

Malibu East Dialogue

October 2013

Your Communication and Information Resource

State of the Association

By Marcel Molins, President

Another year has gone by and as usual, we have had our share of problems. Our building is getting older and as a result, we will have to increase the amount of funds and time necessary to maintain it in good condition.



Our building, because of its size and location next to the lake, has several areas that suffer continuous deterioration. The balconies are a great asset and we all like to enjoy them; nevertheless, from a maintenance point of view, they are a nightmare. The combination of concrete (which, because of the extreme temperatures between the Chicago winters and summers, continuously deteriorates) and the metal railings (which rust) means that the façade of the building and the balconies will continue to require our attention and money. Vice President Richard Strauss will provide you with a more detailed status of the project.

We also have a very large fourth-floor deck, which again, because of the

fact that it is made of concrete, demands continuous care.

Fortunately, we have completed the repairs to the garage. We still need to complete the lighting portion. We are trying to determine how we can save on our electricity bills, given the new technologies that have been developed in this area.

One item that will demand a much greater level of attention from all of us is plumbing. Given the fact that the building is 42 years old, some of the pipes are cracking, both in the common areas and inside our units. This means that the Board and management, as well as all of us as unit owners, will have to be very vigilant about the condition of the pipes inside our units. The cracking of the pipes results in rusting of the metal around the pipes and it potentially can lead to flooding. The result of flooding is damage to the units and the common elements. For this reason, it is extremely important that each unit owner has the insurance coverage mandated by the law. Because of the rusting and cracking problem, we had, and continue to have, very serious problems of flooding in the Captain's Walk and in the Laundry Room. This has resulted in delays in the implementation of the new laundry facilities.

As known by residents who have lived in the building for a long time, every time that we address a project, we look at ways of improving the service. In the case of the Laundry Room it became evident that if we wanted to have the number and types of machines that we felt are necessary to have a first-rate laundry, we had to increase both the exhaust capabilities and the electric power that we had in the Laundry Room. Unfortunately, this meant delays and extra costs. The chairs of the Aesthetics and Building Maintenance Committee will provide you with a more detailed report on the

status of this project, as well as the lighting of the atrium, one of the projects completed earlier in the year.

Another project that has taken substantial time and will continue to require attention and money is the repair or replacement of the compressors and other equipment that provide heat and ventilation to the Captain's Walk. There are two huge compressors that serve this purpose. We have replaced one. We most likely will have to replace the second one. After 42 years, it is somewhat to be expected. As you know, we would like to recover, for the benefit of all the residents, what we call the boat deck, located under the eastern portion of the fourth-floor deck. For this reason, we located a compressor for the Captain's Walk in a corner of the garage, as opposed to the boat deck where the compressors had been located. I know that most of you have not seen the boat deck, but we think that it can be a great enhancement to the many amenities available to residents.

As many of you have already noted, the work to comply with the Life Safety Ordinance of the City of Chicago by installing a speaker system in all the hallways of the building is already in progress and is expected to be completed this year.

We have started the planning for the modernization of the elevators. Even though we know that it will be a nuisance for all of us when the project gets under way, this is clearly necessary because the elevators are malfunctioning too often. Included in the project

(Continued on page 12)

Malibu East events and meetings

Board meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 8

7:30 p.m. - Windjammer Room

Dialogue staff meeting

Thursday, Oct. 10

8:00 p.m. - Community Room

Thursday afternoon discussion

Thursday, Oct. 17

(every 3rd Thursday of the month)

2:00 p.m. - Community Room

Potluck dinner

Sunday, Oct. 27

5:30 p.m. - Windjammer Room

Bring a dish that serves 6-8

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

*Our condolences to the family and friends of
Leon Strauss*



Board meeting notes

By Neil Warner

Please keep in mind that the meeting notes are not the official record of the Malibu East Condominium 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, Sept. 24, 2013

Attendance: Eleven Board members, two management representatives and eight residents
 Excused: Maria Damp
 Presiding: President Marcel Molins

REVISIONS TO AGENDA

- 1) "Renovations to unit 23L" was added to Items Requiring Board Action.

PURCHASE OF UNIT 23K

- 1) Following the owners' authorization, on Sept. 17, to the Board to exercise its right of first refusal on unit 23K, the Board voted to purchase the unit at a cost of \$152,000 plus or minus prorations.

MANAGEMENT REPORT - Violette Deschamps

Items requiring immediate Board action

1) Laundry vendor

The Board is awaiting final contract revisions from the vendor.

2) Storm pipe lining

The Board authorized the Executive Committee to spend up to a specified sum for the installation of a vinyl ester lining inside a cracked storm pipe in the Captain's Walk.

3) 22.1 disclosure form

Tabled.

4) Renovations to unit 23L

The Board approved a motion to renovate unit 23L to increase its market value.

BUDGET REVIEW

1) Assessments

The Board voted to increase assessments by 2% in the 2014 budget that will be submitted to owners.

2) Parking rates

The Board voted to keep monthly parking rates unchanged. Daily parking rates for longer than four hours and weekly rates would be increased by 7% to 18%.

3) Satellite TV

The monthly bulk rate would increase from \$31 to \$32.

4) Fees

Most fees would remain unchanged, except that the returned check charge would increase from \$35 to \$50 and the fee to buy pool tags would become a uniform \$15 each.

RATIFICATION OF ACTION TAKEN DURING CLOSED SESSION

- 1) The Board resolved a matter regarding a tenant.
- 2) Regarding a unit for which the Board had a court order of possession, the Board

voted to enforce it because the owner failed to abide by the terms under which the enforcement had been suspended.

- 3) The Board ratified a lease agreement for parking spaces in our garage to be used by a neighboring condominium.

The meeting ended at 12:53 a.m. and went into closed session.

Annual meeting of unit owners Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2013

SPECIAL MEETING OF OWNERS

After a discussion, the unit owners approved a resolution authorizing the Board to exercise its right of first refusal on the purchase of unit 23K at a price of \$152,000 plus or minus prorations.

ANNUAL MEETING

After candidates for the Board of Directors were introduced, the Board's officers and committee chairs gave reports about what had been accomplished during the previous year and what lies ahead. (The reports can be found in this issue.) The owners approved a resolution authorizing the transfer of any excess operating revenue over expenses at year-end 2013, as determined by the audit, to the reserve fund. After a Q. & A. session, the election results were announced. (See the box on this page.)

Regular Board meeting

Revision to agenda

- 1) "Sheridan Road driveway" was added to New Business.

Election of officers

- President - Marcel Molins
- Vice president - Richard Strauss
- 2nd vice president - Thomas Vaughan
- Treasurer - Joan Scholl
- Asst. treasurer - Neil Warner
- Secretary - Arthur Arfa
- Asst. secretary - Maria Damp

Action items

- 1) **Penthouse repair**
Management will obtain additional bids.
- 2) **Hallway drywall repair**
The Board authorized the Executive Committee to select a vendor to complete the remaining repairs.

New business

- 1) **Sheridan Road driveway**
The Board elected to have the small areas of the parkway on either side of the

Sheridan Road driveway, which the City is replacing at its expense, to be filled in with concrete, also at the City's expense.

The meeting ended at 10:30 p.m. and went into closed session.

Election results

The six candidates with the highest vote totals were elected for two-year terms.

| Candidate | Percent |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Carol Beatty | 44.21 |
| Thomas C. Vaughan | 40.97 |
| Martina Molins | 40.62 |
| Carl Stahlheber | 36.55 |
| Richard Strauss | 35.96 |
| Maria Damp | 31.59 |
| | |
| Allan L. Eckardt | 23.75 |
| | ----- |
| Total | 253.65 |
| | |
| Percent who voted | 42.53 |
| Total ÷ Pct-voting | 596.40 |

Note: If every unit owner had voted and there were no spoiled ballots, the total of the candidate percents would be 600.00% since each unit was allowed up to six votes and all votes cast by a unit were multiplied by that unit's percentage of ownership



It seemed like a good idea at the time!

Association-owned units

By T.C. Vaughan, 2nd Vice President

Given today's troubled economy, a number of our residential units have reached foreclosure status or owners have been pressured into selling their units on a fire-sale basis. Since the 1990s, Malibu East has been exercising its right of first refusal to purchase underpriced units in order to maintain values for all owners in our building. We have never sold a unit at a loss. Following the owners' authorization to purchase unit 23K earlier tonight (pending the Board's approval), we believe that the resulting 14 Association-owned units are all owned well below their realistic market values.

In recent years we have sold three units and enjoyed a 29.6% annualized return on our investment. This \$104,620 profit came after accounting for all improvement expenses on the cost side while covering such monthly operating expenses as absorbed maintenance assessments, satellite TV, real-estate taxes, insurance costs, etc. Improvement expenses have averaged \$9,000 per unit for all that we've purchased.

We currently have 11 of our 14 units rented at market rates, returning to the association a 5.9% annual return covering all expenses, including the absorbed assessment payments. With tonight's potential acquisition, the three unoccupied units reduce our annualized 5.9% return to 3.3%. This contrasts to the investment returns under 0.5% currently available in insured investment instruments.

The average investment in the five owned one-bedroom units is \$108,000, and the nine owned two-bedroom units have an average investment of \$151,000. The floors range across the building, averaging the 17th floor for the one-bedroom units and the 23rd floor for our two-bedroom units.

This Board believes that these decisions represent a sound investment of our assets and ultimately benefits all of our owners.

What's happening around the building

By Violette Deschamps, Malibu East Manager

Bedbugs are now in Chicago and growing in numbers. We already have had several incidents at Malibu East. You can inadvertently bring them to your unit in a suitcase, a backpack, duffel bag or a coat. You can easily pick them up from a dark public place (theater, cinema, restaurant, etc.). They can survive months without eating. They are patient and quiet, and they love warmth, darkness and creases/pleats in which to hide.

The City of Chicago has officially declared bedbugs a public nuisance and has adopted a special ordinance dealing with bedbug abatement provisions, disposal, reporting, fines, etc.

The city ordinance states clearly that the inspection and abatement are the responsibility of a **licensed** pest management professional **trained** for this specific pest.

It further states, "Every licensee shall maintain a written record of the pest control measures performed by the pest management professional on the licensed premises. The written record shall include reports and receipts prepared by the pest management professional relating to those measures taken. The record shall be open to inspection by the departments of health, buildings, and business affairs and licensing."

The City of Chicago requires every resident to comply with the bedbug ordinance; you **cannot** treat the infestation by yourself, or by your friend or an employee, or a pest control agent that is **not** licensed to abate

bedbugs. Improper treatment can even worsen the infestation as it may cause a colony to break up and spread.

The city ordinance states: "Every owner of a condominium unit shall immediately notify, in writing, the governing association of any known or suspected bedbug infestation in the presence of the unit or cooperative, clothing, furniture or other personal property located in the unit or cooperative, and cooperate with the governing association in the control, treatment and eradication of bedbug infestation found or suspected to be in the unit or cooperative."

In any unit where an infestation of bedbugs is found or suspected, the Association will provide pest control services until such time that no evidence of bedbugs can be found and verified. The record of the Association shall be open to inspection by authorized city personnel.

Do not take upon yourself to resolve this problem as you will be in violation of the city ordinance. You must contact management immediately.

Security

By Sandy Chaet, Committee Chair

There is a new camera in the atrium, by the handicapped entrance, in addition to one that now records our front door as well as more of the atrium.

Management has put a new sign on the lower-level wooden door leading out to Sheridan Road. This is a reminder to make sure you the door is closed and to not let others enter with you, especially if you don't know them. It is best not to be "neighborly"; let people use their own fob. That advice goes for any door for which you use a fob.

In the case of an emergency, such as a call directed to the Fire Department, ambulance or police, please call the doorman so that our staff can be alerted to lock off the service elevator.

2013-14 Board of Directors

Marcel Molins, President
 Richard Strauss, Vice President
 Thomas Vaughan, 2nd Vice President
 Joan Scholl, Treasurer
 Neil Warner, Assistant Treasurer
 Arthur Arfa, Secretary
 Maria Damp, Assistant Secretary
 Carol Beatty, Director
 Carl Chadek, Director
 Sandy Chaet, Director
 Martina Molins, Director
 Carl Stahlheber, Director



Community Calendar

By Betty Mayian

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ANNUAL AUSTIN WYMAN LECTURE

"A Conversation with Rabbi Herman Schaalman and Biographer Richard Damashek"

Sunday, Oct. 13, 2 p.m.

Hosted by Emanuel Congregation

5959 N. Sheridan Road

Presented by Edgewater Historical Society, in collaboration with the Chicago Jewish Historical Society.

Admission free; refreshments served.

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

Now open for business at 6000 N. Broadway

Mon. and Wed.: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Tue. and Thu.: noon - 8 p.m.

Fri. and Sat.: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

(closed on Sundays)

tinyurl.com/5L55TL

EDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Celebrating 25 years as a historical society. Current exhibit: "Treasures of Edgewater"

Oct. 12, 13, 19: Plein Air Painters gallery inside museum.

Regular museum hours:

Saturday and Sunday 1-4 p.m.

5358 N. Ashland Ave.

773-506-4849

www.EdgewaterHistory.org

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

www.whitecranewellness.org

THEATER / SHOWINGS

LIFELINE THEATRE

"The Killer Angels"

Gen. Robert E. Lee leads his Army into the North, and the Army of the Potomac has no choice but to pursue. Over the course of three historic days, a remarkable group of soldiers wrestle with their doubts, their fears and their hopes for a shattered nation.

Thru Oct. 27

6912 N. Glenwood

773-761-4477

www.lifelinetheatre.com

RAVEN THEATRE

"The Trip to Bountiful" by Horton Foote

The poignant tale of an elderly woman hellbent on returning to her beloved home in Bountiful, Texas, after being forced to live with her hen-pecked son and resentful daughter-in-law in a cramped apartment in Houston.

Thru Nov. 17

6157 N. Clark

773-338-2177

www.raventheatre.com

REDTWIST THEATRE

"Clybourne Park" by Bruce Norris

Larger-than-life, sweeping epic about race, in a quaint postwar era when everything was possible.

Oct. 5 thru Nov. 10

1044 W. Bryn Mawr

773-728-7529

www.redtwist.org

STEEP THEATRE

"Motortown" by Simon Stephens

Danny returns to the U.K. from a tour in Basra, determined to win back his girlfriend. But what greets him on his homecoming batters Danny's already fragile psyche and sends him on a downward spiral of violence and anguish.

Thru Nov. 9

1115 W. Berwyn

866-811-4111

www.steeptheatre.com

**Zumba class - 7 p.m.
every Sunday in the
Racquetball Court**

Social

By Sandy Chaet, Committee Liaison

First, let me thank Larry Rosen for producing the committee's flyers, Barbara Abarbanell for maintaining the library in the Community Room, Aida Calvopina for chairing our Day Group, and the Social Committee of Greg Christiansen, Jenny Doherty, Marissa Michaels, Jovita Duran, Ruth-Betty Spilky, Barbara Murphy, Ilse Siegler and Betty and Ara Mayian. Thanks to the maintenance and office staff for their help.

Thanks to Adelle White, a Malibu East resident, for leading our Zumba classes every Sunday from 7-8 p.m. And to Dianne Hodges, who leads our belly dance for fitness class on Thursdays from 7-8 p.m. Both of these classes are open to men and women and are a way to be physically fit.

The Respiratory Health Association will again provide flu shots on Wednesday, Oct. 16 from 5:30-7 p.m. in the Windjammer Room. We have been doing this for the last few years to make it easy for our residents to get the flu shot. All you need to do is ride the elevator to the fourth floor and bring \$25 in cash or check for the Respiratory Health Association. If you are on Medicare, bring your Medicare card and there will be no charge. Watch for flyers for more information.

The potluck dinner that we had last April was much enjoyed, and participants asked for another. So, on Sunday, Oct. 27 we will have another. Participants are asked to bring a dish that serves 6-8, and it can be an appetizer, salad, main dish, side dish or dessert. The Social Committee supplies soft drinks. A flyer with details will be distributed. Please RSVP by Wednesday, Oct. 23 so we know how many to plan for.

For Halloween, the Management Office will have ribbons to be tied on your door knocker to let our trick-or-treaters know this is a door they can knock. More information to follow.

The holiday party is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 18. Details to follow.

If you have any suggestions for parties, activities, speakers, etc., or would like to join the Social Committee, leave your name, unit number and telephone number for me in my Board mailbox or at the doorman station.

Building a Malibu East budget

By Richard Alan Strauss, Vice President

Editor's note: The following report was delivered before the Board of Directors reached agreement on assessments, parking rates, etc., for 2014. Those details can be found on page 2, under "Board meeting notes."

2014 budget

The preliminary budget has a 2% assessment increase (equals the rate of inflation, but neither the Finance Committee nor the Board has agreed on a number to submit to the owners). We're considering a 0% to 3% increase.

Parking and other fees are expected to be mostly constant, except if our costs (e.g., satellite TV) or reimbursements (e.g., legal fees) rise, subject to committee and Board approval, as well as that of our owners.

Change in assessments

For the past 22 years (since 1991), Malibu East assessments have risen at an average annual rate of about 4%, versus the approximately 3% average annual increase in home ownership costs.

This year the general inflation rate is 2%. If we add 1%, Malibu East's increase for 2014 would be 3%. The extra 1%, about \$39,000, would not even come close to the extra \$120,000 (about 3%, in addition to inflation) needed to buy out the doormen's pension plan, which is woefully underfunded.

Our budgeting has usually been "right on." Each year we have told you we budget electricity, scavenger rebate and operating contingency for the worst possible situation. This is with the hope and expectation that the worst will not come to pass. Thus, we will have a surplus which can go to the reserve. In 2013, the estimated electricity costs were \$335,000 below budget; the operating contingency was \$33,000 below budget; and the scavenger rebate was \$23,000 over budget. This hoped-for surplus from these three items, \$391,000 estimated to the end of 2013, compares with the total surplus, \$415,000, similarly estimated. The extra \$24,000 (\$415,000, less \$391,000) is 0.46% of the \$5,241,000 estimated operating income. We believe

that a less-than-0.5% variance is acceptable.

Analyzing the reserve

Our auditor reports our reserve fund is valued at \$4,284,000 at Dec. 31, 2012 (and, by definition, the operating fund is at zero). While this might seem like a lot, that is not necessarily so.

First, a significant part of the reserve is not cash. \$2,236,000 is real estate and loans to the operating fund. This leaves \$2,048,000 in cash or equivalents.

Next, a portion of the reserve is our (only) source of emergency funds. Previous Boards of Directors have agreed that 1% of our building's value is a reasonable level for possible emergencies. (This is equivalent to a \$2,000 fund for a \$200,000 house.) Our insurance companies value our 40-plus-year-old property at just over \$146 million. A 1% emergency reserve, then, is \$1.46 million. Is this adequate? The valuation is of replacement costs (about \$292,000 for an average unit), not market value, so we believe it is. (See below for what might require the use of emergency funds.) Holding the \$1.46 million for unanticipated emergencies, we are left with \$588,000 to finance capital projects.

Where, then, are we for 2014 capital projects? (See below for some of the items on which we plan to act.) In 2013, we estimate \$854,000 will be spent on capital improvements. The 2014 budget currently authorizes over \$1 million more than 2013. (The \$1,876,000 for 2014 might not all be spent.) For reserve income, the 2014 budget currently lowers the income to \$977,000, \$137,000 less than the 2013 contribution. It also lowers the anticipated surplus by \$80,000, so the 2014 contribution would be down by a total of \$217,000.

As currently drawn, reserve income would drop by \$217,000, while expenditures rise by up to \$1,022,000. Perhaps the relationship between cash in and cash out should be re-examined.

Future projects

The \$1.46 million for unanticipated emergencies is, by definition, hard to allocate; if we knew what was needed, the emergencies would not be unanticipated. However, some of the things we worry about include the following:

- Drainage – From units (doing clean-outs) and from the building (40-year-

old pipes).

- Electric
 1. Adequate capacity for the future isn't assured.
 2. The building was wired with aluminum.
 3. The City has passed an ordinance regarding energy usage (requiring an auditor).
- New City regulations – Involving such things as life safety, swimming pools, the lake and building codes.
- Insured risks, but which might require our funds – For example, an auto accident with building structures; weather (windstorm, tornado, flood); earthquake; common-area fire.
- Change in lake levels.
- Union benefit plans (operating fund).

Capital projects, for which we plan and about which we inform you in the proposed budget, include aesthetic items, infrastructure work and combinations of the two (most projects include at least some elements of both). Those projects involving both aesthetics and infrastructure include:

- New elevators – We've been promising these since 2008. Now that the garage project is done, we can actually begin in 2014.
- New Laundry Room – Our old contract has expired and a Board committee has been hard at work on the design of a new facility. Actual installation was delayed by the need for electrical, drainage and dryer infrastructure work.
- Captain's Walk – Many projects.
- Painting building exterior – To be scheduled.

Those projects that are primarily to improve infrastructure include:

- Façade repairs.
- Balcony repairs.
- HVAC improvements.
- Drain work.
- Air flow control.

Aesthetic areas for enhancement include:

- Lobby
- Fourth-floor deck.
- Pool area.

There are almost endless numbers of infrastructure and aesthetic projects we could do. The Board works hard to prioritize these, so we use our resources wisely.

Financial outlook

By Neil Warner, Treasurer

Malibu East appears to have weathered the worst of the economic downturn in good shape.

With \$2.7 million in liquid investments in the reserve fund as of July 31, we're \$200,000 ahead of a year ago. In addition, we own the Captain's Walk, which is very conservatively valued on our books at just under \$300,000 after depreciation.

At July 31 the operating fund had \$243,000 in cash, about \$25,000 less than a year ago, and we owned 13 units, five more than a year ago. We also have taken possession of two units via eviction proceedings and are renting out both units.

The biggest negative we face is our delinquencies, which was at a record high of approximately \$336,000 as of Aug. 27. Much of the problem lies with the length of time it takes foreclosures to wind their way through the legal system. Illinois is averaging a period of more than two years from the foreclosure notice to resolution, and the amount owed by a single foreclosed unit can skyrocket during this time. We're helpless to stop it. This explains why 12 units account for 81% of our delinquencies.

Our assistant treasurer for the past year, Carl Stahlheber, has been working with our law firm, as well as attorneys in other states, in an effort to collect money that is owed to us by former owners. It's still too early to determine whether this tactic will prove cost-effective, but we're making every effort to collect what we can.

If you're in trouble with paying your assessments, the Board will work with you, but you must first ask for help. The Board is prohibited from forgiving assessments but will permit a payment plan that reduces your debt. Any future late charges will be suspended as long as you abide by the terms of the payment plan.

The costs of running this building continue to rise. Some, but not all, of the fringe benefits we're paying for our employees are rising much faster than inflation. In addition, the City has been trying to balance its budget partly on

our backs, with huge hikes in water and sewer rates and a phase-out of our annual scavenger rebate. The amount we're budgeting for water and sewer in 2014 is nearly twice our actual costs from just four years earlier.

Upcoming reserve projects with big price tags: elevator modernization, completion of the City's life safety requirements, Captain's Walk improvements, balcony/façade repairs, Lobby reconfiguration, alleviation of the drainage problem near the north Sheridan Road entrance, and possibly converting the "boat dock" into an area that residents can use.

With the garage having been far under capacity during the past few years, the Board has been attempting to boost the revenue, such as by increasing the number of self-parking spaces available.

Our insurance costs, through Sudler's master program, have leveled off after sharp increases in 2001-07. Premiums have increased only 2.3% since 2007.

The Finance & Insurance Committee is working to complete 2012 audit and a 2013 budget to submit to the owners.

As is customary in December, our Holiday Fund Committee will accept voluntary contributions from residents for our 40-plus building employees. Those contributions are distributed at the employees' holiday party in late December. Nearly \$29,000 was distributed last year.

The preliminary audit figures for 2012 show an excess of operating revenues over expenses, and that excess will be transferred to the reserve fund as authorized at last year's annual meeting of unit owners. The Board recommends that owners do likewise for 2013.

TV issues?

To add optional TV programming to your account, phone DirecTV at 800-531-5000.

For customer service regarding equipment repair, installation or technical support, call USA Wireless at 800-433-4558 or email them at orders@usadishtv.com

Life Safety

By Sandy Chaet, Committee Chair

Our voice communication system, which the City of Chicago mandates to be completed by Jan. 1, 2015, is in progress. This is a two-way communication system that the Fire Department uses when it enters our building for a fire. It consists of speakers on resident floors, a red telephone every five floors in the stairwell for the use of the Fire Department, and a control panel in the Lobby.

The project started in July and is due to be completed by mid/late November. So far, much of the electrical work has been completed in various areas of the building, such as our stairwells, lower level, most of the residential floors and part of the fourth-floor common areas. Presently, the resident floors are being worked on, with drywall being removed at the top of the east side of the corridor, followed by the electrical work, and finally the repairing/repainting of the drywall. Management has distributed a schedule to residents as this part of the project progresses. The 30th floor was done in July as a test, but the speakers have yet to be installed. After the resident floors, the central panel will be installed in the Lobby.

When all is completed, the system will be tested by Aon, Commercial Alarm and Sievert Electric, followed by the Fire Department and City inspectors. We will have a demonstration and explanation for our residents.

Please make sure that, pursuant to the City of Chicago's code, you have properly functioning door closures for your unit. After being opened, your doors should automatically close and latch on their own. The City of Chicago, as part of their inspection, may inspect individual unit doors to see if they are in compliance. If you have a question or need help, contact me or the Management Office.

**The 2014 budget
will be mailed to
owners in October**

Communications & Cable

By T.C. Vaughan, Committee Chair

Satellite television

The reception difficulties that Malibu East experiences are due to the 1970s technology of our building's master television system. We have what is called a loop system, wherein a dozen or more units are wired together on the same loop of coaxial cable. The conduit used for the cable is imbedded in the walls between the living room and the first bedroom and has very limited capacity for more cables. Systems that are more modern have what is called a home-run system, wherein everyone has individual cable brought directly to each unit through a much wider conduit. Our current contract with USA Wireless for DirecTV service has been in effect since the end of 2009 and runs for five years, expiring at the end of next year.

Regular television is delivered through this loop system. There are about 25 "Lifeline" channels available without using the cable box and around 127 using the supplied cable box. For high-definition television, USA Wireless has utilized one of the six pre-wired telephone lines that exist in each room of our units. However, again, this is an old delivery system utilizing copper wire, making this also less than ideal.

The committee has been exploring alternatives to this arrangement, and DirecTV is investigating how to deliver a home-run system to Malibu East. Alternatives being pursued include traditional cable companies and AT&T's U-Verse. Any rewiring for a home-run system will pose an expensive answer, although most providers will actively underwrite a major portion, if not all, of the expense. I hope that we will be able to figure out a way to accomplish this upgrade with minimum disruption to unit owners.

On the Communications side, we utilize a number of different vehicles:

Malibu East's website

Our Internet site can be seen at www.malibueast.org. This site contains links to community resources and past copies of the Dialogue. A committee is working to expand the usability of this

vehicle.

Bulletin boards

Meeting notices and other informational details are posted by management throughout the building. Be sure to check them out in the garage, in the elevator lobbies of the second and third floors, in the mailbox area, and by the first-floor service elevator for up-to-date information about our building.

Assessment statement inserts

Often notices are included with the monthly assessment billing sent by Sudler Property Management.

Door knocker memos

When it is important to make information available to residents, informational memos are placed under each unit's door knocker.

Floor representatives

Over the years the floor representatives have provided helpful feedback to your Board and helped generate improvements in our community. It would be great if more residents participated with this committee.

Laundry Room camera

If you go to channel 2 using the "Lifeline" channels (it's channel 2-1 on an HD set, shown in the "Guide" between channels 2 and 5), you can witness a real-time view of the Laundry Room activity. This is most helpful if you are deciding whether to join a crowd or not.

Dialogue

I have left the best for last. Our award-winning monthly newsletter, the Dialogue, is a great read containing building and community information. The acting editor, Neil Warner, will discuss this wonderful amenity.

Sports & Entertainment

By Neil Warner, Board Liaison

The yoga class has been meeting continuously since November 2005. It meets each Monday in the Windjammer Room. New class members can join the class at the first session, which is usually the first Monday of the month. Beginners are welcome. The class size ranges from 12-15 participants.

The Fitness Room continues to get heavy use; auxiliary fitness rooms seem to get little use.

The swimming pools are still open but will close when the weather turns cold. We had mixed results with the pool attendants; management will try to hire more mature adults next year. New pool furniture was purchased this summer, and further upgrades to the pool enclosure are being considered.

Where do you shop?

The Dialogue is planning an article about ethnic grocery stores in our area, and we'd like to hear your suggestions for stores worth seeking out. We're not interested in the major grocery chains, but rather stores that may cater to a specific ethnic group. We'd also like to know which grocery items they specialize in, or which ones you've found particularly worthwhile.

Email your suggestion to Dialogue@MalibuEast.org, or write it in a note that you can leave with the doorman or the Management Office, to the attention of the Dialogue editor. Include your name and unit number.

Favorite food delivery?

The Dialogue would like to hear which neighborhood restaurants rate as your favorites for food delivery. We will tally the votes as they come in and, if we get enough votes, we'll publish the results.

Just tell us the name, address and phone number of the restaurant, which dishes you enjoy ordering there, and

why you favor this restaurant for deliveries.

Email your vote and explanation to Dialogue@MalibuEast.org or leave a note for the Dialogue editor at the doorman station or with the Management Office. Please provide us with your name and unit number.

Restaurant review**Adriatic Restaurant***By Betty Mayian*

It has been almost four years since I reviewed this restaurant. I must admit that I have been back there only a couple of times, so I thought I would give it a try again. I went to lunch with my friend, Bob, to have a cup of soup and a salad. Their soups are so good. I had chicken vegetable noodle this time. They make a different homemade soup daily – watch for their mushroom, it is just so fine. The salad was a beet, goat cheese and arugula and it was just lovely. They serve nice rolls and butter with almost anything. Now, I know I have to go back more often – maybe next week!

The owner is also a contractor, and every time you go in, there is something more he has crafted to make the place spectacular. The inside room is classy and warm, but the changes can be seen in their outdoor space. They are going to enclose the space and heat it for the colder weather. In the summer, just go there to relax and enjoy the waterfall and fishpond.

My previous review follows, updated to reflect some menu changes.

The southeast corner of Bryn Mawr and Clark has been very bad for restaurants. This space used to be Carl's Butcher Shop, and a friend of ours used to work at Carl's. Always sad to see a good business go away, but let's talk about what business has gone into the space. It is a restaurant that is run by the Mirovic family. They really believe in Carl's philosophy of eating meat, because the menu proclaims their love of pork, pork and more pork. Don't get me wrong; they also have lamb, chicken, salmon and other fish on the menu. But pork is their love. Talk about pork schnitzels, pork loin, pork tenderloin, fried pork, pork chop, smoked sausage, chevapchichi (a spicy pork sausage) and an appetizer of bacon-wrapped dates. They make their own sausages and breads in this large space.

Lunch choices are from small plates of appetizers, including fried calamari; four large salads with great dressings can keep you filled; or choose a sandwich that comes with fries or side

salad. These sandwiches are not your average hamburger or grilled cheese. No, listen to this. Try the caprese sandwich with tomatoes, mozzarella fresh basil and olive oil; or the eggplant sandwich, with grilled eggplant, homemade roasted red peppers and dried tomatoes. There are several other sandwiches, too. Then, I turned over the menu and saw several varieties of crepes. I think there is enough to keep us occupied for a few years.

Some of our dinner choices and thoughts will follow. On our first visit I had the Karadjordjeve schnitzel, a fried pork tenderloin stuffed with kaymak and smoked meat. It was lovely and spicy and I took some home for another meal. Ara had the chevapchichi sausages. There were 10 medium-sized links, very dense and spicy, and three of them were enough for a meal. You could share and still take some home for a couple of meals. Lovely. Our friend Kathy had grilled pork loin with caramelized onion and potatoes. Her husband, Dave, had stuffed pork loin. The stuffing was cream cheese, smoked meat and mozzarella rolled in bacon. They were both pleased. The fifth person at the table, Gloria, was a vegetarian and she had the garlic shrimp. She absolutely loved them and had enough for a meal at home. Another dinner guest joined us on another day. He had the salmon dinner. He loved it so much that he gave each of us a bite (to make sure we ordered it another day) and then proceeded to finish every bite on the plate.

Now, I will talk about the layout of this building. The large indoor space has a magnificent horseshoe bar. The bar carries many of the wines and beers of the old Yugoslavia. The tables and chairs are spaced around this wood-paneled area, making it warm and cozy. Downstairs is the bathroom and the rooms where they prepare their sausages and breads. The handicapped bathroom is on the first floor. Their kitchen is also on the first floor and it has an opening to the garden area. Not content with just having tables and umbrellas in the southern garden, they put in picnic tables and benches, covered with a wooden trellis and hanging plants and vines. In the

northeast corner of the garden is a raised table and chairs with a rock-and-water display around the table (very romantic). The rest of the garden space has potted plants, smaller tables, an outdoor bar area, and a parrot. There is an entrance to the parking lot, which is just east of the restaurant, with the car entrance/exit on Bryn Mawr. Seating outside might hold about 40 or more patrons.

A final word. This sounds a bit like a meat-eaters-only restaurant. It's not. There are many dishes with eggplant, salads, pastas and other ingredients that give vegetarians choices. Also, try their soups: large, homemade and reasonably priced. Try this place when you are tired of the everyday restaurant fare.

5553 N. Clark St.

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Sun - Thu, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Fri - Sat, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

www.adriatic-restaurant.com

Dialogue*By Neil Warner, Acting Editor*

I wish to thank the staff volunteers for their hard work in writing articles and delivering Dialogues each month, as well as Larry Rosen, who lays out each issue and coordinates production with the printer. We had some extraordinary human interest articles about residents this past year, and we also try to write about the customs of residents from other cultures which may not be familiar to some of us.

The Dialogue's mission is to promote communication among owners, residents, the Board, management and staff. We focus on our residents and issues that affect them, but we're open to suggestions from residents about what they'd like to see included in future issues.

We always welcome new volunteers, whether it involves writing or delivering issues.

**Potluck dinner
October 27**

Commentary**Stephanie Plum series endearing****By Barbara Abarbanell**

The library in the Community Room has nearly all of the books in the Stephanie Plum series, but they're often out on loan.

Does it matter that Janet Evanovich's books have sold more than 75 million copies worldwide?

Yeah. It means that 75 million people have had at least three hours of pleasure reading her Stephanie Plum series, and I'm one of them.

Do I care that the novels are predictable? Nope, I recognize the setup, wait for the punch line and guffaw aloud, alone in my apartment, reread those couple of sentences and guffaw again, then again. It feels so good.

Stephanie, you see, is a bounty hunter, mediocre at best, and she'll admit to mediocrity. Her realism is endearing. She has a sidekick, of course, Lula, who's incompetent, but she doesn't think so; rather, she believes she's adept. Her self-delusion is endearing.

All the characters Evanovich creates are endearing, even the bad guys, even her pet hamster, Rex. How can you make a hamster endearing, you ask? Evanovich does. She simply loves this pretend Trenton and the pretend inhabitants, human and otherwise, her imagination produces.

Now, just how hard can it be to be a bounty hunter in Trenton, N.J., described by Stephanie as a gritty town whose residents are rather tolerant of each other's behavior and whose bad guys aren't really so bad; they just crossed the bounds of tolerance? Actually, they didn't show up for their hearing; therefore, Stephanie and Lula

go after them so that Vinnie, her cousin and employer, won't have to forfeit the bond his company produced. It's not hard, and it's the mishaps that make the series work.

Purists say her descriptions of directions and places and place names are wrong; her coordinates are wrong. I say, "I don't care."



Janet Evanovich, author of the Stephanie Plum series. Published until 2010 by Bantam St. Martin's Press. Published after 2010 by Random House.

Why Trenton? Its history gives us no information: It was named Trenton in 1719 after William Trent, a major landholder who purchased land from Mahlon Stacy's family, Quakers who settled the area in 1679. It was the site of Washington's first military victory in 1776. The Industrial Revolution made it a major manufacturing center for rubber, wire rope, ceramics and cigars, and immigrants labeled Italian, Hungarian and Jewish became the major residents, living in ethnic enclaves. Dennis Rodman was born there in 1961; Antonin Scalia was born there in

1963; Ernie Kovacs was born there in 1919.

Evanovich was born in South River, N.J., about 37 miles from Trenton. In a 2002 interview, she said:

"Trenton had everything I needed," she said. "It was large enough, so you could assume it had crime, and there was some variety to it. It would have ghetto neighborhoods, upscale neighborhoods and businesses. It had a river for dumping bodies. It had political stuff going on, but more than that it was that I knew Trenton and it was comfortable for me.

"South River was filled with second-generation Americans. I was immersed in Russian, Polish, Hungarian and Italian. I grew up Presbyterian, but all of my friends were Catholic. I'm Catholic by association. I feel comfortable in that second-generation European culture."

OK, I'll cut her some slack and buy both explanations, although they sound too shallow for an author who constructs her novels so very tightly.

I encourage you to live in Stephanie's world for a couple, three hours, dear reader. It's worth it.

Books in the Stephanie Plum series:

- 1994: One For the Money
- 1996: Two For the Dough
- 1997: Three to Get Deadly
- 1998: Four to Score
- 1999: High Five
- 2000: Hot Six
- 2001: Seven Up
- 2002: Hard Eight
- 2003: To the Nines
- 2004: Ten Big Ones
- 2005: Eleven on Top
- 2006: Twelve Sharp
- 2007: Lean Mean Thirteen
- 2008: Fearless Fourteen
- 2009: Finger-Lickin' Fifteen
- 2010: Sizzling Sixteen
- 2011: Smokin' Seventeen
- 2011: Explosive Eighteen
- 2012: Notorious Nineteen
- 2013: Takedown Twenty



Malibu East Community Room

Aesthetics & Building Maintenance

By Maria Damp, Committee Chair

A major project that was completed over the past 12 months was the atrium lighting. The Aesthetics & Building Maintenance Committee reviewed and discussed three proposals and recommended that Malibu East hire Connexion to design and install the atrium lights. The lighting was completed in spring 2013.

At every meeting, the committee discusses the general appearance of the building and moves projects forward according to priority. Cleaning of the hallway carpets is a priority and is ongoing. Schedules should be posted to inform residents of the timeline.

The Garage Lobby was painted, the bench refinished, and furniture placement rearranged. The committee will order new, comfortable seating to replace the plastic chairs. Plans to move the artwork are under way.

The old, worn pool furniture was an eyesore for many residents. Three

companies were researched, and the committee selected furniture from a commercial-grade outdoor furniture company. Twenty chaise-lounge chairs, 10 "dining" chairs, and 10 "sand" chairs were purchased.

The major project for the Aesthetics & Building Maintenance Committee for 2013 has been the Laundry Room renovation. The committee, along with many Board members, reviewed extensive proposals from laundry companies. Site visits were made to view sample facilities from two companies (the third proposal was incomplete). Plans for the new Malibu East Laundry Room include installing all front-loading, energy-efficient washing machines and new dryers. New tile, lighting, paint and décor will complete the project. Machines will operate via a card system in which residents will load money onto their card to enable them to use the machines. Those with Internet access will be able to view open machines and can report broken ones directly to the laundry company. Prior to the Laundry Room renovation, three

physical issues were identified: electrical, drainage and ventilation. Some of these items have already been corrected and others will be completed while the room renovation is in progress. We expect the Laundry Room to be out of service for three weeks in order to create a functional, beautiful facility for all residents. Notice will be given prior to the project starting date, and a list of optional Laundromats and cleaning services will be provided for reference.

Additional items being addressed by the Aesthetics & Building Maintenance Committee include new winter floor mats for the building, painting and redecorating the Receiving Room, painting the Teen Room and Children's Playroom, new plants/design for the center of the atrium, and additional bookcases for the Community Room.

In conjunction with the Long-Range & Special Projects Committee, renovation and redesign of the Lobby, elevator modernization and pool surround/patio refurbishment are all projects that are in the planning stages and will be addressed in the next year.

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Office: 773-878-1574
Cell: 773-425-2239
Email: curtisjacobson@sbcglobal.net



No Job Is Too Small
References Available

'Town Crier' announcements
by Caitlin Gilman

We welcome all new residents to our building, including:

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

Public & Community Affairs

By Sandy Chaet, Board Liaison

Thanks to all of the residents for writing, calling and emailing about the proposed state sprinkler requirements. Due to the tremendous public support, the proposal was eliminated at this time. ASCO (Association of Sheridan Condominium/Co-op Owners) and other groups are still monitoring the situation.

The City Council passed an energy benchmark ordinance at its September meeting, which will require building owners, including condos, to report their energy usage so that the City can compare the energy usage of buildings in Chicago. 48th Ward Ald. Harry Osterman voted no on the ordinance. An amendment has been introduced by 10 aldermen, including Osterman, to amend the ordinance by removing all residential buildings from its scope. This is going to be another hard fight because the environmental groups are pushing for it. ASCO, as well as other

groups, will send out more information as to where letters/emails are to be sent.

To improve pedestrian safety, Ald. Osterman introduced, and had approved by the City Council, an increase in the fine, to \$200, for bicyclists riding on the sidewalks of Sheridan Road from Ardmore to Devon.

Loyola University Chicago received approval from the City Council to close Kenmore Avenue from Rosemont to Devon after the water main/resurfacing project is completed on Sheridan. It will remain open for automobile use until then. Once closed, the street will be converted into a campus green way for pedestrians and bikes.

The water main project on Sheridan Road has been completed, with the resurfacing project already started. The crews will work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the east side of Sheridan and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. when working on the west side of the street. Once the curbs, gutters and driveways have been completed, the street resurfacing will begin, with a target completion date of

Oct. 22. Following the resurfacing, pavement markings will be done, and finally restoration work, which includes landscaping and spot repairs. No work is planned for evenings or weekends, but if the project falls behind, it may happen. The goal is to complete the entire resurfacing project by mid-November. I will post any updates on the Laundry Room bulletin board.

If you would like to be added to ASCO's and/or Ald. Osterman's email list, please leave your name and email address in my Board mailbox in the cart room.

Upcoming events

ASCO general meeting: 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 9 in Windjammer Room. Speakers include Ald. Osterman and a Chicago Fire Department representative. More details to follow.

ASCO fundraiser for Sheridan Road beautification: 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 3 at Marty's Martini Bar, 1511 W. Balmoral. Free admission, cash bar. More details to follow.

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State of the Association

(Continued from page 1)

will be how we can improve the aesthetics of the elevator cabs.

We will be looking also into how to improve the security aspects of the building – in particular, at the lobby and the lower level – as well as how we can make the pool area more attractive.

I have mentioned some of the projects that are in progress, but throughout the year, we have dealt with many other issues and smaller projects that would take too long to mention here.

Over the last four years, we have given a lot of attention also to maintaining the value of the units. It is for this reason that we have been exercising our right of first refusal to buy units that were being offered, primarily by banks, at prices substantially below market. While we have sold three of the units, our plan of action has been to renovate the units and rent them, waiting for the price of the units to increase as the real-estate market recovers. The economic signs are indicating that the market is recovering. In the meantime, as will be explained in greater detail by 2nd Vice President Tom Vaughan, we are realizing a nice cash flow from the rental of the units, as well as a nice profit on the units that we sold.

The level of our delinquencies continues to be very high. Unfortunately, some of our owners continue to suffer the evil consequences of the economy. Our efforts to recover assessments from delinquent owners have increased, and it would appear that, other than a few owners whose units are being foreclosed, there has not been a great increase lately in the number of owners who cannot pay their mortgages and assessments.

In my view, we are facing a critical period in the life of the building. We clearly must undertake a number of very important projects and continue to deal with a market economy which, even though it has improved, is not yet fully stabilized. The amount of our delinquencies is quite high and we will have to be very careful about how we use our reserves and how we continue

to maintain them. Our goal is to be financially responsible and never be faced with a special assessment, which would put many owners under great financial stress and depress the value of our units. Neil Warner, our treasurer, will provide you with a report on our finances, which are still quite good, and Richard Strauss will provide a report on where we stand with respect to the 2014 budget, which is still a work in progress. The cost of the projects to be undertaken is substantial and we need to be very sensitive to the financial situation of many of our owners. I hope that this will be the case and that we will not be faced with any emergencies.

I do not want to sound pessimistic, but I do want to be realistic and point out that, given the age of the building, we need to be very judicious about the way we spend the money of all the owners.

We do continue to believe that it is extremely important that you all get involved in the affairs of our building and find ways to increase our sense of community. We are a village that is built vertically, but we are clearly a community that needs to work together.

Pet Committee

By Sandy Chaet, Board Liaison

All cats, dogs and other pets living at Malibu East are to be registered. The forms are in the Management Office.

There is a plastic bag dispenser attached to the fence around the first dog run. Please use a bag to pick up after your pet. This will help to keep this area cleaner. If your pet does have an accident in the common areas, please tell the doorman so that our maintenance staff can clean it up immediately. Please do not allow your dog to urinate in any part of the atrium, including in front of our main door, near the bricks or in front of the Sheridan Road or Captain's Walk entrances.

In the freight elevator, when crowded, keep your pet close to you to avoid any problems. Our building allows pets; let us make sure we do what we can to show we appreciate this and follow the rules.

Flu shots on October 16

See the Social Committee report on Page 4 for details

The Dialogue

The Malibu East Condominium *Dialogue* is published by resident volunteers to promote communication among owners, residents, the Board of Directors, management and staff of Malibu East Condominium, 6033 North Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60660.

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Letters to the Malibu East Condominium *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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