

CrossWinds

August, 2001

SEARCHING FOR A BETTER BALANCE

CROSSINGS
HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION
COMMUNITY
NEWSLETTER

Committee Meeting
Dates
can be seen on the
Crossings Web Site:
[AtHomeNet.com/
Crossings](http://AtHomeNet.com/Crossings)

On-Site Manager:
DEBBIE RAVAUX
(847) 634-0012
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(847) 806-6121

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is designed &
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provided by Crossings
Board of Directors

A & A Revision

Your board has been studying ways to make the approval process for A&A's simpler, less cumbersome, and, in some cases no longer necessary. The first result is to exempt "tasteful" decorations and/or other accessories added to or placed on an existing planted area under the control of the homeowner, and to act only if a complaint is made. Previously, any and every change made to the exterior required an A&A and board approval.

Now, all an owner need do is to send a note or email informing our management company that a hose reel, small figurine, new bush or similar has been added to your exterior and stating that you accept responsibility for its upkeep. Your acknowledgment from PSI will serve as evidence of notification. Periodically, management will publish a list of items added so that new owners will get an idea of specifically what is being added by other owners.

The board may need to negotiate "tasteful" but only if a complaint is received. Some may suggest that this approach puts the homeowner in a difficult position when one board may allow his decoration and some subsequent board disallow it. But owners who want lasting assurance,



can always file an A&A and have their decorations pre-approved.

Fines Revision

The Board has also reviewed the procedures relating to rules infractions. Previously, complaints against homeowners resulted in a hearing in front of the Hearing Committee, with the committee's findings presented to the Board. If the Board found the homeowner guilty, then our management company levied the appropriate fine from a pre-determined chart. If this is the first offense within a six-month period, no fine was levied. Second and subsequent infractions merit fines of progressively higher amounts.

Your board's goal is not to collect fines from neighbors, but, rather, to seek voluntary compliance with Crossings rules. The

Continued on page 2

BOARD BRIEFS

- ✓ The minutes of June 25 were approved as corrected.
- ✓ Financial statements and committee reports were reviewed and accepted.
- ✓ Recreation Committee requested volunteer help for the Flick and Float and Race Day programs to be held August 3 and 4.
- ✓ Discussion was held concerning the rule for construction of above ground decks. The Maintenance Committee will review the existing rules and recommend any changes for the next board meeting.
- ✓ The board reviewed documents provided by our attorney regarding the proposed merger of the two Crossings Associations.
- ✓ Summer maintenance continues as scheduled. Activities include the addition of top fence rails; staining; wood replacement and painting; and Chimney repair. Concrete repair and replacement; asphalt; seal coating of driveways and parking pads in Phase I, and weed and algae control for the pond have been completed. The tennis court fence needs repair due to vandalism.
- ✓ The Board agreed to offer homeowners the opportunity to have a slot mail box installed on the front of the garage to replace external front door mailboxes. This will be done at the homeowner's expense of \$75.00 if a minimum number of requests are made.

Note: Complete and official minutes, including all committee reports, will be posted on the web site and on the Bulletin Board following approval at next month's meeting.

BOARD ATTENDANCE for the meeting on July 23, 2001

PRESENT:

Bill Bennett
Barbara Blatz
Tony Catania
Lou Eisenberg
Astrid Hasley
Jen Mansfield
Mary Jo Reid
Gregory Tretyak
Nancy Wakeman

ABSENT:

Joe Plata
Noreen Travers

REPRESENTING PSI

Scott Johns
Debbie Ravoux

A BETTER BALANCE continued from page 1

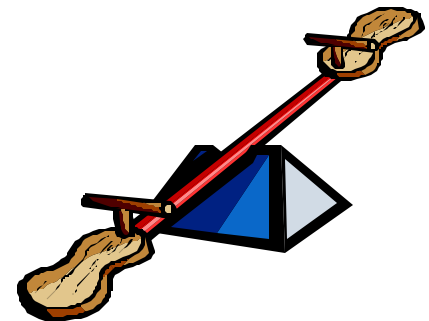
Board understands that sometimes an owner may have forgotten about a rule, or simply inadvertently committed an infraction and, therefore, the board wants to remove some of the bureaucracy associated with rules infractions.

On a unanimous vote, the board has approved, effective as you read this, sending a note to the homeowner for the first offense, which explains the infraction and the expectation of compliance. This friendly reminder will take the place of requiring homeowners to attend

a hearing for the first offense in all but serious cases. Owners cited again for the same offense within twenty-four months, would have to attend a hearing and be subject to immediate fines if found guilty.

Summary

Your board is aware of its responsibility to maintain the highest standards of living for the Crossings. However, we believe that fostering neighborliness is a big part of high standards. These two changes are intended to



make Crossings living a bit less bureaucratic while still stressing adherence to our owner-approved rules.

GARAGE MAILBOXES

Owners whose mailboxes are at their front door have an opportunity to replace them with a slot mailbox on the front of the garage. A container will be mounted inside the garage to catch the mail.

As a one-time accommodation, the Board has obtained a bid from a contractor to supply the slot mailbox, cut the required hole in the garage wall, install the mailbox and a plastic egg-crate "catcher" on the inside for \$75. Owners who are frequently out of town or just receive a lot of mail may want to consider this offer. In addition, by returning the signed form below with your check, you will have fulfilled the A&A requirement.

Note that by signing the form you will accept responsibility for the continued maintenance of the slot mailbox. The contractor requires at least 15 responses to give this price. If enough responses are not received, your check will be returned.



Name _____

Address _____

Enclosed is my check for \$75. Please call me to set up an ap-

ptment to have

the mail slot installed on my garage. I agree to assume responsibility for the mail slot and the hole in the garage.

Signed

Please return this form and your check by **August 27th to the dropbox at the clubhouse, in person to the PSI on-site manager at the clubhouse office or to PSI at 5999 New Wilke Road; Suite 108; Rolling Meadows, IL 60008**

POST MAILBOXES

The United States Post Office will not permit those with post mailboxes to move them to the garage. However, all of the post mailboxes are being replaced this year and by the time this *CrossWinds* is read, the replacement of all post mailboxes will be well underway.



PET REMINDER

Did you know cat and dog owners in Buffalo Grove are required to collar and annually license those pets and affix a tag to the pet's collar indicating that the pet is licensed? For cats and dogs 4 months of age or over, residents must obtain a license within ten days of acquiring the pet, or becoming a resident of the Village.



The cost of the tag is \$10 and no dog or cat will be licensed without proof that the animal is inoculated against rabies. The tags run the Village's fiscal year, which is April 30th of the present year to May 30th of the following year.

TO MERGE OR NOT TO MERGE

Last month the cover article in the *CrossWinds* explained that when the Crossings Association was originally created 27 years ago, it was done as two separate condominium associations. Those folks living north of Fremont are part of "Crossings Homeowners Association." Those living south of Fremont are part of "Crossings #2 Homeowners Association." Legally, we are two separate entities. And some problems might crop up if we continue to remain separate.

What should we do? Our attorney, Robert P. Nesbit, of Kovitz, Shrifrin & Waitzman, a pre-eminent condo law firm, suggests we merge from two legal entities into one. Following are some of the reasons for and against combining the two separate entities into one.

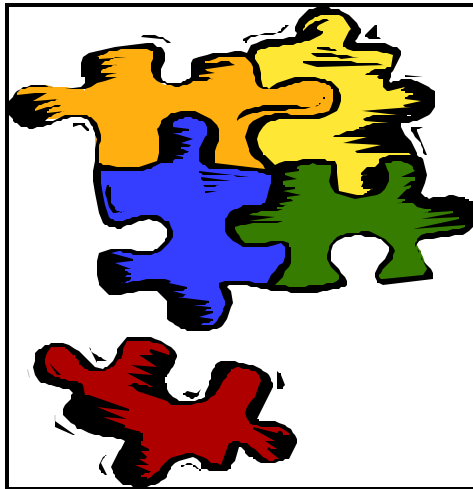
COST

CON --- Our attorney estimates that The Crossings' costs will be between \$7,000 and \$10,000 to complete the merger. Over the years a simple vote by each of the two Associations once a year has accomplished the same result without spending any money. This approach has worked well for almost 25 years and there is no compelling reason to spend so much money to change this long-tested approach. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

PRO--- For a onetime cost of between \$31 and \$43 each, we can collectively put this problem

behind us forever. Those costs include attorney fees, preparing all the paperwork, being present at the merger meeting and recording all the documents with the proper State and County offices following the owners' vote.

Every year the Management Company must instruct and convince each new board member on the need to vote



to operate as a single association. Each year, a majority of board members from each of the two associations must vote to operate together or the motion will fail creating major problems that will divert attention away from running the association. As few as three board members could de-rail our gentleman's agreement by refusing to vote for the combined operation.

REPRESENTATION

CON--- At present, half of the board members are elected from each of the two Cross-

ings Associations to ensure representation from all parts of the Crossings.

After the merger, all candidates will run at-large and all 12 board members could come from only one section of the Crossings, such as Anderson or Bristol. This would be undesirable because it is important to have the board members represent differing points of view and geographical diversity helps to ensure separate viewpoints

PRO --- In five of the last seven elections, it has been difficult to recruit owners willing to stand for election to the board. The effort would be easier if prospective members could be recruited at-large, rather than from specific phases of the Crossings, as our non-board-committee members are today.

The Village of Buffalo Grove elects all its Trustees at-large rather than from specific "wards" and the issue of fair representation has never been raised. For that matter, following the vote to operate as a single Association each year, the Crossings Board has never debated any issue on a phase-by-phase basis, showing that where a board member lives is not a factor in Crossings decision-making.

CONCLUSION

Eleven of your twelve

See CONCLUSION on next page

NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEN & WOMEN...

An ad hoc Candidate Search Committee has been appointed by the Board to encourage owners to run for a seat on the Board. The committee will seek candidates through Mid-September and then interview all candidates individually before preparing information sheets to be mailed to all homeowners in the October CrossWinds. Please note that, because of deadlines for publication, only announced candidates as of September 10 will be included in the CrossWinds article and in the pre-printed Crossings election ballot (Nominations will, of course, be accepted from the floor at the annual meeting in November). The CrossWinds article will contain biographical information, leadership experience and Crossings activities of every candidate wishing to run. Please call or drop a note to the Chair,

Mary Jo Reid, if you are interested in exploring this opportunity.

Seven seats will be up for election this November and it is important that the Crossings best and most committed owners take their turn at governing. Prospective Board members must be clear thinkers, who seek objective facts and bring a valuable perspective to board deliberations. Working toward consensus is a key attribute. The commitment must be made individually, on your own, understanding the requirements of the position. All candidates will be asked to pledge to support the Board member's Credo, which was unanimously adopted by the existing Board last December and is posted on our website.

Board members are expected to attend monthly board meetings (length has been consistently around 2

hours), first reviewing the board packet materials in advance. As a result of that review, questions should be asked of management and each other prior to the meeting (1 to 2 hours). Participation in up to two committees (usually meetings are once a month for from 1-2 hours each) is also expected.

Board members are elected for a two-year term. Service on the board helps to protect your investment in your home. Please give this request to help govern your Association your serious consideration. Give a call or drop a note at the site office or in the drop box, mail it to PSI or give it to the chair of the Search Committee. **Remember the September 10, 2001 deadline for publication in the CrossWinds!**

MERGE continued from previous page

Board members have decided to take our corporate attorney's advice and, earlier this year, voted to merge. The owners from both separate Associations must also agree to merge before the final documents can be drawn up.

More detailed and complete information will be sent to each owner after the Board completes a review of the attorney-prepared "Plan of Merger" at the upcoming August

*11 out of 12 Board
of Directors vote
"YES" to Merge.
NOW the owners
must decide*

board meeting.

Each owner is encouraged to review the materials carefully, to ask any questions of the Management Company, or any member of the board and to be prepared to vote "yes" or "no" at a special meeting to be called later this year or early next.

Crossings Homeowners Association
Community Newsletter
C/O Property Specialists, Inc.
Suite 108
5999 S. Wilke Rd.
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

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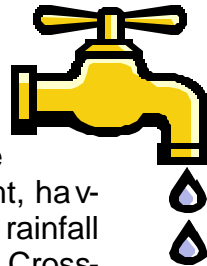
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS ARE ON THE 4TH MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
BEGINNING AT 7 PM AT THE CROSSINGS CLUBHOUSE**

COMING UP NEXT!

Board Meetings on Monday, August 27th and September 24th

All Crossings residents are encouraged to attend

WATERING



In spite of the recent welcome rain, our area is in a period of drought, having received only 16% of the normal rainfall for the year through July 10th. The Crossings foresight in mulching many of our trees has helped them to retain as much moisture as possible. However, we are at a point now where the landscaper has been given instructions to use any available water to feed the trees.

This is a Crossings policy so please cooperate by allowing the landscape staff to use your hoses and do not argue when they tap into your water supply. The cost of water in Buffalo Grove is \$.0018 cents per gallon. Your expenditure for two hours of watering is about 22 cents. Your share of the cost of a new 3-inch diameter tree is about \$2.50. Simple arithmetic argues for your coopera-

tion with the policy, not to mention helping to retain our most prized landscaping beauty --- our irreplaceable, mature trees.

Owners are encouraged to assist by watering trees and shrubs for about two hours every two to three weeks when rain has not occurred. The flow of water from your hose should be a slow trickle – about enough so that a gallon milk jug is filled in one minute's time. A slow flow allows the water to penetrate the ground rather than run off.

Please note that there is no need to water the grass, which goes dormant during a drought and will come back to life with rain.

