

Smoke Signals

Volume 2 Number 2

DRUM POINT VILLAGE WEST

April 2003



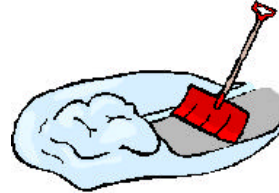
Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree

There is much debate concerning the origin of the "Yellow Ribbon" being used as a symbol of welcome for people who have been away from home under adverse conditions. Some urban legends claim that the custom began during the Civil War. However, Civil War historians do not have enough contemporary evidence (letters, photographs, etc.) to support this claim. It is very likely that this belief was born out of the 1949 John Wayne movie "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon". In the movie and its title song, the woman wears a yellow ribbon around her neck as she awaits the return of her husband from the Civil War. As so often happens, life has a way of imitating art, and so, it is popularly believed that the "Yellow Ribbon" symbol started during the Civil War.

In more recent history, the custom of the yellow ribbon is traced to the song "Tie a Yellow Ribbon" written in 1972 by Irwin Levine and L. Russel Brown. In 1975 Tony Orlando and Dawn recorded a well-known version of this song.

In 1979, Penelope Laingen, wife of U.S. Charge d'Affaires in Tehran, Iran tied a yellow ribbon on a tree outside of her home in Bethesda, Maryland to signify her hopes and prayers that her husband and the other 51 people taken hostage by the Iranians would be returned home quickly and safely. There quickly followed an "epidemic" of yellow ribbons all across the nation, many of which remained on display for the entire 444 days that our citizens were held hostage in Iran.

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Harsh Winter Blamed for Tax Increases

Last year the Township of Brick spent only \$42,000 for its entire snow cleanup. In contrast, the cost for cleaning up after the big President's Day storm was recently quoted at \$639,000, and the total cleanup costs for the winter was around \$840,000.

Ultimately, the taxpayers of Brick have to pay the bill. Mayor Scarpelli was recently quoted as saying, "Certainly none of us enjoy raising taxes, but there is no alternative short of massive cutbacks in the high level of services and programs offered by the community."

Prior to the big President's Day storm, the municipal tax increase for Brick Township was to have been 1.7¢ per \$100 of valuation. Now that the total costs for snow removal have been tallied, the proposed tax increase has more than doubled to

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Next Board Meeting

All members of the Association are invited to attend. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be:

**May 7, 2003 at 8:00pm
The Mill Brook Clubhouse
Saw Mill Road
Brick, NJ**

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CONGRATULATIONS

During the past few months, we've had a few new arrivals at Drum Point Village West. The Association would like to acknowledge and congratulate:

- John & Alynn Alexander on the purchase of their new home. The Alexanders moved in during early March.
- Judith Grady on the purchase of her new home. She purchased her town home in late March.
- Leah Buonpane on the purchase of her new home. She moved in during late March.

...Tie a Yellow Ribbon...continued from page 1

During the first Gulf War, we again saw yellow ribbons across the nation as we once again hoped and prayed for the safe return of our military volunteers.

Now we find ourselves in the sad position of yet again having our citizens abroad under adverse conditions and in harms way. Many folks are tying yellow ribbons to their trees, wearing yellow ribbons and attaching them to their vehicles.

It should be noted that the ribbon does not stand for agreement or disagreement with the war, but only to show our support of the brave people who are fighting it.

While our By-laws prohibit placing or attaching items to the Common Elements on the Property, the Trustees feel that this situation should be an exception to the rule. Therefore each homeowner is welcomed to tie a single yellow ribbon to a tree outside the front of their unit. Of course, the choice to do so is entirely up to you. We all hope that they will not be needed for long, and that our troops and POW's will come home very soon.

...Tax Increases...continued from page 1

3.8¢ per \$100. For a town home with an assessed value of \$129,000, the municipal tax will increase by approximately \$49.00. This is in addition to the proposed school tax increase of approximately \$92.00 for that same town home. Although Ocean County has long touted a reduction in it's budget, Brick residents are not likely to see any savings due to the complicated (and one might say, ridiculously unfair) State tax code. And, the effects of the Library, Health and Fire District tax increases are not yet widely known. But, it appears that the average homeowner in Drum Point Village West will be paying between \$150 and \$250 more in taxes this year.

DCA to Require Carbon Monoxide Detectors

You may have heard that recent state legislation now requires Carbon Monoxide detectors in all residential buildings in New Jersey. As best we can tell, this new law impacts DPVW only by requiring detectors to be installed when a unit is sold to a new owner. It appears that the Association is not responsible for enforcement of this law and that it would be up to the state, county or local government to make sure detectors are installed at the appropriate time.

Although the law may not require installation until you sell your home, you might want to consider doing it anyway. Carbon Monoxide is reported to be the leading cause of death by poisoning in the United States. It is an odorless, colorless gas that is a by-product of burning fossil fuels – including natural gas. Even when an individual is slowly being poisoned by Carbon Monoxide, they often do not realize it is happening. That's because the brain's ability to reason is one of the first effects of Carbon Monoxide poisoning. To protect yourself from this often preventable poisoning, you should have your fireplace, furnace, water heater and flues checked every year, and install a Carbon Monoxide Detector. --

Garbage Can/Recycle Bin Rule Passes

At the February meeting of the Board of Trustees, the new Garbage Can/Recycle Bin rule was unanimously passed.

After reading the comments sent to the Board by various homeowners, and hearing comments from several more homeowners in attendance at that meeting, it was found that there was almost no objection from the homeowners to the adoption of the rule. Accordingly the following new rule is now in effect:

Garbage Cans & Recycle Bins

Garbage cans and recycle bins are to be stored in the garage of the unit except on the night before and day of collection. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the following:

- On the first instance of failure to comply the owner and, where applicable, the tenant, will receive a reminder letter informing them of their non-compliance and be given 10 days in which to comply.
- On the second instance of failure to comply, the owner will be assessed an immediate fine of \$5. No additional notice of non-compliance shall be required to be given.
- On the third instance of failure to comply, the owner will be assessed an immediate fine of \$10. No additional notice of non-compliance shall be required to be given.
- On the fourth and all subsequent instances of failure to comply, the owner will be assessed an immediate fine of \$15. No additional notice of non-compliance shall be required to be given. Each additional day in which the violation persists shall be considered a separate violation for which the owner will be assessed a fine of \$15.

Suggestion: *On a particularly windy day this winter, garbage cans were blown all over the place and several homeowners were unable to identify their garbage cans. It took a couple of weeks to straighten out the mix-ups. If we all write our addresses on our garbage cans, then we can avoid confusion in the future. A piece of duct tape with the street address in indelible ink works quite well.*

Be a Considerate Neighbor



**Please Clean up
After Your Pet!**

Master Deed Restrictions Explained

Almost all community associations have “CC&Rs” (Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions) in their Master Deeds and By-Laws. The purpose of these restrictions is to establish a standard of visual harmony and quality of living that is acceptable to the majority of the homeowners, and to protect property values. Each of us agreed to abide by these restrictions when we bought our homes and became members of the Association. Since we all own the Common Property as a group, it is imperative that we all work together to maintain these standards and thus the value of our collective property.

Unfortunately, as with any large group of people, it is not possible to accommodate all of the various desires and tastes among us. Some of our tastes tend toward “Real Simple”, while others may prefer Victorian, others Southwestern, etc. – you get the picture.

The Covenants Committee (in some associations it is known as the Architectural Review Committee) is charged with the enforcement of these restrictions for the benefit of the entire community. Sometime in early May, the Covenants Committee will be conducting an inspection of the Limited Common Elements and the Common Elements of the property. The committee will then review their observations with the Board of Trustees and where violations are found, the unit owners and tenants will be sent a letter requesting correction of the violation(s).

The following is a list of the types of things that the Covenants Committee will be looking for during the inspections. Please note that this information is provided as a guideline and that the Master Deed will remain the authoritative document:

- A single decoration on the front door of our homes is permitted.
- For obvious reasons we are not allowed to attach anything to the buildings, especially the vinyl siding. Since we all own the buildings, we all do not want holes punched into our property. The unit owner is required to pay for repairs caused by attaching items to the building exteriors. It is unacceptable to hang clothes outside.
- No commercial vehicles are to be stored or parked on the property. There are several homeowners who work for companies that give them a company vehicle to use in their work. We have allowed these vehicles to be parked on the property for an hour or two so that the homeowner may come home for short meal or rest breaks. However, overnight parking of these vehicles is prohibited.
- No items are to be placed on the Common Elements without the express approval of the Board. Please store your leftover plywood, 2x4's, empty planters, containers and other such items in your garages, attics or crawlspaces. The only general exception to this rule is for firewood stored outside of the Miller Units – Mignatti units do not have wood-burning fireplaces. To avoid problems with termites and other wood-boring vermin, firewood should not be stored in, or near, the buildings. If you have a wood-burning fireplace, and you want to store firewood on the property, please ask the Association for an appropriate storage location for your unit. Doing so may save you the trouble of moving a very heavy pile of wood later on.
- No loudspeakers or any other kind of speakers may be

installed outside of the units. If you use a radio or portable television, please keep the volume to a minimum so as not to disturb your neighbors.

- For Sale signs are to be displayed in the window(s) of units that are for sale. No signs may be placed in or on the Limited Common Elements or Common Elements. Temporary (one-day) signage exceptions may, upon specific request to the Association, be granted for garage sales, house sales, and open houses.
- Exterior antennas are not permitted. Per FCC rules, satellite dishes are permitted. However, prior to installing a satellite dish, the unit owner MUST submit a written request to the Association. Upon receipt of such a request, the Association will immediately provide the unit owner with a letter outlining certain parameters such as the size and location of the dish, as well as the responsibility for damage caused by the installation or removal of a dish.
- Patios may have tables, chairs and other furniture customarily used on patios. We may also have a barbecue grill. Up to two other items are permitted on the patio as long as these items are not more than 4 feet in height or width – some unit owners have chimineas on their patios, for example. To be in conformance with HUD guidelines, the Association will permit certain types of play equipment to be placed ON THE PATIOS for use by the small children of the unit owner or tenant – slides and playhouses, for example.
- On the Miller units, a bench is permitted on the front walkway if it is no longer than 6 feet and no higher than 4 feet. For those who do not have a bench, we have allowed substitutions of an item that takes up about the same amount of space as a bench. The size of the Mignatti unit walkways is not conducive for benches or chairs.
- The total number of flower pots/planters allowed at any one unit is eight. This includes empty planters. The total height of the planter AND ITS CONTENTS may not exceed five feet. As you may observe, most homeowners store their empty pots within the unit once the contents have died. Empty pots containing dead plants may be considered unsightly by other homeowners. Flowerpots/planters may be placed on front walkways, rear patios and driveways, but NOT on the Common Elements.
- Flower or vegetable gardens are allowed in specific planting areas adjacent to the rear of the units as long as the plants do not exceed 5 feet in height. If you want to create a small garden, please contact the Association prior to planting, so that we may advise you of the approved location for your unit. Sorry, no cornfields!!!
- Items may not be placed on the Common Elements especially when they interfere with landscaping maintenance.
- For obvious safety reasons, extra propane tanks are not to be stored on the patios or other areas outside of the unit. Most importantly, propane tanks should never be stored inside of a unit.
- Recycle bins, garbage cans, mops, brooms, etc. are not decorative in nature, so please store these types of items somewhere in your unit. Storing of these items on the patios, driveways or any other Limited Common Element or Common Element will be considered a violation of the restrictions.

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...Restrictions Explained...continued from page 3

- Doors may not be painted in any color other than the approved color for your unit. If you need paint color codes, please ask.
- Storm doors must be of a style and color that is approved for your unit. However, prior to installing a storm door, the unit owner MUST submit a written request to the Association. Upon receipt of such a request, the Association will immediately provide the unit owner with a letter outlining the guidelines and restrictions for storm door installations.
- Draperies, blinds, curtains or other window coverings reasonably acceptable to the Association must be installed by each Unit Owner on all windows of the Unit – except for the “skylight-like” windows above foyers and family rooms. Sorry, but Power Ranger sheets are not acceptable curtains!!

From time to time the Association has allowed a limited number of exceptions to the restrictions – on a unit-by-unit basis. For example, you may see an occasional birdbath or bird feeder in the Common Elements. In most of these cases, the homeowner requested permission from the Association and they were given approval for them. It is the intent of the Covenants Committee to enforce the Restrictions in the Master Deed and By-laws that have been adopted by the owners of this community. At the same time, we do not wish to deprive homeowners of their right to express their individuality to some degree. This is why these exceptions have been allowed. If you would like to place something outside your unit that does not conform to the CC&Rs, please ask the Association. When no other violations exist for your unit, you may be pleasantly surprised to find that your requests may be approved.

If you receive a violations letter from the Board following the May inspections and you do not agree that you are in violation, then by all means call or email us and we will work on reaching an agreement with you. Most of the time the problem is a misinterpretation of the restrictions by either the Covenants Committee or the homeowner. It is usually very easy to reach an amicable conclusion.

We want everyone to enjoy living at Drum Point Village West and strive to make it a visually pleasant place.

Sprinkler Heads Below!!!

As the weather turns warmer, it's time to think of green lawns again. Many homeowners may not realize it, but there is a sprinkler head at the corner of almost every driveway in the condominium. We point this out to remind everyone not to place their recycle bins on the lawns, but instead we ask that they be placed on the driveway surface or on the street itself. Placing recycle bins on the lawn means, in most cases, putting it right on top of a sprinkler head. In rare cases this can damage the heads. But more importantly, doing so blocks the water from getting onto the lawns. The result is wasted water and lawns that may become more stressed, especially in very hot weather. Also, please do not park your vehicle on the lawn, even for just a few minutes. The irrigation pipes are just below the surface, and are easily damaged. --

Deficit Assessment Passed

At the Trustee portion of the April 4, 2003 homeowners meeting, the Trustees approved a special assessment for the snow removal deficit in the amount of \$22,800 (or \$240 per unit) as of March 31, 2003. To lessen the impact of this assessment, the \$240 was booked as of 3/31/03 but, at the discretion of each homeowner, may be paid over six equal monthly installments of \$40 each, beginning May 1, 2003. Accordingly, the following is the minimum payment schedule for the current Fiscal Year:

April 1, 2003	\$135.00	Oct. 1, 2003	\$175.00
May 1, 2003	\$175.00	Nov. 1, 2003	\$135.00
June 1, 2003	\$175.00	Dec. 1, 2003	\$135.00
July 1, 2003	\$175.00	Jan. 1, 2004	\$135.00
Aug. 1, 2003	\$175.00	Feb. 1, 2004	\$135.00
Sept. 1, 2003	\$175.00	March 1, 2004	\$135.00

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE A STORY OR TOPIC TO THIS NEWSLETTER?

We welcome your topic suggestions or complete articles on any topic that is relevant to condominium life or specifically to Drum Point Village West.

Please mail or e-mail your stories or suggestions to us by May 15, 2003.

Annual Meeting Results

The Annual Homeowner's Meeting for Fiscal Year 2003 was held on April 4, 2003. Approximately 30 homeowners attended this meeting in person and another 30 or so homeowners were represented by proxy. At the meeting:

- Jim Priolo was present representing the Township of Brick and provided a brief report on the status of the Miller Drainage Project
- Bob Martin and Dolores Tappert were re-elected as Trustees for two-year terms
- Neither of the proposals received the requisite 66% votes in favor. As a result, neither of the proposals were approved by the homeowners. It should be noted that less than 66% of the eligible units were represented at the meeting, making the voting on proposals moot.
- A committee of 4 non-trustee homeowners was established to look into the problems associated with pets and pet waste and to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees selected George Morano Landscape Designs and Lawn Maintenance as our Landscaping contractor for the next two years
- The Board of Trustees selected Ed Feurey as the Association's General Counsel
- The Board of Trustees approved a \$240.00 per unit special deficit assessment to cover the unexpected costs of snow removal for the fiscal year just ended – see article above