

Friends of the Village Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 5

Laguna Woods Village

December 2009

Topics for January 7 Meeting

How secure are we?

PCM Security Manager Gene Hart will discuss security services within the Village.

Election of officers for 2010

Meet the candidates and cast your vote. The current slate is:

- President: Lynn Hamm
- Vice President: Lynne Dvorack
- Second Vice President (Programs):
Barbara Marsh (Acting); Shari Horne
- Secretary: Joan Miliman
- Treasurer: Patrick Murphy
- Membership: Myra Norman, Elinor Chaum

Plan to attend and show your support for these members who will be leading Friends of the Village next year.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES	
February 4	6:30 p.m. – Clubhouse 5
March 4	6:30 p.m. – Clubhouse 5
April 1 (no fooling!)	6:30 p.m. – Clubhouse 5

Notes from the President

What are our responsibilities as residents of the Village?

by Barbara Marsh

So we are now living in a shared community, which means we have bought into a new experience of living and sharing with our neighbors and friends. What are our responsibilities and how have they changed from living in just a regular neighborhood?

Let's start with what we get out of this kind of community. Our lawns and yards are kept up and watered, the outside of our houses are painted, roofed and rebuilt (if necessary). If we live in United, the inside of our manor is maintained, including our appliances. We have swimming pools (with lifeguards), tennis courts,

golf courses (with a pro), clubhouses (with supervisors), fitness centers (with physical therapists), bowling greens, arts and crafts rooms, a photography lab, a woodworking shop, cable TV, transportation, etc., available to us. All these facilities are kept clean and maintained for our use. We have a copy shop where we can get photocopies made at a reasonable price. We have a security force that helps us in many, many ways. We have a service department that helps us with breakdowns of things in our manors and yards.

Now, what is our responsibility? Certain rules have been put into effect to effectively and efficiently maintain all this. We own these facilities, so I would think we would all want to take care of them and not abuse them. If someone is abusing them, it costs us all more money to try to keep them up.

One of the rules is, if you alter anything in your manor or yard, it becomes your responsibility to maintain it. If you buy a manor that has been altered in any way, you assume the responsibility of what has been altered. The reason for this is that the expense and upkeep is more and people who live around you are going to have to assume the extra expense of what has been done to your manor or yard, and that would not be fair.

There are certain rules to help us share and get along with each other. For example: there are certain rules to use the swimming pools, the tennis courts, the golf courses, etc. If everyone learns these rules and abides by them, then we are being sensitive to other people around us. If we resent these rules and do not abide by them, sometimes we have to be reminded of what the rules are so that we are not infringing on other people's rights.

There are certain rules for using our clubhouses. This means we have the use for a certain amount of hours. If we go over those hours, it costs us more money or it causes a hardship on the next group that is coming in. We are to see that the clubhouse is left neat and that we have not altered it in any way.

We are all concerned about the people who come through our gates. This means our responsibility is to see that our passes are used properly and that we accompany our guests to any of our facilities. It means that we can only have guests staying with us no more than sixty days in a year. It also means, if we are involved with a club, we must be ever-vigilant about

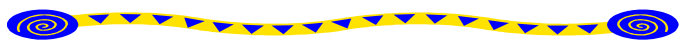
outside residents being members of our club. It means seeing that outside guests pay the extra fee. This helps pay for the upkeep of our facilities.

Fortunately, most of us abide by the rules and are thoughtful of our neighbors and friends. Our fitness centers are a good example of places where you see people cooperatively sharing and taking care of the equipment. Other examples of good neighbors are the pet owners you see “scooping” up as they walk their dogs.

If you see areas that need to be improved then it is your responsibility to work in a reasonable and cooperative way to try to bring the change that is necessary but to realize what this change may bring. It means if you see a sprinkler is leaking or trash is being left outside of bins call Property services (597-4600) and let them know. It means going to our committees and registering our concerns, but also listening carefully to what the committee tells us and working constructively with them to improve a situation.

It is also our responsibility to vote. We need good directors on our boards. That means finding out about how our community works and who should be elected to our boards and helping in any way we can to aid in keeping our boards working efficiently and effectively. Remember, these people are all volunteers who are giving their time. This also means trying to find respectful and courteous ways to help our management company work to do their best.

I guess the bottom line is to learn what the rules are and try to abide by them and be thoughtful of our neighbors and friends. A good attitude helps not only you to be happier but also your neighbor and the people you work with in our community. Didn't we all come here to live out our lives in a happy and peaceful way? I would hope we would all take that on as our responsibility.



NEWS FLASH

WE WILL NOT LOSE ANY CHANNELS ON OUR CABLE TV. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO MANY, DISCOVERY, TLC AND ANIMAL PLANET WILL STAY.



The \$40.00 Grass Mower; How Can That Be?

Editors Note: Resident Connie Grundke recently asked mutual directors why we are paying \$40 per hour to have our lawn mowed. The following article by Kathryn Freshley explains why the line item for labor for the mowing cycle reflects a cost higher than the employee's actual hourly rate, and she arrives at an estimated hourly rate for the lawn mowers. From hiring my own gardeners on occasion, I have found the current going

rate for independent gardeners is \$20 per hour. See how this compares to Ms. Freshley's example below.

How is the Hourly Charge Determined?

by Kathryn Freshley, Treasurer, Third Mutual

Service industry accounting practices are quite different from manufacturing industry accounting practices, with which most individuals are familiar, particularly when it comes to establishing hourly rates for work being performed. The hourly rate that is charged to the client must recover all of the costs incurred by the organization providing that service. This is without consideration of any profit that the organization may wish to earn.

The first step is to determine the billable hours available for each direct labor employee (that is established in the agreement with the union, if there is one). There are 2,080 hours in a year when an individual works the standard legal 8 hours per day and neglecting the fraction of a week: 40 hours per week X 52 weeks = 2,080 hours. Let's recognize that every employee has some time off for vacation (average 15 days), illness (8 days), holidays (10 days) and will take some breaks, travel time, time to record work activities, and disability (average 1.3 hours per day). Using these assumptions, then the billable hours for each hourly employee become: billable hours = 2,080-120-64-80-346 = 1,470 or 70 percent effectiveness. Therefore, if an individual is paid \$15.00 per hour, the basic billable rate without any other expenses is $\$15.00/0.70 = \21.43 per hour. This becomes the bare labor cost even though the employee is being paid at the rate of \$15.00 per hour.

To the bare labor, we must now apply the cost of FICA, Workers' Compensation, medical insurance and pension contributions. The total of these costs is 33 percent of the billable labor cost or $\$21.43$ per hour X 33% = \$7.07 per hour. At this point, the total billable compensation cost for the organization is $\$21.43 + 7.07 = \28.50 for the individual who is receiving \$15.00 per hour.

Additionally, there are costs associated with the employee that must be recovered, such as incidental materials and supplies, uniforms and shoes, repair and maintenance of equipment used by the employee and other outside services to support the employee's activities. These costs often range between \$2.00 and \$3.00 per hour. Let's assume the average of \$2.50 per hour. At this point, our employee billable hourly rate is \$31.00 ($\$28.50 + \2.50) and we still have not applied any overhead for accounting services, MIS, warehouse services, maintenance administration and vehicle and building maintenance. These overhead costs again range between \$2.00 and \$3.00 per hour. Let's assume the average of \$2.50 per hour.

Therefore, our total billable rate for our employee is \$33.50 per hour ($\$31.00 + \2.50), which is only absorbing the costs that can be directly associated with the activities of the employee and does not reflect any profit to the service provider.

Please note that if this service firm was one of my clients, I would be suggesting an hourly billing rate of at least \$75.00 to \$90.00 per hour because there are still

additional costs associated with sales and marketing, financial and administrative management expenses such as management salaries and related employment costs, depreciation, banking and financing costs, property and income taxes (assuming a profitable business) and finally profit. This is why your appliance repairman charges \$125.00 per hour for the first hour and \$75.00 for each additional hour.

Now let's look at our \$40.00 per hour mower employee and determine how much he is making. If we assume the same buildup of costs, then the mower employee is making \$17.91 per hour, which in Orange County is not "out of line" for a union employee operating a riding lawn mower.

Thank you to the following sponsors who have made the FOV website and newsletter possible! Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

**Bud and Eleanor Brant
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Ben Stables
Virginia Templeton**

To help with the continued costs of these publications, please send your donation to Nancy O'Dell, FOV Treasurer, at 3528-C Monte Hermoso, Laguna Woods and mark it "FOV Publications."

Holday Humbug

by Jan Marshall www.authorjanmarshall.com

I am simply pooped from partying in and out of my home. I have attended or hosted so many events and was force-fed so much food that I am fatter than a bloated blimp.

True, some of the bashes were bombastic.

At the **B party**, there were the Baklavas who were sweet, Bill Blasé who came alone but didn't care and Boobs Burkewitz who arrived with a couple.

The A party had the Aesops (she wore Sable), Al and Alice Alonzo from Albany and they sold Apples, and Absent-Minded Albert who forgot his pants. All in all the A's were amiable

Others were hell. Now I owe so many reciprocal invites, which will then lead to more invitations till infinity, that I had to find a way to end the cycle. I have created sure-to-discourage themes guaranteeing nobody will return a second time. From my recent experiences, you too can learn how to make sure to be left alone, if that is your wish.

THE SURPRISE PARTY

Hide 10 people in a closet when the evening is warm and sticky. Have everyone whisper for an hour, drinks in hand. When the honoree arrives, everyone will be so zonked they will ignore him. He'll leave thinking he is in the wrong house. Who cares?

THE BUFFET

Place small throw pillows on the floor for guests to sit on so they must balance their plates on their laps or someone else's. Serve cracked crab with drippy hollandaise sauce, corn on the cob and huge Margaritas. Make an obscene remark which will embarrass the most sophisticated guest who will then spit and splatter everyone. Do not worry about being asked to *their* home.

DO IT BY PHONE; KEEP THE DESSERT FOR YOURSELF

"Hi Mona, can you believe it is already a year since we celebrated my mother-in-law's root canal surgery? Oh, you can't make it. So sorry sweetie." (Ha!)

Unless it is a small dinner party (count on me for the *whine*), or we can meet in a restaurant. Leave me alone and I sure won't bother you. My guarantee - if the phone don't ring, you'll know it's me.

Happy Holidays or *Whatever!*

In Honor of Cheryl Walker "A Toy for Every Child" Will Continue This Year.

You may leave your donation of a new toy in the barrel of the *Globe* Newspaper Office in the Community Center through the end of the year.

Toys will be distributed through "TOYS FOR TOTS" and to families registered with So. County Outreach.

"A Toy for Every Child" was introduced by Cheryl, and this drive is a way to remember and honor a great lady.

Enrich your life; bring JOY to a child.

Chairpersons: Peggy Blizzard and Dottie Fredericks.

Information and pick-up: 455-0216

BRAVO!

To one of our very own

Journalist/photographer Norm Salzberg writes the fact-filled "Joy of Computing" column for the *Globe* to assist us with our erstwhile machines. He organized and ran the PC Workshop for five years while teaching Internet courses as well. His popular column, "Nooks and Crannies," in this *very* newsletter, promotes the undiscovered charms in our village, supported by his artful photography. Always helpful and charming, be clear ladies; he *is* married!

To acknowledge accomplishments and small kindnesses by a resident, submit the information to lvvfriends@gmail.com

Reminders –

- To receive your FOV newsletter by e-mail, please contact: maryrobertson@comline.com.
- Send Letters to the Editor to lvvfriends@gmail.com or 5372-3H Punta Alta, Laguna Woods.
- Send ideas for items of interest to be included in the FOV website to pjwcrafs@comline.com.
- **BRAVO!** To acknowledge special kindnesses by a resident that have made someone happy, submit information to lvvfriends@gmail.com.

Nooks and Crannies

by Norm Salzberg

The term “nooks and crannies” is used to define remote or obscure places. Actually, the wonderful Village locales described in my past Newsletter columns are easily accessible, although some are secluded or just not known by all residents. Another Village venue is the Aliso Creek Park, an area that runs along Aliso Creek from Paseo de Valencia, north of Gate 4, to the Village border, south of Gate 3. Aliso Creek winds its way down from the Laguna foothills and empties into the ocean at Aliso Beach.

Our Village’s Aliso Creek Park is a well maintained, tree-lined landscape with a walkway paralleling Aliso Creek. It is a popular spot for readers and walkers (with and without friends, spouses, grandchildren, or dogs). Residents come to commune with nature, including a family of white herons, miniature rapids, and assorted flora. Parking is available in Cul-de-Sac 60 off Avenida Majorca. Benches are conveniently spaced along the walk. Restrooms and a water fountain are located midway.

Aliso is Spanish for the California Sycamore, a water-seeking tree found along rivers and wetlands. The highlight of our park is a mature sycamore; marked by a historic plaque estimating its age at well over 300 years.

As a nature preserve, Aliso Creek Park has a few rules; most important is to prevent children and pets from entering the creek. And, as elsewhere, early morning walkers are requested to speak softly, so as not to disturb nearby residences.

Letters to the Editor

lvvfriends@gmail.com or

Mail to FOV at 5372-3H Punta Alta, Laguna Woods

It’s wonderful to sit in Tucson where I am vacationing and get LWV news online via the latest FOV newsletter.

Each article was well written, clear and gave me answers to questions I had about the proposed club rule changes and possible effect(s), the Emeritus program, the follow-up on assessments by the treasurers, and on and on.

Thanks to all who contributed. I’m looking forward to FOV’s continued success in 2010.

... Kathleen Rubin

Village to Pilot Closed Captioning for Board Meetings

At its December 1 meeting, GRF voted to run a three-month closed-captioned pilot of the Village’s televised board meetings. GRF will want to hear from residents on the value of the closed captions system to determine if they should make it permanent. No word yet on when the pilot will start.

Membership Information

Annual dues are \$15 single and \$20 double and may be mailed to Myra Norman, 3312 San Amadeo, Unit #C. Note: The FOV fiscal year starts June 1; therefore, membership renewals are not due yet.

Beginning with the Summer Semester 2010, non-resident Emeritus students will be charged \$10 for parking and then \$20 for regular sessions.

Friends of the Village
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