

Cypress Home Owners Association (CHOA)

April 2011 www.cypresshoa.org



Board Meetings

Clubhouse #2, 7:15pm
Thursday, April 28, 2011
Thursday, May 26, 2011
Homeowners' Forum follows the Board meeting. Agendas are posted four days in advance at both clubhouses and on the CHOA website.

Clubhouse Reservations

Amie Chick, 562-412-1082
(10am-7pm)
clubhouse@cypresshoa.org

For only \$20 (plus \$100 deposit), CHOA residents can rent one of two CHOA clubhouses for a birthday party or a baby shower or a church group meeting, and the like.

Clubhouse rental forms can be downloaded from CHOA's website: www.cypresshoa.com

Board of Directors

Betsy-Ann Toffler, President
betsyann@cypresshoa.org
John Russell, Vice President
john@cypresshoa.org
Judith Fischer, Treasurer
judith@cypresshoa.org
Don Moreau, Secretary
don@vypresshoa.org

Management Company

Accell Property Management
Property Manager: Yamy
Criblez, 949-581-4988, ext 275
949-581-9785 (fax)
Email: yamy@accellpm.com.

Power Washing Carports

Power washing of the carport structures & ground surfaces, and trash enclosures has been delayed, due to issues with the contractors and water supply. This project is expected to begin in May 2011.

Emergency Preparedness Committee

CHOA homeowner Robert Kaplinsky has been appointed chair of the new Emergency Preparedness Committee. Robert is organizing a team of CHOA residents to attend a series of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trainings and would like interested homeowners to join him.

CERT is a program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA that educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. The recent catastrophic events in Japan underscore the critical need for being prepared in emergencies and disasters. Please contact robert@cypresshoa.org if you are interested in serving on this committee and/or can attend the CERT programs.
www.citizencorps.gov/cert/

Termites and Painting

During the Homeowners' Forum at the March meeting, the subject of termites came up, specifically in relation to the repainting project. Arenas Painting has been replacing a great deal of wood that has dry rot or serious termite damage, but homeowners should be aware that termite eradication is their responsibility. (Homeowners approved a special assessment for termite tenting for the entire complex in 1995.) Some homeowners have been able to share the expense of tenting their building.

If you are aware that there is serious termite damage, in areas above and beyond the painters' contractual responsibility, talk with your fellow homeowners about the possibility of tenting your building **before** the painting begins. Then contact Yamy, yamy@accellpm.com, to notify the painters to delay until the tenting and termite fumigation is completed.

Carpport Numbering and Striping

Ben's Asphalt and Maintenance Co., Inc., was awarded the contract for the renumbering and striping of the carport spaces. Due to the difficulty in matching the number stencils to the old numbers and for a clean look, a black box will be painted over the current unit numbers prior to stenciling the new numbers. The "look" will be similar to the numbers at the alley entrances. Homeowners will need to move their vehicle(s) but will be notified several days in advance.

CHOA Committees Need YOU

CHOA committees are Finance, Emergency Preparedness, Community Services, Refuse Monitoring, and Violations. If you have expertise, time to serve, and a desire to become more involved with your community, please contact Yamy, yamy@accellpm.com.

Parking Spaces

Homeowners continue to report other vehicles parking in their assigned spaces and in visitor spaces. Please park **ONLY** in your assigned spaces. Residents are also parking their vehicles in the fire lanes and in "NO Parking" areas – these vehicles are subject to tow **without prior notice**, and license numbers will be reported to the Cypress Police Department.

Crime and Scam Alerts

Roberta O'Toole, property manager at Tanglewood North (TN), our neighboring HOA, sent a warning about two men representing themselves as agents of the water company. They claimed to have been hired to notify homeowners that the tree-trimming crew had hit a water line, and to check units that might be experiencing sand in the water.

These men carried a flyer that did not give specifics about the water company they represented or the HOA's name, they drove a car with out-of-state license plates, and they insisted that they must enter the homeowner's residence to run the water. The men indicated that the HOA should have already notified the homeowner of the problem and were very aggressive. Fortunately none of the TN homeowners fell for the scam. Please exercise caution whenever anyone tries to enter your home. Call 911 immediately.

Nixle, a new communications service, is being used by the Cypress Police Department to alert residents about crime trends, missing persons, traffic problems, and other community safety information. This service can be received through email, the web, or instantly via cell phone text message. However, residents need to register. For complete details, go to www.nixle.com.



How to Protect Your Bank Account

Checking account theft is now second only to credit card theft. How do thieves get your checking account information? There are several ways. They steal your outgoing mail, taking checks you've written, soak off the ink, and rewrite them. They steal your wallet and obtain information and credit cards that way. Fake ATM machines can be set up to record your account number and PIN. You could be hit by an inside job when a bank employee steals your account information.

But increasingly, these thieves are going online. Around 45 percent of adults with Internet access use the Web to bank or pay bills. Among those whose checking accounts had been raided, 70 percent were online finance users.

There are some things you can do to protect yourself from online fraud and scams. Never use a public computer or wireless "hot spot" for financial transactions. Be sure that your internet web browser has the security options set to "high". Use a credit card rather than a debit card when making online purchases.

Also, remember to monitor your bank account carefully and often. If you see a debit that you can't remember making, be sure to alert your bank. The sooner you report a problem, the better--after 60 days, the bank may be under no legal obligation to provide a refund.

Keep your virus software up-to-date and run frequent scans of your computer. Blocking pop-ups will prevent some malicious software from being installed on your computer without your knowledge. Also be suspicious of any emails purporting to come from your financial institution, especially if they ask for your account information or password. Contact your bank directly instead of responding to the email.

Treasurers Report

Judith Fischer, Treasurer

My sincere thanks to Brenan Cheung, CHOA Treasurer in 2009 and 2010, who has agreed to chair the Finance Committee and to work with me this year. Together, we will track CHOA income and expenses very closely.

As of February 24, 2011, CHOA's income statement showed a surplus of \$10,886. However, it is difficult to make any definitive statement about the 2011 budget based on only two month's income and expenditures. Certain one-time expenditures, such as pool permits and the attorney's retainer fee, occur early in the year. The auditor is working on the annual audit for 2010, and after it is approved by the Board, it will be mailed to each homeowner.

Although we continue to make some progress in collections, delinquent homeowners and unpaid assessments continue to hinder CHOA's ability to proceed with major projects and to build up our reserves. Here is a schedule of the actions regarding late assessment payments:

- ❖ 30 days late – reminder letter from management company
- ❖ 60 days late – pre-lien letter (\$85 irreversible charge)
- ❖ 90 days late – lien on property (\$125 irreversible charge)

If the assessment is still not paid, the homeowner's account will be sent to a collection agency resulting in more legal and collection fees.

Please make every effort to pay your monthly assessment. If you are struggling financially, please contact Yamy Criblez, Accell Property Management (949-581-4988, ext. 275, yamy@accellpm.com)