle through the office or the Dialogue. *President Molins requested Sudler to see if a third party could look into the problem.*
- 14) The carts are being shoved into the cart room and not replaced properly and thus blocking the door.

The board thanks all residents who responded to the hallway questionnaire

TREASURER'S REPORT

Neil Warner

Financial statement

Balance on hand, cash and reserves — \$3,508,870.23.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1) *Floor Representatives*
Barbara Murphy
Meeting will be held at 7:30pm May 16 in the Community Room.
- 2) *Security*
Sandy Chaet
Worked with the management office on a sheet to update residents' emergency information. Additional street lights will be installed on our end of Glenlake. We've had two instances where residents became incapacitated and access to their units was not available. Would like to discuss emergency access in committee.
- 3) *Social and Educational*
Sandy Chaet
Dance classes on Thursday nights.

Please keep in mind that the meeting notes are not the official record of the MECA Board of Directors meetings. The official minutes are generally approved at the following meeting and may be viewed or copied in the management office.

Free brunch May 20. White Elephant sale June 23.

- 4) *Architecture & Aesthetics*
Chris Chiodo for Carol Beatty
Unable to contact Dresser.
 - 5) *ASCO report*
Sandy Chaet
General meeting next May 1 on impending legislation. The board will send a letter to legislative representatives concerning our opposition to SB0526.
 - 6) *Garage*
Martina Molins
Everyone is still valet-parked; 442 cars are parked in our building.
 - 7) *Public & Community Affairs*
Sandy Chaet
Will ask at the Zoning and Planning meeting for the Sheridan Road sidewalk bike ordinance to be enforced.
 - 8) *Pets*
Sandy Chaet
Proposal for parkway fencing will be made at next board meeting.
 - 9) *Parents*
Marcia Fishman
Easter egg hunt successful. (See article, page 8.)
 - 10) *Sports and Entertainment*
Neil Warner
New yoga class begins May 14. Hope to resume water aerobics classes when pools open.
- #### MANAGEMENT REPORT
- ##### Items requiring immediate board action
- 1) *Outdoor landscape proposals*
Approved bid from Kinsella to landscape ground level and fourth floor.
 - 2) *Laundry room discussion*
Board will explore options to address residents' concerns.
- ##### Items not requiring board action
- 1) *Satellite TV status*
Cable committee will meet this month.
 - 2) *Hallway remodeling project status*
The board thanks all residents who responded to the hallway remodeling questionnaire.
 - 3) *Garage construction project*
Discussion of Dr. Bastani area affected by construction. Proposed ad-

ditional charges for moving the electrical distribution conduits will not be necessary. Work is proceeding as hoped. Pile of waste material by the dog run is unacceptable.

4) **Unit sales**

24C	\$285,000
38G	\$255,000
8B	\$305,000
15E	\$244,500 pending

5) **Lobby circulation/handicapped ramp access project**

The Captain's Walk vestibule doors will be replaced soon.

6) **Critical & ongoing façade inspection**

The annual exterior work will commence soon. The work on the SE corner to repair the previous drastic unit leaks has been successful. Work on more units is contemplated.

7) **North Sheridan Road door update**

The replacement of the North Sheridan Road door and window wall needs final adjustments. Requesting suitable representation that the installation is weatherproof.

The meeting ended at 9:37pm and went into closed session.



What's happening around the building

by Chris Chiodo, MECA Manager

Assessments: Assessments are due by the first of each month. A late charge will be assessed for any delinquent account at the close of business on the 15th of each month.

Please send remittance to:

Malibu East Condo Assoc.
% Sudler – 80
8401 Innovation Way
Chicago, IL 60682-8401

The management office will not accept assessment checks.

Garage construction project: As of April 24, the project is on schedule. Please look at posting in the lobby in front of the management office, which will show the ongoing status.

SPECIAL NOTICE
You must clean the lint traps in the new dryers.

Laundry notice: Before using the dryers, please clean out the lint traps in the front of the machine for more efficient drying. If you lose change, please come to the management office for reimbursement.

Bicycle storage room: We will be conducting a complete inspection of the room and cleaning out all unregistered bicycles. Please make sure your bike is

Parties

Please remember that noise from balconies carries. Your neighbors have a right to a measure of quiet without having to close balcony doors to keep out unwelcome hilarity. Ask your guests to "keep it down" when outside. Don't let your party move to the hallway — finish your "goodnights" inside.

Construction

Construction noise travels ... and travels ... and travels! The rebars in the concrete walls, floors and ceilings carry construction noise up and out to several floors. Please keep all construction activity within the time limits specified in MECA rules. You must provide the management office with any needed construction per-

mitted, and, as a special consideration, it would be considerate to provide to your neighbors, through the management office, the proposed starting and ending date of construction.

registered with the management office and your bicycle has the current maroon sticker on it. Any unregistered

Swimming pool & fourth floor deck:

The pool season is right around the corner. The tentative opening date for the pools and patio deck is Saturday, May 26, at 6:00am for the early-bird swimmers. At this time we are planning to have water aerobics this summer, with the dates, times and instructor yet to be determined. Please make sure you sign a waiver in the management office before you attend a class. Also, expect to see new lifeguards this year. They will be checking for pool passes. If you do not have any, please come to the management office to purchase them. You are allowed only four passes total per unit at a cost of \$10 each.

Façade inspection & repair: Beginning in early May, Golf Construction, along with Klein & Hoffman, will be working on the building façade per City of Chicago ordinance. A detailed notice will go out prior to the start of the repairs to explain the scope of the work and what is required from the residents.

Management office e-mail: For your convenience, if you need to contact the management office or the board of directors for any reason, you may e-mail your requests, concerns, problems, etc., to: malibueast@awb.us

mits, and, as a special consideration, it would be considerate to provide to your neighbors, through the management office, the proposed starting and ending date of construction.

Slamming doors

An open balcony door creates a wind tunnel that can slam your hallway door when entering or leaving. Hold the door tight and prevent this unwelcome noise.

Dogs

Some dogs can become very territorial and bark whenever a neighbor or vendor merely passes by your door. This can become very annoying. Please consider applying some training in this area to eliminate this annoyance.

Top 10, No. 6

By Jack Winans

An article by Mark Pearlstein concerning 10 facts about condominium ownership was reprinted in the October '06 Dialogue. The Dialogue editor is commenting on those 10 facts and urges condominium owners to contribute their personal comments.

If you live in a multifamily building, do not expect the level of silence of a single-family home. But consider that you have neighbors in proximity of whom you must think.

Editorial comment: Noise complaints fall into these categories.

Music and TV

The foremost cause is TVs and sound systems located too close to a neighbor's wall. When moving in or moving furniture, try to keep any sound systems located away from common walls.

Floors not soundproofed

MECA rules prescribe specific sound-insulating criteria when remodeling. Check the management office for details.

Community Calendar

by Miriam Romain



"How to Preserve Your Valuable Photos"
Sat. May 5, 10-11:30am
5358 N. Ashland Ave.
773-506-4849

MAY HOLIDAYS

Asian Pacific American History Month
Jewish-American Heritage Month

May 1

Pagan/Wiccan: New Year

May 3

Israel's Independence Day (Yom Ha'Atzma'Ut)

National Day of Prayer (United States)

May 5

Cinco de Mayo (Mexico)

May 13

Non-Religious: Mother's Day

May 17

Christian: Ascension Day

May 19

Malcolm X's birthday (African-American, United States)

May 23

Baha'i: Declaration of the Bab

May 23-24

Jewish: Shavuot

May 27

Christian: Pentecost

May 28

Non-Religious: Memorial Day

May 29

Baha'i: Ascension of Baha'u'llah

May 31

Buddhist: Vesak (Visakha Puja/Buddha Day)

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

BERGER PARK

CULTURAL CENTER

Computer class

For seniors (60 & over)
Fridays, 2-4pm FREE
6205 N. Sheridan Rd.
773-761-0376

EDGEWATER

BRANCH LIBRARY

CAPS 24th Dist. Beat #2433

Come meet our beat police.
Wednesday, May 2, 7pm

Saturday Book Club

11am 1st Sat. month
1210 W. Elmdale
312-744-0718

EDGEWATER

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

THEATER/SHOWINGS

ACTORS WORKSHOP THEATRE

"Equus"

8pm Fridays and Saturdays, 3pm
Sundays, \$25
Through May 13
1044 W. Bryn Mawr
773-728-7529

CITY LIT THEATRE COMPANY

"Gidget"

8pm Fri. & Sat., 3pm Sun., \$25
1020 W. Bryn Mawr
773-293-3682

GRIFFIN THEATRE

"The Constant Wife"

7:30pm Thu.-Sat., 3pm Sun., \$24
1225 W. Belmont Ave.
773-327-5252

PROFILES THEATRE

"Apple"

7:30pm Thu., Fri.; 4pm Sat.;
5:30pm Sun., \$24
4147 N. Broadway
773-549-1815

PEGASUS PLAYERS

"The Frogs"

8pm Thu.-Sat., 3pm Sun., \$10-\$30
O'Rourke Center, Truman College
1145 W. Wilson
773-878-9761

RAVEN THEATRE

"The Sea Gull"

East Stage
8pm Thu.-Sat., 3pm Sun., \$25
6157 N. Clark
773-338-2177

MECA EVENTS/MEETINGS

Dialogue Committee meeting

Tuesday, May 15

7:30pm — Community Room

Floor Representatives meeting

Wednesday, May 16

7:30pm — Community Room

Thursday afternoon

discussion group

Thursday, May 17

(every 3rd Thurs. of month)

2:00pm — Community Room

MECA board meeting

Tuesday, May 22

7:30pm — Windjammer Room

Continental Brunch

Sun., May 20

Windjammer Room

White Elephant Sale

Sat., Jun. 23

Captain's Walk

Leave event and meeting notices at the desk for the Dialogue.

ASCO and community news

By Sandy Chaet

There will be an ASCO general meeting on Tuesday, May 1 at 7:30 p.m. at Park Tower, 5415 N. Sheridan. The speaker will be Michael Kim, attorney, who will discuss all the pending legislation affecting condominiums. Refreshments will be served. Parking is available for a fee in Park Tower's garage.

ASCO is developing a website thanks to Larry Rosen, a Malibu East resident. Please visit the website at www.ascosheridanroad.org. If you would like to be on the ASCO e-mail list to get our mail, please leave me your name, email address. Please leave it in my mailbox in the cart room. The list is not shared with anyone else. By being on the e-mail list, you will receive community and ASCO news.

There will be cameras installed at the intersection of Hollywood and Sheridan. The camera is the kind that will write and mail tickets to motorists who disobey traffic signals. The Chicago Dept. of Transportation permit is in effect until May 9th and should begin shortly. Work will be on weekdays as well as Saturday.

There will be sewer work around 5300 N. Sheridan starting the next few weeks. Work will only be done on weekdays and should be completed by May 11.

George Lane Beach playground construction, which was supposed to have been done in the fall, should be coming along soon. This is the park located at Thorndale and Sheridan.

Other news involves the two liquor stores at Granville and Winthrop, which should be turning in their liquor licenses about the end of the month, according to police sources. Pepitone's restaurant, 5437 N. Broadway, should be opening in a couple of weeks. Speakeasy, 1401 W. Devon Ave., has been bought by a Lakeview restaurant, Uncommon Ground.

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Member FDIC

ASCO report on ComEd electric rate increases

Dear ASCO resident,

Today was a blue ribbon day for ASCO and condo residents across northern Illinois.

After much effort and groundwork by our state representative, Harry Osterman, a legislative hearing was held in the Thompson Building to take testimony from the public and the electrical industry about recent rate increases and the impact of the reclassification of common elements.

There was good testimony for our side. Ald. Vi Daley was there to speak. Gene Fisher testified on behalf of the Diversey Harbor Neighbors. Leon T. LeRoy of the Board of Directors of Malibu East testified on behalf of ASCO.

The star of the show, according to state Rep. Osterman, was Leon. When you read his testimony (*see page 1*), you'll know why. He brought down the house with his eloquent presentation. Leon's background includes a lot of experience in public speaking, especially as trustee of his church. According to Rep. Osterman, Leon gave "new impetus to the fight for reclassification," and our state representative was very optimistic about the future.

It didn't take long for ComEd to put an offer on the table. An article in the Crain's Chicago Business spelled out the offer.

But negotiations do not take place in a vacuum. Our state senator and Sheridan Road resident Carol Ronen has been a part of a Senate coalition of Chicago and downstate legislators working on the resolution of the reclassification problem. She has kept close touch with ASCO during this process. She has also been working with the Chicago Bar Association, researching the legality of the reclassification and possible legal action.

Malibu East has carried the load for all of us on this issue. Early on, President Marcel Molins arranged for a special board meeting on the issue and invited his constituent, Sen. Ronen. The board briefed her on issues with details of which even the legislators, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) and people in the governor's of-

fice were unaware. Tom Vaughan took on research duties and briefed ASCO on the situation. His ability to understand and explain the math on this was invaluable. Board member Sandy Chaet went to City Hall to testify on our behalf before the City Council Committee on Energy. And today Leon carried the flag.

The leadership given by Malibu East in this issue is further proof of the strength of ASCO. Each of our member buildings has its own leaders, and this is our core.

Thank you, Malibu East.
Sheli Lulkin, ASCO president

Source: ASCO email

Electric rate hearing

Osterman holds special House committee hearing on potential electric rate increase in condo common areas

During a special House Electric Utility Oversight Committee hearing on Thursday, April 12, state Rep. Harry Osterman (D-Chicago) and other legislators heard moving testimony from condominium associations (*see page 1*) and owners, community leaders (*see story at left*), and consumer advocates on the reclassification of electric rates for public areas in condominiums. Condo owners stand to experience a dramatic increase in their utility costs for common areas as frozen electric rates thaw.

"If an increase in monthly utility bills weren't bad enough, condo owners stand to be whacked again because of a change in the law that classifies common areas at a higher rate," said Osterman. "Despite homeowners' creative attempts to save on their energy bills, when it comes to monitoring their common areas, this loophole prevents them from controlling rising costs. By bringing everyone to the table, I hope this hearing brought this problem to light and will help lead to a solution for consumers."

Osterman asked for the special committee hearing after angry constituents and senior citizens flooded his district office with calls about the misclassification of common areas. Osterman, whose representative district consists of hundreds of multi-unit buildings, has introduced legislation to address the problem of the reclassification of common areas in con-



Pictured Above (from left to right) at Thursday's House Electric Utility Oversight Committee hearing addressing ComEd are State Rep. Mary Flowers, Chairman, State Rep. George Scully, State Rep. Harry Osterman and State Rep. Carolyn Krause.

dominium buildings. Among those who testified at Thursday's committee hearing were Chicagoland condo board presidents, Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office, Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn, the Illinois Commerce Commission and the Citizens Utility Board.

In addition to his work to address the high rates in common areas, Osterman is a sponsor of legislation that would leave pre-2007 electric rates in place until the Illinois Commerce Commission declares that the power market for all but the largest users of electricity is competitive. House Bill 1750 specifies that in order for the ICC to declare that competition exists, 33 percent of ComEd's and downstate Ameren's customers must purchase electricity generated from Alternative Retail Electric Suppliers and that at least three such suppliers are available to choose from.

"Based on what we heard today, it is apparent that the reclassification loophole is a serious concern for multi-unit housing tenants and is an issue we need to deal with immediately," said Osterman. "By holding this special hearing, constituents were provided an opportunity to weigh in and help craft the legislation that I intend to introduce upon my return to Springfield."

For more information about Osterman's committee hearing, please contact his constituent service office at (773) 784-2002. The 14th District covers Edgewater and Rogers Park.

Source: Michael Cassidy, Ill. House of Representatives

ECC safety forum

ECC safety forum highlights great community initiatives and honors outstanding police officers

By Tracy Poyser

On March 31, the Edgewater Community Council, (ECC) and the 48th and 40th Wards aldermanic offices sponsored a midday forum on community services and safety initiatives at the Nicholas Senn High School on North Glenwood.



I learned a lot about initiatives and services, many of them driven by volunteers and neighbors, that make Edgewater such a great community. According to Louise Rohr, who chairs the ECC Safety Committee and co-hosted the forum, about 60 people attended, and they hope it will become an annual event.

ECC representatives discussed the work of ECC, particularly safety, and representatives from the aldermen's offices explained their roles in and service for the community. Representatives from various city and county agencies had tabletop exhibits with materials describing their work and services. "Since 1960, the ECC has worked closely with block clubs, the business community, elected officials and our fellow neighbors to improve and advance the quality of life in Edgewater," said ECC President Nancy Schroeder in her welcome address. "Community safety is one of our top priorities," she emphasized, "and we work hard to organize residents to be a positive presence on our streets by sponsoring regular community activities such as this one."

The forum also featured three very informative workshops to get neighbors involved and aware:

1. Safety tips for children and seniors, street safety, self-defense tips and recognizing gang activity and signs.
2. Various ways the community can actively participate in improving neighborhood safety through the CAPS and Court Advocacy Programs, and tips on when and how to use 311 and 911 services. (*See insert, March '07 Dialogue.*)
3. Demonstration of privately funded



Left to right: Louise Rohr, Commander Bruce Rottner (24th District), Sergeant Jeff Sachs (20th District), Officer Steve McNichols (24th District), Officer Ryan Arnold (24th District), Rep Harry Osterman.

surveillance cameras, an important aspect of the ECC Safety Initiative.

Louise Rohr also presented ECC recognition awards to the 20th and 24th District police commanders and several officers for their dedication and service to the Edgewater community, in making our streets safer and in improving the quality of life for residents. She recognized Cmdr. Kathleen Boehmer and the officers of the 20th Police District for their work on the drug sting operation that led to investigations and arrests of more than a dozen offenders — and more recently, for their work leading to the arrest of the slasher/stabber who had traumatized the southwest section of Edgewater.

Special honors went to Sgt. Jeff Sachs of the 20th District bicycle patrol operation for increasing pedestrian safety along Sheridan Road and Osterman Beach and Park, Officer Tom Rolon of the 20th District Bryn Mawr evening foot patrol for making Bryn Mawr and the El station safer for all of us, and Cmdr. Bruce Rottner and the officers of the 24th District for their dedication and work in apprehending the offender of a homicide in the 5800 block of Winthrop, and the perpetrator of the burglaries on Thorndale. Also recognized were police officers Steve McNichols and Ryan Arnold, of the 24th District, for their heroic rescue of a family in distress in a fire on Kenmore in early January; and recently retired officer Derrick McClinton, 24th District Thorndale afternoon foot patrol, for maintaining

peace and keeping order at the Thorndale El station.

ECC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit and voluntary membership organization formed in 1960 to improve the quality of life in our community. Visit www.edgewater-communitycouncil.org, or call ECC at 773-334-5609 for up-to-date information on future programs.

Pet Committee

By Betty Mayian



The Pet Committee was not an original committee at Malibu East. Sandy Chaet and Marcia Fishman got involved as other owner/residents did, when the board wanted to adopt/review pet rules. It was adopted by the board and added to the Malibu East Rules and Regulations. Sandy and Marcia are the current co-chairs of this committee, which does not meet on a regular basis. The function of the committee is to discuss pet concerns, offer suggestions to the board and review pet rules, if necessary. The objective is to have the building pets and their owners follow the pet etiquette in the Pet Rules & Regulations. The procedure is to have the board liaisons report back to the board. If a resident has a problem with a pet, the complaint should be addressed to the board and to the management office.

Dialogue reprints

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www.MalibuEast.org/dialogue

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Easter egg hunt party

By Chris Barragan

The MECA Parents Committee hosted an Easter egg hunt party in the Windjammer Room on Saturday, April 7.



Even though the weather was freezing outside, it felt like spring was in the air! The room was decorated with flowers, balloons, bunnies, and plastic eggs were everywhere. About 20 of our young residents and their parents enjoyed spending time together and celebrating the holiday. The kids colored Easter eggs and decorated their own cupcakes. Even though we didn't play any games this year, there was a special energy in the room. Everyone had fun, and the refreshments were delicious. There was fresh fruit, vegetables and dip, and Easter bunny cookies and pink lemonade gave a "springtime feel"! When the official call was announced, the Easter egg hunt began, and everyone scattered to find the plastic eggs. Some eggs were hard to find, and no corner of the room was overlooked!



The party ended with goodie bags for everyone to take home and remember the day.

A special thank-you is given to Art, Carlos and Parsa for helping to set up and stay until the end. They are part of our "party" crew, and we couldn't have done it without them! We were also grateful to Meg and Yu, our guests, for offering

their kind assistance. We were so lucky to have them as our guests!

The Parents Committee and Chairman Marcia Fishman send our thanks to everyone who attended, and we hope to see you at our other events. We welcome all parents to join our "crew." We would love to have you!

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Restaurant review

By *Betty Mayian*
Cotes Du Rhone



This restaurant is quite a nice addition to the south side of the Broadway business district. It just opened up and will have a very interesting neighboring restaurant across the street shortly — Pepitone's. This just might help them out, too. I am happy about this since it also contributes to the activity that is really increasing so much on Bryn Mawr. Not quite Andersonville, but very, very good and better parking, too.

I am going out of my norm by doing this review after only going there one time. Since we had three people who were very hungry, we all had quite a nice experience with our food. The restaurant is currently BYOB — but, this will eventually change. It is a good idea to call and find out the rules before you bring in your bottle of wine, tequila, or six-pack of your favorite brew.

The décor is attractive, with silk hangings instead of doors to save space. French chalet mirrors with fleur-de-lis, tin ceilings in both rooms, soft candles in the wall scones and beautiful music reminiscent of the soft jazz that we love so much. It was very pleasurable.

For our starter, we chose a bowl of lobster bisque (to share, I thought). My husband loved it so much that I let him have it all. Not my favorite anyway. Another choice for the future is the French onion soup. You could also be more adventurous some with the escargot, calamari, sea scallops, mussels, duck liver pâté or cheese plate. All are not your standard variety local cuisine — but that's what makes it so exciting. We now have a choice.

We chose a salad to share among the three of us. The mesclun greens and baby tomatoes with sherry and mustard seed vinaigrette was perfect to each of us. We had lovely, crusty French bread with our starters. They showed a couple other salads on the menu. Arugula and smoked salmon with Belgian endive, red onion and fresh tarragon vinaigrette may inspire us next visit, unless we want to go for the spinach and portobello mushroom salad with lardoons (bacon).



The main courses had a dozen selections on the menu and a few more that were chosen as specials for this night. We were happy to see a nice selection of seafood for our vegetarian friend to choose from. She chose the pan-seared salmon filet with yellow curry broth, tomatoes, grilled vegetables and stewed lentils. Everything was good, but the lentils stole the show. Also listed were sea bass, rainbow trout, sea scallops, and a bouillabaisse stew of shellfish and fish. But Ara chose the skate wing fish with lump crab meat for his main course. We both thought it was one of the most marvelous fish dishes we had ever eaten. I told the waitress to compliment the chef/owner, Brian Moulton, that we loved their skate wing dish and that the potatoes were superior. She told us that the skate wing had wild rice — not potatoes. We said that was not what we had. Well, she found that the chef made a mistake and gave Ara the South African sea bass with garlic potato puree, grilled asparagus, lemon and white truffle oil. I hope all restaurants make mistakes like this from now on. We absolutely loved sea bass. It was my first time trying it, and I will order it again.

Now, I had to order the duck breast with pomegranate wine reduction sauce and wild rice. Excellent. Other main courses are rack of lamb, half chicken, steak au poivre, duck confit, and that mainstay of French cooking, the cassoulet. The cassoulet is a casserole of white beans,

lamb, duck, pork and sausage topped with French bread crumbs. Guess what I will order next time? We all finished the dishes with no leftovers to schlep home. That might mean the portions are smaller than a lot of other restaurants' meals — or, it might mean we enjoyed it so much that we finished it off. You be the judge.

When we said we couldn't do the dessert menu, our waitress said that the owner would like to give us one because of the mix-up in the food delivery. We thought that we could share one crème brulee. Linda and I took our spoons and went at the most luscious and creamy crème brulee I have ever had. With such soft and smooth custard topped with a candied sugar, no one could mistake it for flan that some restaurants pass off for brulee.

We didn't order any, but coffees and other special coffee drinks are available. One more wonderful idea from this owner is to offer you a birthday entrée for only \$5, if you come on that day and bring a valid photo ID. We will try to remember this. My suggestion is to call to make reservations. We went there exactly at 5pm and it was OK, but this is a very popular place, and calling is a good idea. Enjoy.

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