

THE SUN MESA TOA NEWSLETTER JUNE 2010

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held on May 20 as scheduled. The meeting was not well supported by Association Members for reasons that I do not understand, although we did manage to get a quorum of 33 with proxies. Even more disappointing was the lack of any qualified nominees or volunteers for the Board of Directors. Bob Dyster volunteered to continue as Secretary and Chairman of the ACC even though he had expressed a desire to bow out in 2010 after completion of his third stint as a board member. There is a lot of work to do, especially in the summer, on our aging property. Please consider getting involved and making a contribution of your time to SMTOA!

Going forward the Board of Directors for 2010/2011 is only slightly changed from the previous year:

President, Phil Book
Vice President, Frank Chuba
Treasurer, Al Schwecke
Secretary and ACC Chairman, Bob Dyster
Board Members at Large, Bob Haubrich and Dale Meesey

Shrub Removal and Replacement Plans

Last Wednesday, our Landscape Contractor, Property Manager, and several members of the Board of Directors surveyed the property to identify the dead and dying shrubs that need to be removed. Some will not be replaced if the amount of clutter in individual lots appears excessive. In my view, individual lots will never be very appealing unless owners are able and willing to administer some TLC, such as occasional watering to supplement the drip irrigation system and perhaps pulling a stray weed or blade of grass.

The planned shrub work is unlikely to correct all of our accumulated problems. We may miss some problems that currently exist and are likely to have additional problems develop due to inadequate fertilization, insufficient water, "winterkill", insect infestation, or whatever. Think of the planned work as the initial phase of a continuing project.

Grass Irrigation

Irrigation restrictions continue in 2010. Our assigned watering days are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, from midnight to 9 AM and from 6 PM to midnight. As has

previously been discussed, we have a lot of grass that we are trying to maintain in a semi-arid environment. We need to apply about 1.5” of irrigation water per week, or 0.5” per day for each of the 3 assigned watering days, in accordance with the recommendation for the bluegrass type that we have. Note that 0.5” per day is roughly equivalent to **40,000 gallons per day** for the 120,000 to 130,000 square feet of grass that we are watering. At \$7.70 per thousand gallons, our expected cost is just over \$300 per watering day, or almost \$1000 per week. Even with that expenditure (some might say waste), our grass will nevertheless show signs of stress in hot, windy conditions such as we experienced in early June. The Donala water district has made it clear that water rates will increase about 10% each year, both to raise revenue and to “encourage” water conservation. Note that the withered and brownish appearance of our grass during hot, windy conditions is not anything new. The following assessment has been excerpted from Joe Pertl’s 2005 newsletter. Our options are even more limited than in 2005 due the District’s watering restrictions and much higher cost for water.

“Recently, I increased the watering schedule on our 8 timers. The budget allowance restricts the amount of time that we can water each day. I have learned over the years that you can never water enough to keep the grass looking decent unless there is support from Mother Nature in the form of moisture from the skies. As you know we have not had that necessary support. The grass is distressed in areas, but we can do just so much and then it becomes cost restrictive.”

Front Door Maintenance

I reminded the attendees at the recent annual meeting that the Sun Mesa Rules and Regulations state that each owner(s) is responsible for maintenance of the exterior finish of their front door (Paragraph 2a, page 18 under SMTOA Maintenance Guidelines, Owner Responsibility). In 2005, Joe developed the finish recipe given in the cited section: “The exterior stain color for the front door of each unit is **MinWax “Early American” #230**. The topcoat will be **MinWax Spar Urethane, Clear Satin finish**.” These products are readily available at your preferred paint supply store.

Wendell and Linda Hunemuller’s son recently sanded and re-finished their front door using these products – the result looks good to me. Give them a call at 481-8487 (Unit 230) if you would like to take a look. Their son is quoting a labor price around \$100 to sand and finish an owner’s door where the owner provides the stain and topcoat. Check with either of them for particulars and a firm quote, which might vary if an owner wants the door removed for sanding (that can produce unpleasant dust).

Remember that a good quality storm/security door will extend the finish life, especially if the door is exposed to sunlight for long periods of the day. Additionally, a good quality storm/security door enhances personal security and conserves energy. Many of the original owners had an attractive storm/security door installed by Liberty Home Products. Jim Rebeck has provided the following information based on an installation in 2004:

Liberty Home Products
3659 Austin Bluffs Pkwy
719 266 8524

Email Issues

Email can be an efficient and timely way to distribute important information to many Sun Mesa residents. That practice is widely advocated by legal advisors, property managers, and Colorado legislation governing how HOAs should operate. However, it seems that each time I attempt to send a timely message using our email list, a lot of it is undeliverable because the address I had was not valid or the recipient doesn't recognize the sender. If you (owner or renter) would like to receive potentially important Sun Mesa email from me or Kerry Cantrell, please ensure that I have your current address and you are set up to recognize the sender (pbook@earthlink.net or Kerry@zandrmgmt.com).

Ant Control

With the warmer weather, the black ants that we have in Sun Mesa are beginning to show up in various places. It's a good idea to get these pests under control when they first appear and before they get into your home. Several of us have learned that Ant-B-Gone powder, a product manufactured by Ortho, is a relatively inexpensive and effective product to control the ants when they are working in a your driveway or along edges of the concrete. The price is under \$8 for a 20-ounce tube that will last for several years. As with any pesticide or herbicide, read and follow manufacturer's directions before using.

Continuing Maintenance

The planned second phase of the gutter and downspout tune-up and repair project has been completed. Following completion of that project, the second phase of our 5-year unit painting cycle was initiated and recently completed. A final inspection on June 15 resulted in acceptance of the completed work.

Sun Mesa Rules and Regulations

For new owners, renters, and owners who have misplaced their copy of our Rules and Regulations, remember the Sun Mesa website at www.sunmesatownhomes.com as a source for this and other useful Sun Mesa information, including recent and previous newsletters. The Association is no longer distributing printed copies of the current 2006 pamphlet.

Vehicle Security

Personal and vehicle security within Sun Mesa has been very good for many years. However, as most of you are aware, we did have valuables taken from 3 vehicles early Easter morning this year (1 unlocked and 2 forced entries). Carelessness by the residents and vehicle owners was a major contributing factor. Best advice is to lock the vehicle, take valuables inside or place out of view, and park in areas lighted by garage lights (**which should be on**) or street lights if possible.

Z & R Property Management

As the property manager, Z & R implements the Board's decisions and passes architectural submissions on to the ACC. Any Association question or concern, including landscaping issues, should be forwarded to Z & R at (719) 594-0506, or by email. Any homeowner who has a problem, comment or suggestion is asked to submit a letter to Z & R for proper follow-up and Board review. The address for correspondence is 6015 Lehman Drive, Suite 205, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Emails can be sent to Kerry@zandrmgmt.com and faxes can be sent to (719) 594-0473.

If you witness a violation of the Declaration or the Rules and Regulations, please report it to Z & R by documenting what you see in writing, signing the letter and mailing it to Z&R Property Management. Faxes or emails are also perfectly acceptable. Anonymous complaints cannot be acted upon; please include your name and address in any complaints - it will not be divulged.

Phil Book
President