

Holbrook Heights

Community Association

Newsletter

July, 1998

Summer Pool Hours

Seven Days A Week

10-11am

Adult laps (no lifeguard)

11am-5pm

General Swim (breaks at :50)

5-8pm

Family Swim (breaks at :50)

8-9pm

Adult Laps (no lifeguard)

Pool Fees

Pool fees for the 1998 season are the same as for 1997:

Season pool use fee for Holbrook Heights homeowners who have paid their annual Association dues (or renters, if arrangements are made with the homeowner): \$60

Daily pool use fee for each Holbrook homeowner family member: \$1.50

Outside Memberships:

Families who are not Holbrook homeowners can use the pool on a seasonal basis for a fee of \$185, or a daily fee of \$3 for each family member.

Holbrook Pool's the Happening Spot in the Neighborhood - Everyone's Welcome!

- Remember to put your empty soda cans in the container marked for recycling. You'll see them come back in the form of fun gear like floating basketballs, purchased with the recycling proceeds.

- For your safety, remember, no roller blades or skateboards inside the gate

- Thinking ahead to this fall or next year, moms & dads? Would you like to organize a pool or park activity for the kids? Or maybe work a shift at the Snack Shack (paid)? Talk to Marilyn or Susan to start the ball rolling.

- Thanks, everyone, for your patience on Saturday, July 18. The pool couldn't open till the afternoon because we had to repair damage by vandals. If you know who may have been responsible for the vandalism, please call Management Unlimited at (925) 706-0123.

- Do you have suggestions for making the pool and park a better place for you and your kids? Tell Marilyn or Susan, or write your thoughts down and drop them off in the suggestion box at the Snack Shack.

Holbrook Neighborhood Preservation Evolves

Within the past year the Holbrook Heights Community Association Neighborhood Preservation Committee got our community to a state where all major City of Concord residential neighborhood code violations were addressed.

These City codes define minimum standards to

(continued on page 2)

This edition, without the CPA report, is being sent to renters in Holbrook Heights.

which everyone is expected to adhere for the health and safety of all, not to mention maintaining property values.

Unfortunately, some violations are cropping up again in Holbrook. There's talk of reinstating the committee's effort. Meanwhile, each resident can file complaints directly with the City of Concord. Here's how:

Step 1.

Make sure your complaint is a code violation.

Check your files for the Summary of Ordinances & Codes that the Association mailed twice to every homeowner and resident last year. If you'd like another copy call Management Unlimited at (925) 706-0123. Even better, visit the front desk of Concord City Hall to look up your situation in the complete Concord Municipal Code. Either way, be sure to note the code section that the situation violates. A common confusing example: a weedy yard is not a code violation until the weeds are taller than three inches AND are dry, thereby causing a fire hazard.

Step 2.

Prepare your complaint. Documentation is everything.

Clearly describe what's wrong. Cover what, when, where and details. What: state the problem in terms of the code it violates, and describe this particular case. When: how long has it gone on? When did it start? How often does it happen? At what time of day does it happen? Where: exactly where is it on the property? East side? In front of the fence on the west side of the driveway? If it's an inoperable

vehicle, include make, model, color, and the expiration date on the registration sticker. Take photos, if possible. Photos document situations, and documentation is everything.

Step 3.

Submit your complaint.

The City of Concord does not reveal who makes complaints. You should remind them to keep this confidentiality in your case.

In writing is by far the best way to submit your complaint. Send it first class or registered mail as a clear, detailed letter to Rick Crawford, City of Concord Neighborhood Preservation Program, 1950 Parkside Drive, Concord, CA 94519. Phone calls can be forgotten by busy staff, or what was said can be remembered differently by the two participants. Documentation is everything.

If you do file a complaint by phone, prepare what you're going to say in advance. Note the date you called, time of day, who you talked to, and everything they said to you. Keep good notes of phone calls. Documentation is everything.

Step 4.

Follow up.

72 hours after your letter should have been received, call Rick Crawford, head of the program, at (925) 671-3454 to ask what they've done about your complaint. Within 72 hours, they're supposed to have inspected to see if your complaint is valid, and if it is, have their first letter of notice of a violation out to the property owner. Take complete notes of this conversation. Note the

date, time of day, who you talked to, what they said. If they've done nothing, call them back once a day. Don't let them put your complaint aside.

If they've sent out the first letter, and the situation still exists after 14 days, call them back and ask for a status report. After 10 days, they should have reinspected the problem situation and sent a second letter. When you call on day 14, if they haven't sent the second letter, ask them what they plan to do about it. Call every day to verify the status. Take notes. Don't let them ignore you or put you off.

Ten days after sending the second letter they are supposed to inspect again to make sure the violation has been cleared up. Call them on day 14. Again, take notes. If the situation still exists, you have to stay on them to come in and clean up the mess, or otherwise start solving the problem.

Common complaints

Weeds - Weeds must be high and dry; in other words, they must present a fire hazard. Write to or call the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District directly: 2010 Geary Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94553; (925) 930-5500.

Vehicles parked on the street for longer than three days without moving - Write to or call the Concord Police Dept. directly: 1350 Galindo Street, Concord, CA 94520; (925) 671-3220.

Inoperable vehicles on private property - Write to or call Rick Crawford, City of Concord Neighborhood Preservation Department, 1950 Parkside Drive, Concord, CA 94519. (925) 671-3454.

Lending Library of Homeowner Association Information

The Holbrook Heights Community Association can lend our members copies of the following booklets produced by the Community Associations Institute. If you'd like to borrow one or more, call Management Unlimited at (925) 706-0123 to make arrangements.

- Association Management
- Guide to Annual Meetings, Special Meetings & Elections
- A Complete Guide to Reserve Funding & Reserve Investment Strategies
- Accounting Guide for Common Interest Realty Associations
- Community Association Insurance
- Selecting the Landscape Maintenance Contractor
- Choosing a Management Company
- Enhancing Outdoor Spaces for Community Associations
- Drafting Association Rules
- Communications for Community Associations
- The Role of the Association President
- The Role of the Association Secretary
- Revitalizing Apathetic Communities
- Conflicts of Interest
- Bid Specifications and Contract Negotiations
- Personnel Law for Community Associations
- Renters: A Guide for Nonresident Owners and Associations

Board Meetings

The Association Board of Directors meets on the fourth Thursdays of the month at 7:30pm in the trailer near the pool. Each meeting starts with a homeowners' forum, and all Holbrook Heights residents are welcome to attend. Please call Management Unlimited in advance (925) 706-0123 if you plan to come, because the trailer is small and we may need to find a larger room.

Upcoming Meetings

August 28

September 24

October 22

November:

Town Hall meeting, and adjusted Board meeting date to accommodate Thanksgiving

CNA's Email Agendas

Since late January, the Concord Neighborhood Alliance has emailed interested members the agendas for City Council, Council committees, and various commissions and boards. Getting an early heads up on issues affecting their neighborhoods has enabled members to get involved during preliminary discussions, exactly when their input is most effective.

The Alliance lobbied the City last December to make its agendas available online but without success. In late June, the CNA took the initiative with a press release offering the public free e-mail agenda subscriptions.

This inspired the Contra Costa Times to write an article about city Web sites which described Concord as reluctant to provide online public meeting information because of a lack of public interest and constraints on staff time. However, three days after the article appeared, the City had put its Council agenda on the Internet.

The Alliance is urging the City to take over its email subscription service and to follow the examples of other cities by putting staff reports, the Municipal Code, the General Plan and other useful information on its Internet site. Concord continues to study the idea. In the meantime, you can subscribe to the agendas by sending an e-mail message to Alliance@value.net and typing "subscribe agendas" followed by your first and last name.

The CNA's goal in providing this service is to encourage greater public participation in the affairs of our city through advance notice of its meetings and the issues under consideration. At present, citizen involvement is remarkably low considering that Concord has a population of 114,000. In fact, many meetings occur without a single member of the public in attendance. The CNA hopes that email agendas will foster a healthy civic environment in which citizens are routinely and directly involved in their own governance.

The CNA does issue a disclaimer. The Alliance's subscription agendas are not official or approved documents. Because their email subscriptions depend on volunteers and often require transcription, occasional glitches may occur.

Holbrook Heights

Community Association

P.O. Box 485

Concord, CA 94522-0484

The quality of life in Holbrook Heights depends on us.

If timely and accurate agendas are critical to your interests, please rely on the City of Concord and not the Alliance. For a hard copy of the official/approved versions, contact City Hall at (925) 671-3000 or <cityinfo@ci.concord.ca.us>.

That said, we believe the majority of Concord residents will find CNA email subscriptions a convenient way to keep in touch with civic affairs. Please don't hesitate to contact the CNA with your comments and suggestions.

Concord Neighborhood Alliance
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Concord, CA 94522
(925) 689-7881
Alliance@value.net

Crime Prevention: Neighborhood Awareness Test

1. *Right at this moment, can you name the colors and types of cars driven by your nearby neighbors?*

One effective deterrent to crime is to alert your neighbors or the police about cars in your area whose drivers could be engaged in suspicious or criminal activity. Make a point to familiarize yourself with the cars and other vehicles in your neighborhood. You could do this in a few quick minutes while pulling out of your driveway for work, picking up the mail or emptying the garbage.

2. *Do you know the rhythms of your neighborhood? Do you know who works days and who works nights? Who's in school? When neighbors are away or on vacation? Would you miss your older neighbor's regular activities?*

You don't have to be nosy, just observant. The idea is not to know exactly what everyone else is doing every moment, but to get a feel for the flow of activity. Then you'll be aware when something feels out of sync, like a person entering a home in the middle of the day when everyone in that household is normally at work.

Or you might check on a neighbor if you notice a sudden change in routine, or uncollected mail.

3. *How many children live on your block? Any home businesses? Any retirees?*

Having a sense of the ages and activities of people on your block can make it easier to identify strangers. Get to know the neighborhood children, even if it's just to say hello from time to time. Retirees and parents staying home with children can keep an eye on houses while others are away. People who work at home might also provide additional eyes on the street.

- from *Safe Homes, Safe Neighborhoods*; Mann &

Blakeman, 1993