

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES

AUGUST 2014

Community Interests

WHAT YOUR INDUSTRY IS TALKING ABOUT ... WHAT HOMEOWNERS NEED TO KNOW

TEAM WORK



Northern Nevada's

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Community Interests

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES

AUGUST 2014

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NORMAN ROSENSTEEL,
CMCA, AMS, PCAM

President's Message

I can't believe it's August already! This year is flying by.

August brings one of our hottest months of the year, so, if I were a resident of Southern Nevada (or Northern, it's still cooler), I would be heading north for the Northern Nevada Golf Tournament at Northstar Resort on August 15th. We've partnered again with the Northern California CAI Chapter and I'm sure this will be an event to be remembered.

Come on up and cool down!

Lake Tahoe is a short drive from the resort and a great place to spend the weekend. We also have our LAC luncheon this month in Southern Nevada, on August 12th, so please come for an update on what the Legislative Action Committee has been doing, and to ask any questions you may have.

Thanks, I look forward to seeing you all at these events!

I'd also like to comment on some of the great teamwork that's taking place. When our committee members work together with our staff and the Board, and vice versa, we all benefit.

The acronym TEAM stand for 'Together Everyone Achieves More,' and that has certainly been happening in CAI Nevada.

For the very few 'team' issues we have had, it's always important to remember that we are all here to do what is best for our organization as a whole, not just what may benefit one or a few. We will have occasional differences of opinion, but through communication, understanding and compromise, we can arrive at solutions that improve our organization. Most of our volunteers know this and have done a fantastic job working together, and, for that, I wholeheartedly thank you all!

Norman Rosensteel



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MARY RENDINA
CHAPTER EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

Chapter Commentary

Over the past six years, despite the recession, we have almost doubled our membership and sponsorship. To handle this increase, in 2010 we moved from a 600 sq. ft. two room office suite to a 2600 sq. ft. office complex with a reception area, three offices, a meeting room, a training center, a kitchen and two bathroom facilities.

Our Board of Directors has supported our efforts to find additional ways to service our members more efficiently while keeping up with the ever-changing world of technology.

With that in mind, I am very excited to announce we have signed a contract with CVENT, an online event and database management company.

CVENT is user friendly and will allow registrants to track events they have attended.

Our sponsors will be assigned a code to use when registering. As a sponsor, when you are using tickets for luncheons, CVENT will notify you of the number of tickets remaining on your account.

Event attendees can still pay with a credit card or check. You can register more than one person at the same time. Our interactive calendar page will allow you to search for events based on the event type. For example, if you are a manager, you can search for all manager classes being taught throughout the year.

Registrants will receive an automatic confirmation and a reminder email prior to the event. Once you have registered, you will no longer receive registration reminders, cutting down significantly on email blasts.

Your credit card and check information is secure, because CVENT is PCI 1 rated.

We plan on rolling out our new online registration system starting with the August Las Vegas Manager breakfast. We will introduce this in phases, and our goal is that by the end of 2014 all RSVPs for all events will go through CVENT.

There are numerous features, too many to go into in a magazine article, but I know once you start using CVENT, you will agree registering for our events will be a breeze.

Thank you in advance for your patience and anticipated cooperation as we transition to this new registration system.

Warm Regards,

Mary Rendina

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ERIC THEROS, SCM IS WITH THE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT GROUP

Join Us and Make a Difference!

Candlelighters Childhood Cancer 5K - CAI-HOA Champions

Saturday, September 13, 2014

by Eric Theros, SCM

The Candlelighters 5k Walk/Run is only a few weeks away and it's time for the CAI HOA Champions team to kick it into high gear!

Outreach and all of CAI have helped make the Candlelighters 5k a huge success. For the past four years, we have been the largest corporate team to participate in this event.

We are on track to do the same this year, but will need your help in making that happen! The event is going to be held Saturday, September 13th at Exploration Park at Mountain's Edge.

Candlelighters is an organization that benefits the members of all families battling any form of childhood cancer. Unfortunately, it is probably a safe bet to say that everybody reading this article has had his or her life touched by cancer in some way. It is always a tremendously difficult battle, but especially difficult when it is a child ... son, daughter, niece, nephew, friend.

Balancing the fears associated with this disease and worrying about the finances

needed to cover medical costs and being strong ... all at the same time ... can be next to impossible!

That's where Candlelighters steps in!

They help with everything from finances to therapy to support to everything you could possibly need to battle this disease. Their motto is "Because Kids Can't Fight Cancer Alone" ... "Because of Candlelighters, neither do the parents and families."

Every penny of the proceeds goes to help local families here in Nevada.

That is one of the facts that help get that "local pride" push of support that CAI has helped build over the years. The team goal this year is \$9,000 and we're hoping to round up 200 participants.

To show our solidarity and the sheer numbers of our team, each year the CAI team proudly wears the lime green visors that have been donated by CAI business partners. The lime green visors are





CANDLELIGHTERS

CHILDHOOD CANCER FOUNDATION OF NEVADA

spotted at every step of the event showing how massive the CAI team and hearts of its members truly are.

This year, in order to save money and put additional funds into the organization, Candlelighters is not providing event shirts. This will make the uniformity of the lime green visors that much more noticeable.

The team is open to ALL CAI members and their families and friends (even the four-legged friends as the walk is pet-friendly!) To sign up for the team, you can either visit the CAI page and click on 'Outreach' for the link or you can visit <http://Candlelighters.kintera.org/Superhero/CAI>.

Even if you can't make it to the event itself, you can still be part of the team. Of course you are encouraged to attend, but if you are not able to make the walk or are out of town, you can still register and your registration fee still goes towards the CAI team goal and to the Candlelighters. You can also give a donation directly to the team by following the link above.

We are nearing the home stretch and are trying to get to our goal, but "we" can't do it without "you"! Homeowners, Business Partners, Management Companies ... "We" need your support! We had a great turnout for the 51's game in July and those proceeds go towards our goal of \$9,000.00, but we still need you to sign up or donate before the event. There are quick and easy to follow instructions on the Outreach tab of the <http://cai-nevada.org> website to show you how to register. Go to the link, click CORPORATE TEAM and TEAM REGISTRATION (trust me, you won't be creating a new team, you're simply joining ours.)

Thank you for your support, and the entire Community Outreach Committee, CAI and all of the childhood cancer families, THANK YOU! ●

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Around The Block

Around the Block is an idea for a new regular segment in the monthly magazine that presents articles relating human-interest stories from our family of communities. If you have a story to relate, be it a tale about competition, coffee klatches, sewing circles, hobbyists, book clubs, community activities, and/or people or groups who deserve recognition, this is the place to tell it. We are looking for humor, ideas and upbeat examples of what makes your community a great place to live in 600 words or less. The magazine committee looks forward to hearing from you and thanks you for your contributions.

A Matter of Trust

by Catharine "Kate" Lindsay

It took three weeks for me to realize precisely how difficult it was for her to call me to discuss the clubhouse policy ... three weeks before I realized that when she initiated the conversation she wasn't sure if I'd respond as angry and wounded or as a victim of a jealous homeowner.

Three weeks is a pretty long time for someone to wonder what type of retribution they'd suffer because they initiated what could be a very contentious conversation.

Like many homeowners associations, we've gone through a bit of a rebirth in the last few years. Our board is a blend of experienced and newbie's; and all want to make our HOA an amazing place to live. But human nature being what it is, some of our experienced board members have been haunted by old tensions or past transgressions and newbie's have been

frustrated by what appeared to be restrictive or arcane processes.

Trust is not necessarily in bloom.

As a newbie, I saw the ghost of pre-2008 board battles at almost every meeting. There were arguments over roofing contracts and holiday decorations. Residents had a knee jerk doom and gloom reaction to any proposal. There was a lot of waiting – waiting for someone to screw up, waiting for someone to figure out it was a lost cause and waiting for some form of retribution.

As a newbie, it was hard for me to see the impact of the ghost of HOA boards past. Even though those ghosts informed each discussion and decision made by the current board, I blew right past it like a box left too long in the closet. You had to step around it to get to what you wanted, but most of the time it was out of the way and shouldn't bother anyone.

I was wrong, and that is how I came to leave a fellow board member in limbo for three weeks while she waited to see how I would react.

Our clubhouse is actually just the walled space between the bathrooms and the pool pump room. It's not a lot as clubhouses go, but it has a kitchen and natural light. Frankly it hasn't been used much in the last 20 years. A year ago, my husband and another resident began to use the clubhouse about once a month to do their photography. For one day, it becomes their studio. Outside of board meetings, it's the most use the clubhouse has seen. After a while,



one board member began to wonder – what exactly was our clubhouse policy, were we following it and most importantly, could my husband’s use of the clubhouse give the appearance of impropriety? Did it seem that, since I’m the board president, he was getting a perk by using the clubhouse so frequently?

She called me. She asked about the policy. She suggested we review the policy and make sure that we had complete transparency so that there couldn’t be a question about whether my husband was getting special treatment.

To be honest, I was embarrassed. It’s something I should have thought of myself. We were following what we knew of the existing policy, but, upon inspection, that policy was kind of vague and more than anything, we needed to deal with what could be perceived as inappropriate use. She and I talked, I wrote an e-mail to our management company and we put it on a future meeting agenda. To me, after the initial moment of “ah geez, how could I miss it” it was just another item to review, improve and implement.

Three weeks later we were on a call with our property manager and that’s when it hit me just how much this board member risked when she brought up the rental policy with me. I learned that her introduction to being on an HOA board was when a former board member was basically deposed. There was a question about landscaping work completed at his condo on the HOA dime. It may or may not have been legitimate but it led to a huge blow-up. The board member resigned and sold his condo. From that point forward this board member, my neighbor, had worked on boards with people who agreed in public and sulked in private or who were obnoxious in public and rude all around. It was never easy to do anything because everyone was so sure they were being taken advantage of that they took a defensive position from the start of any conversation.

How could the emotional impact of a dysfunctional or angry board last so long after the minutes were stored and the financials audited? After talking to a few long time homeowners, I learned it was an expectation among our residents that each board meeting would be a pot waiting to boil over.

Then I entered the picture, a complete unknown, and they were waiting to see what I’d do. How would I handle things that are hard – like a homeowner who accuses the board and HOA of harassment? How would I handle things that are personal – like a vendor I’m friendly with who doesn’t get the job done for the HOA? Will I smile at the board and homeowners in the meeting and stab their back when I walk out the door?

It’s reasonable to worry that I would rage at the idea that my husband and I were taking advantage of my position on the board. How dare anyone accuse us of something

so awful after all we’ve done for our HOA! And as I said before, I, and my husband, were embarrassed when the spotlight was turned on this situation. There was no telling how it could play out.

I’m still sorry that I didn’t recognize the risk taken by this board member when she made that particular call. I hope subsequent conversations showed her there wouldn’t be any kind of retribution and she felt safer in her role as a board member. Overall we used this discussion to take a few steps forward and build trust in each other regarding how we’ll manage the most difficult and uncomfortable situations. The more we trust each other the more we’ll be able to accomplish.

I’m not naïve enough to think the ghosts of HOA boards past won’t still pop up from time to time or that I’ve completely removed my blinders and become an amazingly intuitive person. I simply hope we redefined the expectation of how our board will behave whether we’re selecting a pool vendor or discussing a difficult compliance issue.

As for the clubhouse policy, we discovered we actually had three. Each had the same basic outline but different deposit requirements and a few unique qualifications. We’re getting that tidied up in time for the 2nd quarter 2014 newsletter. It won’t put an end to all possible conflicts of interest, but it should put an end to this one. ☺



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Budget Season

“Every Dollar Should Have A Name”

by Stacey Cosentino, SCM, CMCA, AMS

It’s that time of year again ...

You’re scrambling to gather accurate figures for your draft budgets. Luckily, you learned your lesson last year when preparing your budgets and have set yourself up for easy input and accurate figures this year.

But what happens when the new Manager has to do their budget for the first time ... ? Panic, anxiety, and frustration over where to get all the information, twelve months of financial reports and bills spread all over your desk.

Working with new Community Managers and their budgets is my favorite time of the year. Think about it, you are setting up the spending and savings report for someone else’s money. What a great feeling when you see that bottom line and are able to not only save money, but

also fund the reserves and make the community financially whole.

When setting up budget workshops with new managers, I took note of some of the questions they had and wanted to share that information.

Q: What can be done throughout the year to be better prepared for budget time?

A: Know your contracts and reach out to their offices and simply ask, “Do you anticipate an increase upon renewal?” Most of the time they will not have a problem informing you ahead of time as it is much better to be prepared financially and they understand that. If there is an increase, don’t immediately think the board should go out to bid. We are all justified an increase in pay and not to mention they are also trying to keep up with the ever evolving economy.



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I also keep a spreadsheet of the amounts of the contracts so I can easily plug those figures into my template. Even though they may be on your previous year's budget, if a contract has changed hands during the year this figure may be different than what is on the previous budget.

Contact the respective utility companies and ask for any anticipated increases. If they can't give you a figure, budget for a slight increase anyway. As we all know, even in our own homes we get hit with annual increases from the utility companies.

Most importantly, don't forget to call your insurance Agent or Broker and ask for any possible increases. They will be able to give you good figures based on the trend and your losses for the year.

Q. How specific should the line items be?

A: This really depends on you and your Board. I prefer not to classify too many items to "other" ... this creates a lot of extra research when trying to prepare a budget. Don't be afraid to ask your accounting department to open a new GL expense line item for those expenses that will come up again. In the great words of Dave Ramsey, "Every dollar should have a name." This way you will know exactly how much you spent and what you spent it on. Save "other" for the one-time expenses that will probably never come up again.

Q: How involved should the Board be?

A: Again, this depends on the Board; I have some Boards who just want to see the bottom line when it is complete and others that want to be involved from beginning to end. Try and be proactive and prepare a draft for them. Be as detailed as possible with your descriptions. The more information that you make available, the fewer questions and changes they will have. Once the draft is prepared, you can either correspond via email or work with a couple of Directors on a final budget to present to the entire Board. If you have the convenience of a conference room and large screen, invite them over to review each line item in detail as opposed to by email so that you can all be on the same page when presenting to the full Board for adoption.

Q: If you make a mistake or forget to add something, what can be done if it has already been adopted and ratified?

A: If it is a major contracted expense that affects your bottom line or even a capital item that will affect your reserves, you can always propose an amended budget to the association. Just make sure that you are referring to statute and the community's Documents and following the same guidelines as you would for standard budget adoption and ratification. If it doesn't affect either, you might not need to worry about it too much; just consult with your Board of Directors. The budget is your financial roadmap, but you're not bound to the numbers in it other than the monthly reserve transfers. If you go over budget in certain line items, don't panic, it will just tell you which areas you need to increase in the next year's budget. ●

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KEN CARTERON, IS SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AT SEACOASTS COMMERCE BANK AND NORTHERN NEVADA CO-CHAIR, AND BOWLING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Greetings from the Bowling “Mecca” of the United States

by Ken Carteron

Yep, that would be us up here in the North.

On June 20th, we held our 10th annual Bowling event to the theme of “Zombie Bowling, It’s a Dead Man’s Party.”

We filled 20 Lanes at the Grand Sierra Resort Bowling Center. With the quality of the games rolled, you would have thought that some of our sponsors brought in pros off the tour, in town for the State Bowling Championships. With the face paint, torn up clothing and the lanes so close to the bar, we might not have known the difference if some of our sponsors had gone downtown to recruit.

The high Zombie women’s score of 189 by Paige Boesen and men’s score of 260 by Walter Block were evidence of the excellent performances we witnessed.

Our 1st place team scored 1450 for their two qualifying games. That trophy went to Pacific Western Bank. Finishing just behind them in a close second was Angius and Terry.

It was not all about the bowling however, we had some ‘convincing’ Zombies in the house. Our best dressed Zombies were the team from Securitas with best male Zombie, Tom Bayard and female Zombie, Teresa Wilson.

This ‘apocalypse’ would not have been possible without our sponsors.

The committee would like to thank you all:

- FirstService Residential
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- Reno Greens Landscape
- Angius & Terry
- Leach Johnson Song Gruchow
- GetDocsNow
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- Pacific Western Bank
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- Belfor
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- Kelly Moore Paints

The Bowling sub-committee of the Northern Nevada Committee: Tonya Bates - Opus 1 Community Management; Kim Brown – Reno Greens Landscape; Laura Price – Associa Sierra North, and Lisa and Ken Carteron - Seacoast Commerce Bank, with, of course, help and leadership from our Northern Nevada Committee Chair, Beckie Richter. All worked very hard to put together a night to remember for all of us un-dead who participated. ●

Check out *Zombie Bowling photos* on page 35!

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Southern Nevada Upcoming Events

AUGUST	8/4	Las Vegas Homeowner Seminar Center	CAI Training Center	6:00 p.m.
	8/7-8/8	M-206	Gold Coast Hotel	8:00 a.m.
	8/12	Las Vegas Monthly Luncheon	Gold Coast Hotel	11:15 a.m.
	8/12	CAI Nevada Chapter Board Meeting	Gold Coast Hotel	1:30 p.m.
	8/26	Las Vegas Manager Breakfast	CAI Training Center	9:00 a.m.
	8/23	Las Vegas Homeowner Seminar	CAI Training Center	9:00 a.m.
SEPTEMBER	9/9	CAI Nevada Chapter Board Meeting	Gold Coast Hotel	1:30 p.m.
	9/9	Las Vegas Monthly Luncheon	Gold Coast Hotel	11:15 a.m.
	9/12	Nevada Educated Business Partners	CAI Training Center	9:00 a.m.
	9/13	Candlelighters Walk	Exploration Park	7:30 a.m.
	9/25	Neon Museum Social Event	Neon Museum	5:30 p.m.
	9/27	Las Vegas Homeowner Seminar	CAI Training Center	9:00 a.m.
	9/30	Las Vegas Manager Breakfast	CAI Training Center	9:00 a.m.

Northern Nevada Upcoming Events

AUGUST	8/15	Northern Nevada Golf Tournament	Northstar Resort	10:00 a.m.
SEPTEMBER	9/17	Northern Nevada Quarterly Breakfast	Peppermill Hotel	7:30 a.m.
	9/17	Nevada Educated Business Partners	Peppermill Hotel	10:00 a.m.
	9/18	Northern Nevada Manager Breakfast	Peppermill Hotel	9:00 a.m.
	9/18	Northern Nevada Homeowner Seminar	Peppermill Hotel	6:00 p.m.



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JIM LAMOREUX IS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE TENAYA CREEK HOA IN RENO NEVADA

Can a Community Effectively Live within a Wetlands?

by Jim Lamoreux

Our subdivision was built on wetlands from which Tenaya Creek flows in the NE quadrant. Both the NW and NE areas of the subdivision have been delineated as wetlands. The situation came to our attention when owners in the NE quadrant complained that creek water was entering their back yards. Consequent research on the problem prompted us to send out bids for wetlands specialists in the Reno area. We selected one and they proceeded to evaluate the wetlands to determine their status. They discovered that we were indeed connected to a major waterway and were regulated. This meant that to do things in the wetlands, we had to apply for what is called a 'Nationwide 27 permit.' The permit allows us to rehabilitate the creek as long as we create a net increase in "aquatic resource functions and services," as it states in the following citation:

"Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Establishment and Enhancement Activities. Activities in waters of the United States associated with the restoration, enhancement, and establishment of tidal and non-tidal wetlands and riparian areas, the restoration and enhancement of non-tidal streams and other non-tidal open waters, and the rehabilitation or enhancement of tidal streams, tidal wetlands, and tidal open waters, provided those activities result in net increases in aquatic resource functions and services."

Part of the development suggestions made by the wetlands specialists includes creating what is called low-flow channels and vortexes to help capture the silt and redirect the creek towards beehive drains to the south. In order to do this we will need engineering drawings and a cost estimate to be able to apply for stream rehabilitation grants and hopefully avoid a special assessment to complete this project. You might ask why we are going to all this trouble just to manage a creek. What we have learned so far opens up too many possibilities to be ignored.

We created a temporary "V" ditch to redirect creek water away from the homes. The "V" ditch while temporary was our first project in the wetlands. The ditch is 2'6" deep and 140' long. It has cobble rock at the west end to catch silt from the creek. The meandering creek water goes into the ditch behind the houses and into the cobble rock. From there it is directed to the beehive drain running south of the creek. This is meant to redirect the water until we can get grants together to rehabilitate the creek to flow the way it was originally intended.

This should be enough you might say. It is not! Our wetlands take up a little over two acres of land that could be used by the residents in a number of ways. We envision park benches and walk ways to make the area accessible to owners. With careful planning and budgeting we see those two acres of wetlands being opened up and evolving from a looming problem to a beautiful and useful amenity.

Wetlands management involves state, city and federal rules. It takes permits from the city, the

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state and the Army Corps of Engineers to properly and legally develop a project. When our task is complete we will have rehabilitated our creek and as a bonus for doing this, hopefully added an amenity to our subdivision that wasn't there before. We will also address vector borne diseases with the county and the West Nile issue. For now, we cut down the vegetation by hand and this exposes the pooling so that the county can treat the water for mosquitoes. With the creek re-directed by low flow channels this should manage the silt better to avoid pooling and disease-carrying insects.

Some people we have talked to about this project see it as a community "problem." We see it as a plus as long as we can successfully negotiate city, state and federal government requirements and in the end open up the area to use by the residents.

We have designed a Kiosk to identify the wildlife there and disseminate information about the creek and wetlands. We have drawings by the wetlands specialists about how the park could be evolved into a real amenity for the subdivision. We are excited about this project and run it by the owners in our newsletters and on our web page encouraging feedback on how they would like to see this land evolved. With our narrow streets there is no place for kids to play without dodging cars and scraping knees on asphalt. We are discussing ways to get vendor cooperation in helping us build a dirt lot in the NW quad for kids to play off the street. This would have to be included in the Nationwide 27 permit.

Wetlands should not be seen as a managerial problem and a negative for any HOA Board. We hope to have our wetlands become a shining selling feature for homes in the subdivision as well as a bragging point for the community.

With a lot of creative thinking and strict budgetary management, we anticipate that our wetlands will become an example of what can be done with this sort of natural attribute. ●

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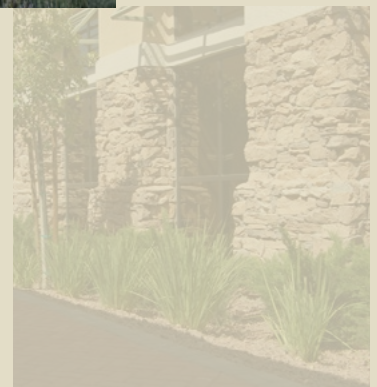
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Northern Nevada Trade Show

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Eddy House in Northern Nevada

A non-profit organization that provides supportive residential housing to young adult males who have "aged out" of the system. The home provides a safe place for these youth to pursue their educational goals and learn valuable life-skills.

Solace Tree in Northern Nevada

A non-profit organization on a mission to bring support and education to grieving children and adults.

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Michael F. Waters

The Cupcake Girls

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Melanie Ust

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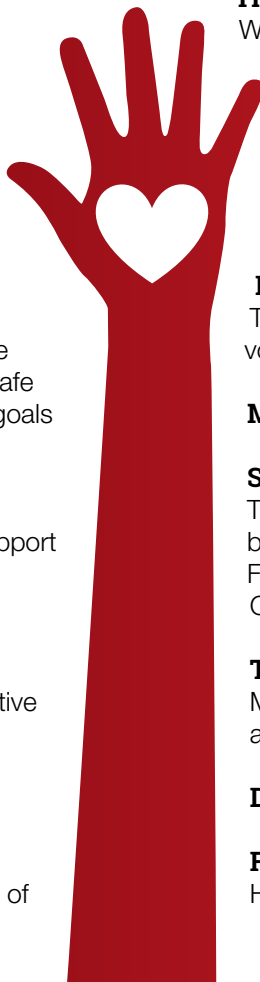
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Diana Arzberger

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JUDY FARRAH, CMCA, LSM, PCAM IS A COMMUNITY MANAGER WITH FIRSTSERVICE RESIDENTIAL

In the Beginning ... and Now

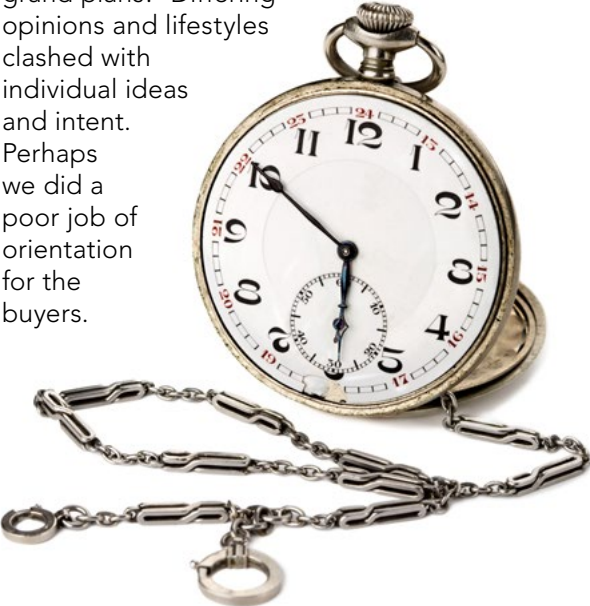
by Judy Farrah, CMCA, LSM, PCAM

Where were you in 1991? My guess is that more than two-thirds of you were not members of CAI, or even involved in any type of community management. How can we be so sure of that?

Because our CAI chapter was barely a year old and had about 50 members. There weren't even 100 HOAs in the state of Nevada! Yet still, a wonderful thing happened that year during the Nevada Legislative session. One of the best legal minds in this state introduced us to a state adapted version of a new federal legislation regarding housing development across this country. The legislation became known as NRS 116, the Nevada Community Association Uniform Act.

This legislation was intended to create a guideline for the operation of the thousands of acres of land under development throughout Nevada at that time. It was expected to protect the value of the homeowner's investment when they purchased units inside planned developments and provide a structure for maintaining common elements therein. It was intended to protect the interest of the homeowners and maintain the value of their property while also providing a new shared lifestyle of common elements like parks and pools and recreation centers.

What happened to the grand plans? Differing opinions and lifestyles clashed with individual ideas and intent. Perhaps we did a poor job of orientation for the buyers.



Perhaps people moving into the planned community developments just didn't take the commitment seriously.

Now, here we are 23 years and 11 legislative sessions later working to adhere to the intent of the law while continuing to educate our homeowners and assist them in understanding what is expected of all of us involved in this "industry" of home/community development. It is an everyday task that becomes even more public and problematic during an active legislative session.

We all – homeowners, board members, vendors and management – need to take a look at where we are and what we can do for the benefit of our many community associations throughout the state, and then determine how we can effectively communicate those expectations to our legislative representatives during the coming 2015 session. ●



CAI Toy Drive

JULY 1 – OCT 1

CAI - Nevada Chapter is participating in local 98.5 KLUC DJ Chet Buchanan's toy collection campaign. We will collect new toys at all luncheons, manager and homeowner seminars and committee meetings July 1 to Oct 1.

Bring new, unwrapped toys to all luncheons, manager and homeowner seminars and committee meetings July 1 to

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Have You Thanked Your HOA Board Members Lately?

by Leonard Baron, MBA, CPA

While many owners in Common Interest Communities (also called Homeowner Associations) have unflattering opinions about the board members who govern their neighborhoods, the truth is, they're generally working to protect your home and investment.

Let's walk through what HOA board members do for the community to get a better idea about the important role they fill.

WHAT DOES THE BOARD DO?

In Nevada, all HOA board members are owners who are elected by the other unit owners from within the community. The board's job is to enforce the rules as dictated by the community's articles of incorporation, bylaws and covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs). Every owner who buys into an HOA-governed community is given a copy of the

Articles, Bylaws, CC&Rs and rules adopted by the board. Even if you don't or didn't take the time to glance through those HOA documents, as a buyer you agree to live within the rules and regulations of the community. In Nevada, since 1997, purchasers have been required to initial as having received a document as outlined in NRS 116.41095 that lays out, in detail, quite a few of the rights that you may be giving up by purchasing in any HOA/Common Interest Community in Nevada.

The board quite often hires a management company for the community, approves vendors and payments, penalizes property owners who violate the rules, approves the annual budget, makes decisions when necessary, and handles every other function that a governing body needs to do on behalf of the people they are governing – subject to the Articles, Bylaws and CC&Rs. Boards follow those rules closely because, if they



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allow an exception here or there, it's likely to create conflicts with other owners who expect the rules to be followed.

Most boards do a good job handling functions that individual unit owners are simply relieved they don't have to deal with. And contrary to news reports bashing HOA boards, board members in Nevada are unpaid, and they're rarely stealing money or imposing draconian rules. When those horror stories surface, it's generally because one or two owners choose to publicly air a grievance, rather than working through the community to make positive changes for everyone.

ARE YOU UNHAPPY WITH THE BOARD'S WORK?

My advice for folks who don't like what their HOA board is doing is to quit whining! Note: I am not a board member in any community, but I attend HOA meetings and see many unreasonable complaints – and for full disclosure, I see some valid ones too.

One of the most important rules in every single HOA is that if the members of the community do not like the decisions of the board, they can vote the board members out. If you don't like the rules of the community – as enforced by the Board – get yourself elected to the board so you can enforce the rules and potentially go out to the owners to vote to change any unreasonable provisions in the documents.

Most people who object to what's happening won't do anything to help the board. They just want to keep complaining. But if you aren't going to spend your time and effort to help better govern the community, then don't criticize the folks who are doing it (unless they are breaking Nevada law).

The majority of the time, community members should be saying 'thank you' to board members for spending their time doing a thankless job, trying to protect every community member's biggest asset. I've seen excellent HOA board members in a few communities get so fed up with dealing with whining and complaining constituents that they just give up and quit. Then the task of managing and operating the community – paying bills, making decisions and enforcing rules – is not done by anyone for months. Take my word for it: you don't want to live in one of those communities! A receiver can be appointed by the State of Nevada to run the association which can cost considerably when having an outsider charge you by the hour to do those things that the volunteers have been doing with no compensation. ●

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CHRISTIAN DIAMANDIS,
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Commentary: Out of Control Government

by Christian Diamandis, CMCA, PCAM

I am writing today to point out the obvious, which the people need to recognize and the government needs to hear. I will start with the larger view before drilling down to the local level.

If anyone in this country still thinks bigger government is the answer to our country's problems, they are either apparatchiks or not paying attention. The recent VA scandal should hold up a red flag for everyone who thought that the Affordable Care Act was a good idea. The government mismanaged the VA to the point that soldiers died in a bureaucratic entanglement that will never be unraveled. That program was well funded and was designed to take care of those most deserving in this country. How do you think the government will do with a vastly underfunded program for the undeserving?

Then there is the IRS and other alphabet soup government agencies that have run amok,

changing their rules affecting private citizens to increase their own power and influence. The signs are everywhere that quasi-government agencies have sidestepped the checks and balances that once kept a lid on government overreach. Today we are at the mercy of unilateral decisions made as if in a dictatorship, no matter how preposterous the decisions are.

To think that the people will stand by passively if this continues is nearsighted, but that is another problem with government. I do not predict things are going to end well given the current course government has set.

That is the big picture and it is bleak.

Now I am going to relate a local story that once again shows how our government is inept, unwieldy, or both in its decision making, even on the local level.



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As often happens when dealing with the government, you start out thinking that you do not have to deal with it. The case I am referring to is a simple case where a community I manage decided to redo the streetscape for their community. I found the city code on line, or so I thought, and I gave it to the landscaper. The plan was to redo the entire irrigation system and replace what was there with different trees and shrubs. It was a pretty straightforward proposition. Initially, the city stated that no permit would be required, but, it turned out the original plans were not on file so, after the contracts were signed, the city stepped in to tell us that the plans were not up to the new code and would have to be approved for a variance or altered. The city would not approve the variance so the plans had to be altered to add 10 more trees, the spacing being now 30 ft. where once it was 40 ft.

The code I pulled up on line, from 1997, called for 40 ft. spacing between trees. That code was altered in 2011 to require 30 ft. spacing between trees. I should not have to spell this out, but, after 10 years of drought, with no end to the drought in sight, the city planners decided it was a good idea to require Homeowner Associations and other entities with streetscapes to increase the required number of trees. Did anyone at the time think that maybe this was not the smartest approach to saving water? Then, though the community in question had a streetscape with 40 ft. spacing, simply because there was no plan on file, the city required the association in 2014 to plant 10 more trees ... this after three more years of drought ... ultimately imposing more water use. This is government at its absolute dumbest decision making level.

I do not want to leave out the hypocrisy that is also palpable in our government.

I am sure, if you are paying attention, you realize that government hypocrisy runs right along with its ineptitude.

While our city planners are burdening private citizens with greater requirements for plantings, they are replacing or converting much of the city streetscapes to sculptures. While I agree with the premise because it saves money both in maintenance and water: why is it that only the city can do it while the citizens are held to a different standard?

So, both locally and nationally, we are dealing with a government that is out of touch with those that are the pillars supporting it. Eventually those pillars will fall and the government will collapse of its own excesses.

That is a fatalistic view, but history always comes back to haunt those who do not learn from it.

Nero is fiddling still ... I hear him in Detroit! ●

Opinions expressed in 'Commentary' are not necessarily the view of CAI, 'Community Interests' magazine or Staff. Comments are encouraged.

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CATHARINE "KATE" LINDSAY IS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT WESTCHESTER MANOR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Vendor Impact

by Catharine "Kate" Lindsay

It's early Thursday morning. Mary calls – panicked, frustrated and plain old 'pissed off.'

Construction is being done on her building. She had no idea it was going to happen and has a million questions. What's going to be done about the landscaping, will the same paint color be used and should she call the satellite company to have her dish reinstalled?

Two weeks earlier the board signed the construction contract, but thus far the management company hadn't received a start date from the vendor. In the meantime we were going ahead with our checklist - we'd scheduled a walk through with the landscapers to discuss aging shrubs, made plans to touch up the stucco, check outlets and faucets and inspect the carports. The project plan also called for sending a letter to the homeowners explaining the scope of

work and giving them a rough timetable of the entire process.

... Except the construction company showed up on site and work began before the management company had received a start date ... Before the shrubs were removed. Before the outlets and faucets were repaired. And most importantly, before communications were sent to the residents and owners.

This would be why Mary woke up to scaffolding outside her window, the sound of wood panels being ripped off the entryway and no clue about what was happening.

The contractor apologized. It was an oversight. In truth, the work they performed was excellent and frankly, because they were on site, *they* had to deal with the myriad of questions and concerns that erupted after they showed up unexpectedly and began tearing off the wood siding.

After the lights were re-hung and the debris hauled away, the board got an earful from almost everyone who lived in those buildings. The residents weren't unhappy that the work was being done but the lack of information was frustrating.

There've been moments when a vendor sits in the board meeting squirming under the frustrated gaze of the directors and I believe they have no idea "what the deal is." They took care of the issue – sure it wasn't done the way everyone would have preferred to have it handled, but it was handled; so why all the aggravation?

I believe our vendors want to see our community succeed. They don't submit a bid in order to do a half-way job. But their lack of understanding of community dynamics often leads to that kind of board meeting and that level of aggravation.

And as we gathered for our board meeting I knew one of those moments was about to occur.

Next item on the agenda – landscaping concerns. The landscaping representative was

Snow Ball
2014 CAI Nevada Awards Gala

It's Nomination Time!
The month of August is all about nominations for the upcoming Snow Ball Gala.

This year the Gala Committee is excited to announce a new nominating process, which includes self-nominations and notifications. However, please feel free to continue to nominate managers, board members and associations that you feel have gone above and beyond in their categories and contributions to the community and CAI!

For more information on the new nominations processes and categories, please visit www.cainvgala.com, which goes live August 1st. Nominations will begin August 15th and run through September 15th.

listening to the board complain one more time about weeds. He was patient, trying to determine what the core problem was.

He knew that three weeks before, high winds kept his team from working on their scheduled day so they planned to pull weeds and trim shrubs the next time out. Except that, the next week they didn't have time to pull all the weeds or trim all the shrubs because they were clearing debris from the wind storm. So they planned to catch up the week before the board meeting. Only there had been rain so they planned to come out just as soon as the weather cleared, even if it meant being there on a Saturday.

He knew it.

The board, the management company and the homeowners didn't. Each time the landscapers received a request to remove the weeds they replied that it would be taken care of the next time out and they thoroughly intended to do just that. And now it's a month since 'Jim the Homeowner' called the management company about the weeds.

Every morning Jim leaves for work and there are the weeds. Every night he comes home and there are the weeds. He becomes more and more annoyed. Jim tells his neighbors he's called but no one is doing anything. The board shows Jim the e-mail from the

landscapers saying it'll be taken care of, but it doesn't make him happy. The landscaping crew eventually gets there ready to do battle with the weeds. And when the HOA budget meeting comes around, Jim will be front and center demanding to know why we're paying for landscaping when they can't be bothered to pull a twelve-inch dandelion.

Once a contract is signed, a vendor no longer just represents his or her own company. They've become a partner with the HOA board in maintaining and enhancing the community. Part of that relationship is timely, effective communications so that homeowners can be adequately prepared for changes or can have their expectations properly established. Communication is key. If you hear the words "it's really important that you let us know" during any project conversation, remember, it's really important.

When a vendor does a horrible job, they aren't surprised when a contract isn't renewed. But what vendors need to understand is that, no matter how well they perform the actual work, they may no longer be asked to bid or could even find their services terminated because they don't consider communication and timely performance as important as matching paint schemes or edging the flowerbeds. ●

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The annual NV Childhood Candlelighters "Race For Our Kids" to help families and children battling childhood cancer is coming soon and Management companies, business partners, homeowners, friends, family...YOU! *All money raised stays in Nevada to help local kids and their families!*

Want to join the team? It's easy! Here's how:

1. Simply go to the CAI-Nevada homepage and click on **Outreach Committee**.
2. Click anywhere on the page that opens to be brought to the sign-in page.

OR

If you can't join the team but still want to help out with a donation, simply go to the same page and click on "**General Team Donation**"



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SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, September 13, 2014 @ 7:30am

Exploration Park at Mountain's Edge
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Join the
CAI Team!



KATHY PERKINS,
ICPS, CPS IS A CRIME
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Considerations Regarding Community Entrance Gates

A Message from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

by Kathy Perkins, ICPS, CPS

1. **Un-manned gated entrances limit some vehicle traffic, but not all.** It is difficult to prevent all "follow-ins" and it is impossible to ensure that entrance codes are not given out in a way that creates risk. Too many individuals / service providers have access codes. Pedestrian traffic is not deterred by an entrance gate as walking in when the gate is opened is very easy. Also, pedestrian access gates, if present, need to be secured at all times.
2. **A manned entrance gate allows for more control as to the vehicles entering due to the security person making a visual and verbal contact with those entering.** Maintaining a log of those entering by name and vehicle license info is helpful but all companies have a process for personnel assigned entrance gates. Know what process



is in place for your community if applicable. Some communities have dated passes or passes that indicate the reason the service provider is inside and what address they are there for.

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3. Manned entrance gate personnel only have awareness of what takes place at the entrance gate. They are not neighborhood eyes and ears. And, distractions can occur and busy times can get hectic. Do your part to help make their job easier when expecting guests.

4. All neighborhoods have multiple entry points. Undesirable people will hop a wall or fence, find pathways or other weak points with the neighborhood perimeter with which to take advantage of. Any entrance gate, manned or not, is not a deterrent to a determined individual – they are simply an obstacle to overcome.

5. Residents may develop a false sense of security if they assume entrance gates will keep out undesirables. Residents typically take fewer safety or home security precautions because they feel “protected” by the gate.

6. Residents are often inclined to pay less attention to activity in the neighborhood because they feel that if someone is inside the neighborhood they must have been let in or are supposed to be there. Residents are usually less observant and less inclined to pay attention to people and vehicles when they have a false sense of security.

.....
Neighbors working with neighbors will help to create a sense of community and oversight. Crime can happen anywhere, but there is prevention behavior that can make a difference.
.....

7. Criminals commit crimes where they feel undetected, unobserved and at no or low risk for being reported to law enforcement. An entrance gate makes no difference to most criminals and does not serve as a deterrent as much as residents might think.

8. Criminals are deterred by effective home security practices, observant neighbors, and the fear of being arrested. Effective home and neighborhood security has more to do with awareness, participation, and consistent safety practices. Neighbors working with neighbors will help to create a sense of community and oversight. Crime can happen anywhere, but there is prevention behavior that can make a difference. Always observe and report! ●



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DONNA TOUSSAINT,
DCAL IS VICE-PRESIDENT
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CHAPTER

You Just Can't Make this Stuff Up

by Donna Toussaint, DCAL

One of our homeowners was fined for not paying her assessments.

She was an original homeowner and always paid her assessments on time. She just couldn't understand why she had a lien on her home. She explained to the board that she, personally, went to the management office and dropped off her payments. She said the management company was near her hair salon and that was why she dropped off her assessment ... so she would not have to pay for postage.

Our manager explained to the homeowner that it was almost nine months since we had received a payment.

She said that is just impossible!

So I asked her, "Where exactly have you been dropping off your assessment checks?"

Her answer made the problem very clear.

We had changed management companies nine months ago and she was still dropping off her checks to the previous management company. She said she knew we had changed management companies, but thought it didn't matter which company she gave her checks to. ●



Save the Date!

CA Day is Coming!

Friday, October 24, 2014 at the Gold Coast Casino

EVENT SCHEDULE

ALL NEW CE Class: 1:00PM - 4:00PM
Tradeshow: 4:00PM - 6:30PM

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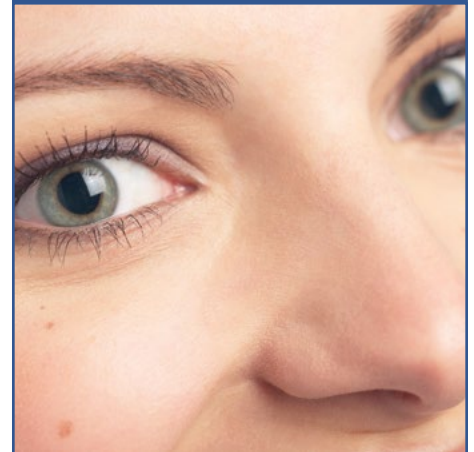
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