

NEPENTHE NEWS

*A monthly publication of the Nepenthe Association
1131 Commons Drive, Sacramento, CA 95825*

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www.nepenthehoa.com

Nepenthe Annual Election Board of Directors, CC&R Changes & More On Ballot

The annual election for the Nepenthe Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday, May 24th 6:30 PM at the Nepenthe Clubhouse. Ballots will be sent out to residents in the latter part of April. It is the privilege and duty of each Nepenthe resident to participate in this process by casting their vote. Ballots must be received via mail at the Clubhouse by Sunday May 23rd, 2010, or in person at the Clubhouse by Monday, May 24th, no later than 6:30 PM.

There are two Director seats up for election this year. Joan Trotta's term is up, and she cannot run this year per Association term limits. Judy Semerjian's term is also up, though she has been nominated for a 2nd term. Semerjian and Elizabeth Tafoya have received nominations from the Nominating Committee. Residents will have an opportunity to meet the candidates at Candidates Night, which will be held Monday, April 26th at from 4:30 to 6 PM, prior to the monthly Board of Directors Meeting at the Nepenthe Clubhouse.

This year's ballot will also include the approval of the annual minutes and approval of IRS 70-604 (The purpose of IRS 70-604 is to allow a homeowners association to avoid taxation on its excess membership income by either refunding it to members, or carrying over the excess to the following tax year). Additionally, the ballot will include the following proposed amendment to the CC&R's, to which you will have the opportunity to cast an "Approve" or "Disapprove" vote:

The CC&Rs, at Article II, Section 2.03(a), will limit the percentage of homes which may be rented at any given time to 12% or 71 homes. The provision will provide for grandfathering of all homes until sold, and waiver of the limitation in the event of a Homeowner's hardship.

Additional information regarding this proposed CC&R change will be included in your ballot materials, and there will also be information regarding state-mandated changes that bring the Bylaws in line with the state-mandated ballot mailing process (the Association has already been following this law – this simply brings the Bylaws in line with state law).

Please remember that your vote is critical to the success of the election process at Nepenthe. 25% (148) of the 590 Nepenthe homeowners must vote for the election to be valid. Failure to achieve the 25% number would result in costly re-mailings to the community. Please be sure to exercise your right and cast your vote in this year's election.

Mortensson Announce Board Resignation

To the Nepenthe Homeowners

On March 29, 2010, I submitted my resignation from the Nepenthe Board of Directors.

When I started volunteering on the Finance Committee in 2006, I was semi-retired. I had the time to devote to that committee and then, since 2007, to the full Board itself.

I am now employed in a full time position in HR at a health care system, a job that is extremely satisfying to me. My role there has been expanding to the point where I no longer believe I have the time to devote to Nepenthe as I once had. The role of a board member simply requires more time than I am able to give.

I want to thank you, Nepenthe Homeowners, for the support you have shown in my three years on the board. During those three years we started and finished the painting and siding project – a very expensive project, but worth it! Just look at our units now.

We developed our relationship with Merit, selected Rob, solved some your issues and encouraged and developed committees. We listened. I received many comments about the fact that we allowed the dog park folks to put a proposal together instead of rejecting the idea out of hand. Good ideas to some are poor ideas to others. And vice versa.

The job of the board is to listen with courtesy and to consider ideas. Then to apply not one's personal preferences, but to put on the fiduciary hat and determine whatever the suggest is – determine if it is a good investment or direction for the overall association.

In my opinion, the two toughest issues I had to deal with still remain for this board.

1. Reserves – I still believe that owners confuse the Reserve Study with the Budget. The reserve study is an estimate of long range costs – planned activity and contingency planning. It is not a budget.
2. Homeowner involvement – We are not finding enough owners for committees and to allow choices in the elections for the board. Truly, we need more homeowners to step up and invest in the Nepenthe future – through Board or committee work. Contact Rob at the office if you have interest.

We have a fabulous community. It was my honor to help set the direction for Nepenthe.

Thanks!

Marcie Mortensson

mm95825@yahoo.com

Email Communication Update

Early last year, the Nepenthe Association rolled out email communication to the community. This communication tool has proven to be very valuable to the residents that have subscribed to the system. Currently, over half of the residents at Nepenthe receive email communications, including the newsletter, Board meeting reminders, and safety updates.

Recently, the platform for sending out these blasts was changed. The change enabled a direct link to the homeowner database, which should streamline the process for properly maintaining your email address information, as well as providing us with a more consistent and dependable IP address (this is the “code” that enables your computer to recognize that the email is from Nepenthe). As a result of this change, we have been advised of the following:

- A few email addresses in the system are incorrect. The Nepenthe staff does receive system alerts on these, and we are following up with homeowners as we receive them. Please contact the Nepenthe staff if you are concerned that you are not receiving email bulletins. For example, bulletins regarding the March 22nd Board meeting were sent out on Friday, March 19th and Sunday, March 21st. If you are signed up for email bulletins but did not received these emails, you may want to contact the staff.
- The Nepenthe email may be winding up in your “spam” or “junk” folder. This is usually an easy fix – simply find the email in the folder and re-assign it as a recognized sender. You may also need to contact your internet provider if the problem persists. The Nepenthe staff has also been gathering information from homeowners as these issues arise, so you may wish to contact Sue or Janay if you continue to have an issue, as they may be able to tell you how another Nepenthe resident with the same provider as you solved their problem (AOL, Yahoo and SBC Global seem to be the three with the highest percentage of issues).
- It may take two clicks to open an attachment now, where in the past it only took one click. This seems to depend on your operating system, as we have been told by different homeowners that it is a one or two-click operation. Also, we have had some homeowners that needed to update their Adobe Acrobat Reader, which can be done free of charge by clicking on the Adobe Acrobat link that is sent within the text of the email.

If you are not currently subscribed to this free email communication service, please contact the Nepenthe staff (929-8380 or nepenthe@meritpm.com), and you will be added immediately.

Siding & Painting Project Almost Complete

As reported at the March 22nd Board of Directors Meeting, the siding and painting project has almost reached completion. All that remains is the painting of a couple of buildings, the placement of the final rain gutters, and the punchlist and door painting for the final homes in the project. A financial recap of the project should be completed by next month.

Please remember to keep dirt and groundcover off the siding. We have already run into occasions where homeowners have placed dirt right up to the level of the siding. This will cause premature deterioration of the siding, and the homeowner can be held accountable for repair/replacement costs in these instances. You should maintain at least a 4 inch clearance between the soil and the siding at all times.

Irrigation & Landscape Update

In 2009, the Nepenthe Association directed water conservation efforts along Howe and University Avenues. High-flow sprinkler heads were either replaced with low-flow heads or they were capped completely, and battery-operated timers were installed to help manage water flow. The results were encouraging, and the efforts to better manage the irrigation water continue in 2010.

Over the past couple of months, Fernandez Landscaping has been working to replace more high-flow heads with low-flow heads. And within the next 4-6 weeks, work should begin to fully automate the irrigation water supply, beginning in Zone 1 (American River Drive, Colby & Adelphi Court, and Commons Swarthmore Drive homes northeast of the Commons/Swarthmore intersection). This work will include the installation of a two-wire system that will utilize moisture sensor technology. This will allow for shorter water runs, and will even eliminate a water run if the sensors are wet (for example, the sprinklers won't come on if it is raining). Once Zone 1 is complete, other Zones should see this technology added.

Please remember that the City of Sacramento's "summer" water restrictions are now in effect. The highlights:

Individual Residences

- No watering between 10 AM and 6 PM.
- Odd addresses are allowed to water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.
- Even addresses are allowed to water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.
- No watering is allowed on Monday.
- You must utilize a shut-off nozzle on your hose if you are washing your car, and the same odd/even rules apply to car washing.

Nepenthe Common Area

- No watering between 10 AM and 6 PM. The exception to this will be when water conservation changes are being made in an area after 10 AM and the system may need to be tested.
- Because many of Nepenthe's common area valves service both even and odd addresses, Nepenthe cannot conform to the even/odd watering mandate by address. Instead, watering will be implemented by zone. Zones 1, 3 & 4 will be watered on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Zones 5 & 6 will be watered on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. Due to mowing schedules, Zone 2 will be watered on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. The only exception to this schedule would be due to water conservation system testing, as noted above. *(Please reference the enclosed zone map to see how this impacts your area.)*
- Nepenthe Association is not watering on Monday. As noted above, we may briefly turn a valve on to test an area where irrigation changes have just been made.

As Nepenthe residents, you can assist in these efforts. Please contact the Clubhouse (929-8380 or nepenthe@meritpm.com, or the MERIT hotline at 888-596-4984 if the Clubhouse is closed) to report any irrigation issues such as excessive watering, broken heads, sprinklers pointing in the wrong direction, etc.

Pools to Open April 25th Weekend Clubhouse Hours to Change

The pools and spas of Nepenthe will officially open on Saturday, April 24, weather permitting. This will include the heating of the Clubhouse lap pool, as well as the spa at the Dunbarton Cabana. The spa at the Clubhouse is already up and running. Please remember that the pool is open to residents and guests only (a maximum of four guests per present resident). **Do not allow children to be in the spa, as the extreme temperature can be hazardous to their health.** Please be sure to review all pool rules and regulations, which are posted at each of the pool locations.

To support the use of the pools, the Clubhouse hours will be switching over “summer” scheduling, which is noon to 4 PM. This will also be effective April 24th,

Address Plaques Being...Addressed

Over the past few months, many of the new address plaques have fallen off the buildings. The sign company is currently working on a solution for this problem, which will likely involve securing the signs with pins or screws. The Nepenthe Association apologizes for any inconvenience that this may have caused.

Financials Update

The Nepenthe Association Consolidated Financial Statement, dated February 28, 2010, included the following information:

- Cash Balance of \$1,008,457. This was a decrease of \$140,363 since January, primarily a result of \$199,918 paid out for work related to the siding and painting project.
- Assessment cash received exceeded budgeted amount, due to some homeowners paying special assessment off early (some via real estate transactions).
- Operating budget is \$8,321 over budget, due primarily to lump-sum payment for roof and gutter cleaning. This number will level out as contributions to operating for roof/gutter cleaning catch up with the payment.
- There are currently eight delinquent homeowners, which constitutes 1.4% of the 590 Nepenthe homeowners. The delinquent amount of \$48,745 equals 1.7% of the regular annual assessment.

Grounds Committee Shifts Meeting Date

Please note that the Grounds Committee will be meeting on the second Thursday of each month, 4 PM at the Nepenthe Clubhouse unless otherwise stated. The committee had been meeting on the third Thursday of the month. This change goes into effect in April.

Patrol and Safety Update

There were a few calls to patrol in February regarding minor issues, but nothing that required intervention by the patrol company of police.

The tough economic times continue, and that means that the potential for criminal activity still looms large. Some things to remember, especially during this economic downturn:

- Keep your doors and windows closed and locked, especially when left unattended.
- Keep your garage and gates closed at all times.
- Do not leave anything of value exposed in your vehicle.
- Do not grant access into your home to strangers.
- Call the Sacramento Police should you encounter any illegal activity, and then notify management and/or Capital Patrol.

Please remain alert, and do everything in your power to minimize the chance of becoming a victim of crime. An ounce of prevention...

As instance of criminal or safety-related activities have occurred, our residents that have signed up for email blast were made aware of these occasions. Please contact us at the Clubhouse (929-8380 or nepenthe@meritpm.com) if you would like to be added to email blast, enabling you to receive these and other important updates.

Campus Commons Dog Walkers

Group Dog Walk. Saturday April 3, 10:00 am.

Meet at playground with your pup and join in on a group dog walk around Campus Commons.

Dog Walkers Annual Summer BBQ

When: Thursday, May 20th, 2010 ~6:00 pm
Where: Hartnell grass area (near 260 Hartnell)

Please bring a food dish to share with 10-12 people (salad, appetizer, side dish, dessert, drinks, etc.) and a chair on which to sit.

RSVP and let us know what dish you plan to bring; call Terry at (415) 990-8044 or Pam at 207-7546. Call today to sign up to bring your favorite dish before someone else beats you to it! Hot dogs, condiments, utensils, plates, and napkins will be provided.

Thank you to the many that have supported us with donations to purchase doggie bags as part of our community effort to keep Campus Commons beautiful.

Regarding the dog park survey, there is still time to share your opinion via completion of the Dog Park Survey. Please contact the Nepenthe staff if you would like to obtain a survey form.

Nepenthe Recognizes Sacramento Tree Foundation

Over the past year, the Sacramento Tree Foundation (working with SMUD) has been instrumental in the granting of 83 free trees to the Nepenthe Association. The STF has also spent countless hours on-site at Nepenthe, assisting in the proper choosing and placement of these trees. At the March 22nd Board of Directors Meeting, the Board resolved to donate \$250 to the Sacramento Tree Foundation on behalf of the Nepenthe Association.

Worth Repeating...

- It is the responsibility of any homeowner who leases or rents their home to make sure that the **Resident Information form** is filled out with the relevant details associated with the lessee.

This form can be obtained from the office. This is important information, as it shows who has privileges here for pool use, etc. It also has the information to contact the lessee if there are issues.

- Please remember that all **garden waste** is picked up by the landscapers on Monday morning. Please do not leave garden waste out at other times unless coordinating with the landscaper, as this is a violation of the Community Rules.
- Please remember that all **alleys are considered fire lanes** and parking is not allowed. Parking in the alley can block neighbors from getting in and out of their garages, and could prevent emergency vehicles access when needed. Parking in the alley could result in the vehicle being towed without notice. Please review this with your guests to ensure that they are properly parked when they visit. This includes contractors that may be providing service at your property. Please make sure that they are parked in a manner that is not obtrusive to your neighbors.
- Have you checked out the **Nepenthe Homeowners Association website**? Please visit www.nepenthehoa.com for all the latest information about your community. We are working on improving the website to create a one stop shop for Nepenthe residents. Currently you will find information about what is needed for various architectural submittals. You will find information about the associations committees and their responsibilities as well as the contact information for the chair of each committee in case you have any questions or concerns. You can access the association legal documents and information about the parking rules.
- The City of Sacramento has added a couple of points of contact in an effort to improve communications with residents:
“Dial 311”: 311 provides a single point of contact for City of Sacramento government services. They handle requests from stray animals to utility services, and much more. 311 customer service representatives are at your service 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays. You may also email them at 311@cityofsacramento.org.
Sacramento City Police: The Sacramento City Police website (www.sacpd.org) now allows you to file police reports on line. Just look for the link about halfway down the left side of their web page. Nepenthe Association encourages residents to file reports with the police whenever they witness or are themselves the victims of criminal activity. It is important for the police to be completely aware of all illegal activity that is taking place in and around our neighborhood.

Worth Repeating (continued)...

- **Monthly billing statements** are due the 1st day of each month and late on the 15th. Preferred method of payments are automatic withdraw or U.S. Mail. Checks dropped off at the Nepenthe Clubhouse must be received no later than the last day of the month in order to be assured of being applied to your next month's payment without possible late fees.
- **Nepenthe Book Club** - The Nepenthe Book Club meets monthly on the third Tuesday at 1:30 PM at the Nepenthe Clubhouse. New members are always welcome. Scheduled readings include:
 - 4/20 – Interesting Women (Member's Choice)
 - 5/18 – The Rising Tide, Book 1 of Trilogy, by Jeff Shaara
 - 6/15 – The Piano Teacher, by Janice Y. K. Lee
 - (No meetings in July or August)
 - 9/21 – Poetry (Member's Choice, share your favorites)
 - 10/19 – have a little faith, by Mitch Albom
 - 11/16 – TBA
 - 12/21 – TBA (Holiday Tea)
- **Campus Commons / Nepenthe Men's Group** - The Men's Group of Campus Commons and Nepenthe gets together every Friday from noon to 4 PM at the **Campus Commons Clubhouse** for an afternoon of Bridge, Gin Rummy, Poker, Dominoes, and more. Please contact Dave at (916) 568-7478 for further information.

April Events Calendar

Friday, April 2 – Clubhouse Closes at 1 PM for Good Friday (Gym/Spa open until 10 PM)

Saturday, April 3 – Architectural Review Meeting – 9:30 AM in the Clubhouse.

Sunday, April 4 – Clubhouse Closed for Easter (Gym/Spa open 7 AM to 10 PM)

Monday, April 5 – Tai Chi Class – 3 PM to 4 PM in the Clubhouse.

Tuesday, April 6 – Private Party – 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM in the Cabana.

Thursday, April 8 – Grounds Committee Meeting – 4 PM in the Clubhouse

Friday, April 9 – Private Party – 11:30 AM to 2 PM in the Clubhouse.

Monday, April 12 - Tai Chi Class – 3 PM to 4 PM in the Clubhouse.

Saturday, April 17 – Private Party – 2:30 to 7 PM in the Clubhouse.

Sunday, April 18 – Private Party – 1 PM to 5 PM in the Clubhouse.

Monday, April 19 – Private Party – 9 AM to 3 PM in the Cabana.

Monday, April 19 - Tai Chi Class – 3 PM to 4 PM in the Clubhouse.

Monday, April 19 – Finance Committee Meeting – 6:45 PM in the Clubhouse.

Tuesday, April 20 – Nepenthe Book Club Meeting – 1:30 PM in the Clubhouse.

Wednesday, April 21 – Private Party – 10:30 AM to 3 PM in the Clubhouse.

Saturday, April 24 – Pools open (weather permitting)

Monday, April 26 – Tai Chi Class – 3 PM to 4 PM in the Clubhouse.

Monday, April 26 – Candidates Night – 4:30 to 6 PM in the Clubhouse.

Monday, April 26 – Board of Directors Meeting – 6:30 PM in the Clubhouse.

At Your Service

Nepenthe Manager: Rob Hessing, Merit Property Management – 929-8380 or rhessing@meritpm.com
(You can bypass the recorded message by clicking the # sign on your phone's keypad.)

Assistants to the Manager: Janay Cash and Sue Frazee, Merit Property Management – 929-8380 or nepenthe@meritpm.com

Nepenthe Maintenance: Roger Work, Merit Property Management – 929-8380

Merit Regional Office: 608-3068

Merit Emergency Hotline: (888) 596-4984 - Toll free 24 hours

Emergency leaks: Dan Poe – 275-0082 or Mark Edelman – 825-3156. 24 hours.

Merit Billing: 1-800-428-5588 press extension 5 at any time to bypass the message

Capital Patrol Service: 447-8500

Nepenthe Insurance: John O. Bronson Co.

- General questions – Rob McVicar – 480-4138
- Flood insurance questions - Irene Sabourin - 480-4146
- Property and liability insurance requests – Rocio Leon – 480-4134

Board Members

- Randy Friedman - 646-4112
- Bill Newbill - 929-8380
- Judy Semerjian – 927-8689
- Joan Trotta - 929-8458

Committee Chairs:

- Architectural Review - David Digardi
- Elections - Yvonne Del Biaggio
- Finance – Nancy Arndorfer
- Grounds – Ivan Gennis
- Insurance - Richard Coombs
- Nominating – Joan Trotta

Nepenthe website - nepenthehoa.com