

Malibu East Dialogue

January 2012

Your Communication and Information Resource

MECA celebrates its loyal staff elves

By Tracy Poyser

We see some of them almost daily, but others fleetingly or, depending on their shifts, not at all. They manage our vertical MECA village, clean our hallway carpeting, paint stairwells, turn up swiftly when something needs fixing in our units and know how to do it well, change hundreds of light bulbs each year (there are 40 in the Windjammer Room alone), keep a watchful eye on the security of our building, make sure our outside areas are litter-free and safe, jockey our cars back and forth at a moment's notice, always greet us and our visitors with courtesy and friendliness, and handle other tasks too numerous to list.

So, it's only fitting that once a year our 40-plus staffers should be honored by our Board and community with their own annual holiday and awards party. Hosted by Social Committee chair and Board member Sandy Chaet, this year's event on Dec. 23 in our Windjammer Room featured a delicious holiday lunch buffet and much cheer and companionship.

President Marcel Molins and several other Board members - including



Richard Strauss, Marcia Fishman, Martina Molins and Neil Warner - stopped by during the event. Since the entire staff couldn't be there at the same time and leave our building unattended, our valued elves celebrated in several shifts from noon to 3 p.m., with VP Strauss expressing appreciation and thanks on behalf of our residents several times during the afternoon so that no one missed out. He was particularly touched by hearing one of our staff refer to Malibu East as "my building," and he did the honors of distributing this year's employee longevity awards.



Maintenance wizard Noel Raboza was honored for his 30 years of service with a special plaque and much applause. Newly arrived from the Philippines in 1981, he found out about an opening in our garage from his landlord, who happened to be MECA's office bookkeeper. At that time, the garage was still managed by the building instead of an outside contractor. In 1988, he switched over to third-shift janitor. Asked what he enjoys most, he spontaneously replied: "The residents - they're so nice!" (Guess all the grumpy ones are asleep during Noel's shift!) And what made him stay so long? "If it weren't so nice here, I wouldn't!" he responded. Which jobs does he find most difficult to handle? "None if you're single," he quipped -

probably one of the reasons why you'd never see Noel without a smile on his face. So, Noel, here's to another 30 years as a happy bachelor, if that's what it will take to keep you at MECA!

Receiving Room guru Norma Bolante, fast finder of packages big and small and proud owner of pet chickens, was celebrated for 20 years of service. Her husband, MECA doorman James (Jimmy) Bolante, accepted her award on her behalf since she needed to dash back to her station to deal with all those arriving holiday gifts. She remembers walking past MECA's construction site when she was 15 years old and looked at the huge springs used to allow the building to sway. Before joining our staff, she delivered newspapers in the building and worked at our local Dominick's. Her joy during her two decades here is having seen our residents' kids grow from babyhood to college age - and, of course, meeting her Jimmy here.



Another 20-year award went to one of our trusty maintenance guys, Armando de la Cruz, accompanied to the party by his wife, our morning-shift

(Continued on page 8)

Malibu East events and meetings

Dialogue staff meeting

Wednesday, January 11

7:30 p.m. - Community Room

Thursday afternoon discussion

Thursday, January 19

2:00 p.m. - Community Room

(every 3rd Thursday of the month)

MECA board meeting

Tuesday, January 24

7:30 p.m. - Windjammer Room

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

Our condolences to the family and friends of
Chauncey L. Moore, Jr.



MECA board meeting notes

By Neil Warner

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 during the next meeting and may be viewed or copied in the management office.

Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2011

Attendance: 11 board members, 2 management representatives and 6 residents
Excused: Kim O'Neal
Presiding: President Marcel Molins

REVISIONS TO AGENDA

- 1) "Status report on garage painting" added to Items Requiring Future Board Action.
- 2) "Boat dock ceiling repair" added to Items Requiring Future Board Action.
- 3) "Atrium lighting" added to Items Requiring Future Board Action.
- 4) "MECA-owned units" added to Items Not Requiring Board Action.
- 5) "Fence repairs" added to Items Not Requiring Board Action.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Neil Warner

- 1) **Financial statement**
Balance on hand, cash and reserves (as of Nov. 30; however, financial statement wasn't available for early meeting)
\$2,609,740.22
- 2) **Delinquencies**
Report not meaningful before 15th of month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1) **Floor Representatives – Carl Stahlheber**
Proposed Weight Watchers group didn't have enough participants to be viable; will try to arrange for meetings in Captain's Walk with Malibu residents invited. Committee also discussed new PA system for Board meetings and possible addition of car wash in garage.
- 2) **Social – Sandy Chaet**
Holiday party in lobby Dec. 14 (see article and photos, page 5). Seeking to get a speaker from Chicago Fire Department in February or March. Belly-dancing/exercise class beginning Jan. 5 for five weeks, 7-8 p.m. each Thursday night; \$50 fee.
- 3) **ASCO/Public & Community Affairs – Sandy Chaet**

The Walgreens at Broadway and Glenlake will be torn down and rebuilt for a newer concept.

- 4) **Garage – Martina Molins**
We need to rethink how we're using the garage and how to maximize its use and the revenue it generates.
- 5) **Sports & Entertainment – Neil Warner**
A new yoga class begins Jan. 9.
- 6) **Finance & Insurance – Neil Warner**
The 2010 audit will be mailed to owners.
- 7) **Public & Community Affairs – Sandy Chaet**
Checking to see what additional signs might be needed on Sheridan Road.
- 8) **Long-Range Plans & Special Projects – Carl Stahlheber**
Will look into the feasibility of solar panels for our building.
- 9) **Legal – Marcel Molins**
We closed today on purchase of unit 40F at price of \$146,000 as a result of Board exercising its right of first refusal following owners' authorization at the Nov. 22 special owners' meeting. MECA collected more than \$5,000 in delinquent assessments.
- 10) **Building Maintenance & Services – Eleida Gomez**
Board opted to keep old Oriental rug in lobby rather than new one that was on display. Committee will investigate new carpeting for mailroom.

MANAGEMENT REPORT – Janet Hope

Items requiring immediate board action

- 1) **Consolidation of MECA bank accounts**
Starting Jan. 1, we will consolidate some bank accounts to make book-keeping more efficient and to maximize interest earned.
- 2) **Board meeting dates 2012**
Meeting dates, as set by president, were agreed upon.

Items requiring future board action

- 1) **Laundry contract**

Special committee will investigate our options for new washers and dryers in preparation for the expiration of the current contract.

- 2) **Life safety upgrades**
Vendor will demonstrate proposed sound system in hallway on-site Jan. 12.
- 3) **Status report on garage painting**
Management is getting additional bids. Work can be done in winter.
- 4) **Boat dock ceiling repair**
Management is getting additional bids.
- 5) **Atrium lighting**
Management is investigating options.

Items not requiring board action

- 1) **MECA-owned units**
With purchase of 40F this month, MECA has exercised on nine units, one of which has been sold and five of which have been rented. We will attempt to sell or rent the remaining three units.
- 2) **Fence repairs**
Damaged fence will be repaired.

RATIFICATION OF ACTION TAKEN DURING CLOSED SESSION

- 1) None

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) **Scavenger rebate**
The Board authorized management to submit an application for the 2011 Refuse Collection Rebate, as now required by the city. The rebate is being reduced by the city from previous levels. (See December 2011 Dialogue, page 8, for details.)

NON-AGENDA INFORMATION

- 1) **Unit sales and leases**

36H	\$160,000 sale
21H	\$155,000 sale
38F	\$1,700 lease
42J	\$1,500 lease

The meeting ended at 10:15 p.m. and went into closed session.



What's happening around the building

By Janet E. Hope, MECA Manager

Happy New Year!!!!

Assessments are due the first of the month. Please mail to:

Malibu East Condominium
c/o Sudler-80
8401 Innovation Way
Chicago, IL 60682-8401

The Management Office cannot accept assessment payments.

On your January assessment statement you will notice an increase in your monthly assessment charges. This is the start of the 2012 budget year, and assessments were increased 4%, so please remember when writing your check to verify the amount due. Many people automatically pay the same amount every month and forget to include the increase in January.

Did you know you can also pay your assessments online by credit card, or you can sign up for direct debit? You can also view your personal assessment account history. Simply register online for "Sudler at Home" (SudlerAtHome.com) today; further information is available in the Management Office.

Real-estate tax appeal: As in prior years, the association's attorney filed an appeal on behalf of all owners against real-estate tax assessments. This appeal was successful, and the total building's valuation was reduced from \$10,572,991 to \$9,457,051, resulting in a tax savings for owners of \$174,014. This reduction would have been reflected in your 2010 tax second installment invoice, which was due last fall. Your calculated portion of this invoice

is 20% of your actual savings, which will be billed in three installments, (January-March). If you have a senior freeze and believe you have been invoiced in error, please contact the Management Office.

Winter reminders

Balconies: The winds coming off the lake can be very strong during the winter months, so please ensure all items are either removed from your balcony or safely tied down to prevent them from being blown off. This especially applies to lighter-weight items.

Heat: Please remember if you are leaving town for an extended period to leave your heat on (it can be at a low temperature) to prevent frozen pipes.

Snow removal: During snowy weather please enter and exit the driveway with caution, as there may be a staff member working to remove snow. Always proceed with care. The staff does its best to keep sidewalks clear for you, but given our proximity to the lake, icy patches can develop very quickly. If you notice slippery conditions, please report them to any staff member.

Holiday tree removal: If you have a live tree and would like assistance removing it, please contact the Management Office. The building staff will be happy to wrap it in plastic and remove it from your unit, so the needles, etc., do not fall in the hallway. There is no charge for this service. Simply contact the Management Office if assistance is needed.

Holiday fund

By Neil Warner



Despite the difficult economic times, Malibu East residents proved generous in their contributions to the 2011 holiday fund. A total of \$28,040 was distributed to 40 MECA employees at their annual holiday and awards party, complete with catered luncheon, held Dec. 23 in the Windjammer Room. (See article, Page One)

The sum distributed was down from \$30,500 in 2010, due primarily to the somewhat smaller number of contributors, a slightly lower average contribution and a higher number of late contributions, which are being carried over to next year's fund.

Approximately 265 units contributed to the fund, with an average contribution of \$106, down from \$110 in 2010.

Recipients included doormen, maintenance men, Receiving Room staff, garage employees, Management Office staff and security personnel. Distributions are based on a formula in which years of service count for 75% and salary counts for 25%. The average tenure of our staff is more than 12 years.

Contributions were received not only from residents, but also from nonresident owners and two Captain's Walk businesses. Along with the holiday fund check, each employee received a list of the names of contributors and their unit numbers.

The staff wishes to thank all contributors for their generosity.

2011-12 Board of Directors

Marcel Molins, President
Richard Strauss, 1st Vice President
Thomas Vaughan, 2nd Vice President
Neil Warner, Treasurer
Kim O'Neal, Assistant Treasurer
Marcia Fishman, Secretary
Carl Stahlheber, Assistant Secretary
Sandy Chaet, Director
Maria Damp, Director
Allan Eckardt, Director
Eleida Gomez, Director
Martina Molins, Director

'Town Crier' announcements

by Rodica Ilc



We welcome all new residents to our building, including:

If you have information concerning talented or famous MECA residents, please contact the *Dialogue*.



Community Calendar

By Betty Mayian

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

BROADWAY ARMORY

Indoor park, six gym floors, trapeze classes, senior activities, athletic equipment, meeting room, computer center, dancing floor, shuffleboard, weights, arts and crafts, aerobics, ping pong, after-school activities and more.

5917 N. Broadway
312-742-7502

tinyurl.com/27YYYN

EDGEWATER BRANCH LIBRARY

Library building is closed during construction (see article, Page 8 of August Dialogue).

**A bookmobile is now available in the Broadway Armory parking lot:
Tue-Thu: 10 a.m.-1 p.m., 2-6 p.m.
Fri-Sat: 9 a.m.-noon, 1-5 p.m.
(closed on Sundays and Mondays)**

tinyurl.com/5L55TL

EDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"Edgewater Grocery Stores 1886-today"

Regular museum hours:
Saturday and Sunday 1-4 p.m.
5358 N. Ashland Ave.
773-506-4849

www.EdgewaterHistory.org

ST. ANDREW'S WINTER FOOD FEST

Greek food, beer, wine, pastries and other Greek delicacies, orthodox books, raffle.

Admission free. Parking on church grounds.

Sat., Jan. 28, 3-8 p.m.;

Sun., Jan. 29, 12-4 p.m.

St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church
5649 N. Sheridan Road
773-334-4515

WHITE CRANE WELLNESS CENTER

Adult day wellness programs for persons 60 and over. Gentle yoga, tai chi, music, exercise, lunch and snacks.

Transportation provided within boundary area.

1355 W. Foster Ave.

773-271-9001

whitecranewellness.org

How we can all recycle

By Beth Robinson



Recycling is one of the easier things we can do to improve the environment. Recycling reduces the amount of garbage that goes into landfills, and it saves energy. By taking a short walk down the hallway to deposit recyclable material in the bulk room, MECA residents can feel the satisfaction of contributing to a cleaner world. However, it is important to follow the guidelines provided to ensure that these efforts do not go to waste.

Two large bins with plastic liners are located in each bulk room to collect the recycling, and signs posted on the wall provide instructions as to which items are accepted. All of the recycling materials are dumped into the same container. This procedure seems sloppy to some, especially in comparison to other locations that separate paper, plastic and metal. Waste Management, the company that services our building, uses single-stream processing to sort the material after it is brought to its facility. To separate the paper, glass, plastic and metal, this process relies on a series of disk screens and magnets, as well as employees who pick out some items manually. Anyone interested in seeing how the recycling is processed can find a short video on the topic at

thinkgreen.com/video-recycling-single-stream

The list of items that can be recycled includes glass bottles, aluminum and tin

cans, newspapers and all of the inserts, junk mail, envelopes, white and colored paper, brochures, broken-down cardboard boxes, Post-It notes, file folders with plastic tabs or metal hangers, staples, clamps and paperclips. Plastic bottles only stamped with the number 1, 2, 4 or 5 in a little triangle (the Resin Identification Code) are allowed. Even hard- and soft-cover books are accepted.

It is important to separate regular garbage from the recyclables. Items that should not be deposited in the bins include food, cat litter, candy wrappers, dirty paper products, Styrofoam, plates or dishes, and plastic bags. All items for recycling should be cleaned before placing them in the bins. This not only helps to keep the building clean but is also essential to the recycling process. One dirty product not identified and removed during processing can contaminate an entire bale of plastic, containing thousands of pounds of plastic, which must then be sent to a landfill instead of being recycled. You may read the full list of what to recycle and what to trash on the wall in the bulk room or you can get your own copy at

wmchicago.com/RecyclingServices.html under "recyclable materials."

Cat litter and vacuum cleaner bags should be securely wrapped, labeled and placed in the bulk room for removal nightly by our maintenance staff. NEVER put cat litter or vacuum cleaner bags in the garbage chute.

Besides helping the environment, recycling benefits our pocketbooks, too. The city taxes each Dumpster we use, but Dumpsters that are used for recycling are exempt from the tax.

The neighborhood provides nearby drop off locations for several recyclable items that are not collected in the building. Dominick's accepts plastic grocery bags, newspaper sleeves and dry cleaning bags for recycling. Both Chicago public libraries and Walgreens serve as drop off points for most dry-cell batteries, including alkaline (e.g., Duracell, Energizer), lithium (usually used in cameras), button-type and rechargeable tool batteries. Old clothing that is still in good condition can be donated to Care for Real or other organizations.

Recycled material is used to manufacture goods ranging from paper towels to fleece jackets, so another way to support recycling efforts is to buy these products.

THEATER/SHOWINGS

STEEP THEATRE

"Love and Money"

Humorous and harrowing example of materialism and its effect on love.

Thru Feb. 28

1111 W. Berwyn

866-811-4111

steeptheatre.com

REDTWIST THEATRE

"Opus"

A story about a string quartet and a bitter clash of wills between two leaders. One is ousted by the other and replaced by a young woman.

Thru Jan. 15

1044 W. Bryn Mawr

773-728-7529

redtwist.org

Holiday party 2011

By Betty Mayian

I have been living in Malibu East since June of 1971. One of the very reasons to live in this wonderful place is the number of activities that are available to each of us. Working on the Social Committee and on the Dialogue, I see how much work is involved in planning and executing these events. Those of us who have done this for a while can see the need for a few younger residents to join us - before it is too late and then there will be no more events. The best-attended event is our annual holiday party in the lobby.

I looked back at other articles that I wrote about events that were planned by the Social Committee, chaired by Sandy Chaet. I remember the people who helped us years ago and think about where they are now. We tried, for years, to include everyone in this end-of-the-year party, wanting everyone to feel good about living in this high-rise home. It is too bad that some rarely choose to attend, but this year we saw many new faces (thank you) and also



many that have been around as long as I have. I've seen children grow up over the years.

The holiday party offers free food and drink to all who attend. The food was delicious and plentiful. Our residents also brought many items to share - thanks for your generosity. This year was different in that we had a case of champagne, as well as wines of various types, to accompany the food and soft drinks. Everything went well, and we received a lot of appreciation from the guests. I hope all of us pay attention to the reason for the season, being thankful for all we have and the friends who are here for us. Thank whomever you want for this, but appreciate that there are others who do this in a different manner.

It is hard to estimate numbers in a case like this, but I think there must have been around 200 people attending, maybe more. It is good to see your neighbors in this relaxed setting.

On behalf of the residents, the Dialogue wishes to thank Social Committee members Jovita Duran, Marissa Michaels, Greg Christiansen, Barbara Murphy, Ilse Siegler, Helen Aninag, Ruth-Betty Spilky, and Betty

and Ara Mayian for planning the party. We also wish to recognize Kris Klimek, Susan Buchler, Leon LeRoy, Mary Oleszczak, Richard Strauss, Jackee Ames and Eleida Gomez for helping at the party. Lastly, we thank Janet Hope and Rodica Ilc in the management office and our maintenance staff for their efforts in the preparation for the party.

Along with the planned refreshments, the donations from the following businesses were much appreciated. The next time you visit or order from them, please say, "Thank you!"

- Pete's Pizzeria & Bakehouse
1100 W. Granville
773-262-4040
pizzas
- Villa Palermo
2154 W. Devon
773-465-5400
pizzas
- Wing Hoe Restaurant
5356 N. Sheridan
773-275-4550
chicken wings
- Helen Wagner Realty
Captain's Walk Mall
773-334-0200
cupcakes

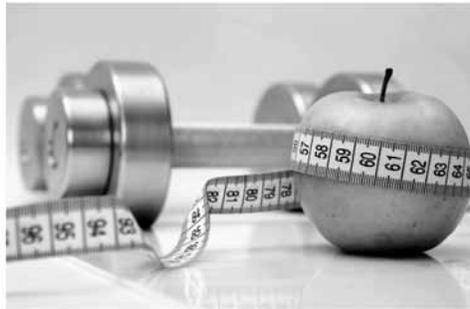


All photos by Tracy Poyser



HOLIDAY SPECIAL

FOR MALIBU EAST RESIDENTS & FRIENDS



The EAC Holiday Fitness Package includes:

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- Nutritional Counseling Session (1)
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C L U B

ONE SPECIAL PER PERSON

Restaurant review: Burke's Public House

By Betty Mayian



When I was told to do a review on one of our newest food establishments, I thought, "Oh, no! Poor Burke's; lately, the ones I review have been closing. I know why Bananas Foster closed – the owner became sick. Too bad, he is a nice man. But I have no idea why Kingfisher closed. If anyone knows, please let me know.

Anyway, Burke's is a family-style sports bar, with so many TVs that you can watch every sporting event at the same time. Whiplash, anyone? It is like a traditional pub, too, with pub-style foods and microbrews alongside the famous names. I have been meaning to try more of the Guinness half and half drinks. There is the classic Black and Tan (with Bass), a Black and Blue (with Blue Moon), a Blacksmith (with Smithwick's Ale), a Black Belgian (with Stella Artois), a Black Goose (with Goose Island Honker's Ale), etc. In the past I thought that the second brew was

Harp for the Black and Tan (or half and half), but it depends where you are in the world. In the United States, they use more Bass. Look up some of the other fun names for the mixture of Guinness and...

When Ara and I walked into Burke's, we noticed the décor. Very old-worldly, we could be in Dublin. We checked out the seating (enough room for 80 people), and the space looks good for parties, too. Next we checked out the menu. The categories are starters, soups and chili, salads, burgers and sandwiches, and desserts. They have a kids menu and a special brunch menu for Sundays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Since so many people want to know where to go for Sunday brunch, I will report on that aspect first. There are eight items, from egg dishes (build your own omelet; pepper and egg sandwich; Simply Breakfast of eggs, meat, toast, fruit and hash browns; and a vegetarian hash with eggs); a blackened chicken sandwich; breakfast flatbread pizza; French toast with Jameson caramelized apples; and Sarah Burke's griddle cakes with fresh fruit. These items are all ordered off the menu and not from a

buffet table. Some lunch items can be had during this time.

The first time we went to Burke's, the Southwestern turkey Cobb salad caught my eye. I am a sucker for a good Cobb salad. This did not disappoint. It was fresh, and the dressing (I switched to bleu cheese) was flavorful with the ingredients. Ara did not find a BLT on the menu but was satisfied to see a bowl of chili, Angus burgers, turkey club (where they might substitute bacon for the turkey), and an Italian beef with sweet peppers. He chose the Burke and bacon burger, and we split a starter item called Black and Tan onion rings. Outstanding choices. My drink was the Blacksmith (see above), and Ara went for root beer, since they didn't have real Coke. We took half home for lunch the next day.

The second time at Burke's we tried the salsa, chips and guacamole starter, along with Caesar salad for me and the BLT for Ara (of course, he asked for it special). The sandwiches are served with their wonderful waffle French fries, coleslaw and pickle. Grilled Portobello mushroom sandwich is a

(Continued on page 8)

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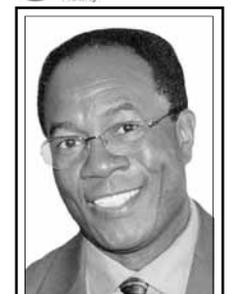
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TEAM REALTOR



Employee recognition

(Continued from page 1)

Receiving Room clerk Maricruz (Mary), and his three adorable children, especially his 3-year-old, who demanded to have his picture taken with his dad. He may well be vying for a job at MECA when he grows up. Armando joined our maintenance crew in 1990 as a vacation relief-shift worker after he heard about it from MECA maintenance man Carlos Morales, and started working full time as soon as an opening became available. He genuinely feels it's a gift to work here, and he especially loves the team spirit among his co-workers. His biggest joy was meeting his Mary here shortly after he started.



Jose Noriega

Celebrated for 10 years at MECA were maintenance workers Jose Noriega, Froylan Sanchez and Manuel Sanchez and doorman Gilbert Richardson. All of them excel in service and loyalty to our building and our residents.

Recognition was also given to two of our security personnel, one for 15 years of service and another for 10 years. Our security staff works mostly behind the scenes at Malibu East to keep us all safe in our homes.

Last, but not least, Strauss presented a special 40-year award to a man whom



Gilbert Richardson and Richard Strauss



Howard Stahl

many residents may have seen without realizing that he's a valuable member of our maintenance crew: Howie Stahl. Howie's a private contractor who has helped many residents with various jobs over the years, but he has also helped our staff with so many projects and special jobs of all kinds over the last 40 years that he's considered one of MECA's own.

Wish we could mention all of our other MECA elves by name and tell you more about them, but since we can't, please take a moment, next time you have a chance, to say a special hi and thank them for all the often unseen work they do, and not just during the holidays. After all, they're family!

Photos by Tracy Poyser

Restaurant review

(Continued from page 7)

good vegetarian choice.

I cannot leave out the desserts, now, can I? They are pretty standard. For chocolate lovers is the lava cake. Brownie bits are the easiest to share. Chicago-style cheesecake is for me. And apple tart is also available. We tried none. Let us know how they are.

Owners Brendan and Kevin Costello call their restaurant "The Friendliest Place in Edgewater." Don't bet against that phrase. It is all that and more – their food is good, too. Brendan came over to talk several times during our stay. The name "Burke" came from their grandmother's maiden name. They were fixing up for the holidays, and it was looking very festive. Gosh, I hope they stay around.

Hours: Mon. to Fri. 4 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Sat. 11 a.m. to 3 a.m.

Sun. 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.

5401 N. Broadway, Chicago IL 60640

773-944-1109

www.burkespublihouse.com

The Dialogue

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Articles written by and opinions of the MECA *Dialogue* staff and contributors are their personal views and do not necessarily represent the views of MECA or its Board of Directors and management.

Letters to the MECA *Dialogue* Committee are encouraged. Its staff reserves the right to edit those letters which it sees fit to print and to print only those with constructive content. Letters to the *Dialogue* Committee may be left at the management office.

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