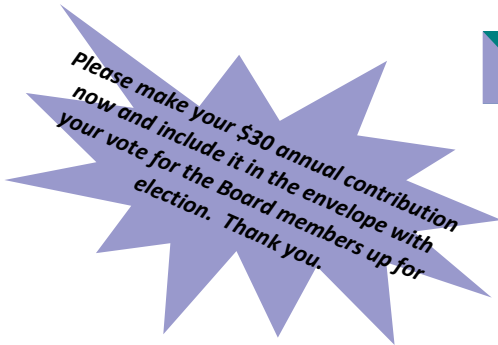


THE COVENANT COURIER



MARINE HILLS ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

Special points of interest:

- > Marine Hills residents leaning towards a Homeowners' Association with mandatory fee.
- > Observant postal carrier stops mail from being stolen from Marine Hills' mailboxes.
- > Disaster training helped participants understand the differences between an emergency and a disaster.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MARINE HILLS ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE PROPERTY MONITORS

The Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee is currently comprised of six (6) volunteers from the Marine Hills neighborhood, three (3) of whom have performed the duties of property monitors in the past. Mr. James Simpson has been the lead property monitor for a number of years, but is now rotating out of that role, effective January 2010. The role of property monitor in the future will be a collaborative effort conducted by at least two (2), preferably three (3), committee members yet to be assigned after the results of the elections are finalized.

Twice a year historically, the three (3) property monitors conduct a drive-around of the entire Marine Hills neighborhood to look for Marine Hills' residents whose properties are exemplary and for those properties presenting with opportunities for improvement utilizing the respective plat-specific covenants and restrictions as reference documents. There are twenty-two (22) plats designated in Marine Hills, although Plat 13 has yet to be assigned in

deference to those who may suffer from triskaidekaphobia.

Over the course of the last three and a half (3½) years, these drive-around inspections have evidenced occasional covenantal discord, necessitating the writing and mailing of in excess of eighty (80) letters to offending residents. Resident compliance with the letters has been between sixty (60) and seventy (70) percent, for which the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee and the residents of Marine Hills are most appreciative. The City of Federal Way Code Enforcement Division has been of significant complementary benefit to the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee in effecting change in heretofore intractable instances of resident/property owner reticence and blatant reluctance.

In addition to the biannual drive-around inspections, the property monitors receive and respond to inquiries or complaints from Marine Hills' residents concerning a host of neighborhood issues. *(cont. page 3)*

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Rumblings from Our Neighborhood

After decades of placid living in Marine Hills, interspersed with occasional expressions of discontent over perceptions of perfection in this cosmopolitan community, we, of the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee, have been the recipients of letters from a number of Marine Hills' residents who are desirous of establishing the Marine Hills' Homeowner's Association to assure greater uniformity of neighborhood aesthetic perfection. Since these recent letters have called

for the transmutation of the current covenant-guided oversight process to encourage covenantal conformity, tacitly together with an attendant increase in Marine Hills residents' voluntary annual contributions of \$30.00 to a mandatory \$300.00 *per annum* contribution, it seemed appropriate for all of Marine Hills to be apprised of this groundswell movement.

While such a change in approach to following the covenants seems economically ill-timed, should the majority of Marine Hills'

residents favor pursuing inauguration of a mandatory \$300.00 per year membership fee and establishment of the Marine Hills Homeowner's Association in lieu of the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee, we would appreciate hearing from a broader cross-section of our neighborhood residents concerning this matter.

Caution is urged in such a major pursuit, however, since there are a host of potential... *(cont. page 4)*

Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee Financial Summary for the Year 2009

The Financial Summary given below includes Funds Available starting in January 2009, Contributions made by residents of Marine Hills during the course of 2009, Total Funds Available during 2009, Expenses Incurred during 2009, and the Funds Available starting in January 2010.

While most of the eight (8) categories of Expenses Incurred during 2009 are self-explanatory, some modicum of expatiation is deemed appropriate for several selected entries; to wit –

- Entries 3) and 4) display expenses associated with the 9th Place South main entry to Marine Hills wherein applicable costs of utilities (water and electricity) and plants and upkeep (including replacing lights, correcting water leaks, sign painting, etc.) are seen to total \$613.16 for 2009.
- Through the fine efforts of Mr. Bud Bohrer, former Treasurer for the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee, the annual Liability Insurance [Entry 6)] for the Board was reduced from past charges exceeding \$2000.00 per annum to \$1190.00 for the year 2009.
- Further savings [circa \$100.00 annually] to the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee were realized by renting a Private Mailbox [Entry 7)] in lieu of a Post Office Box at the Federal Way Post Office on Pacific Highway 99.
- The Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee website <http://www.MHACC.net> cost of \$513.72 [Entry 8)] paid in 2009 is actually for two (2) years through 2011.

Overall, Expenses Incurred in 2009 exceeded Contributions by \$730.31. *We, of the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee, humbly request a contribution of \$30.00 from all Marine Hills residents to offset the Funds Available reduction experienced in 2009, permit the entries listed as Expenses Incurred to be met in the year 2010, and allow funds to be available for new projects, such as upgrading the 11th Place South entrance in 2010.*

Starting Funds for 2009 were \$4976.95

Contributions for 2009 were \$5535.00

1. Newsletter Printing [Two (2) Newsletters]	=	\$1161.00
2. Office Supplies [Copies, Letterhead, Envelopes, Stamps, etc.]	=	\$1431.46
3. Utilities for 9 th Place South	=	\$ 278.33
Water = \$138.71		
1.Power (Electricity) = \$139.62		
4. Plants and Upkeep for 9 th Place South	=	\$ 334.83
5. Dash Point Road Maintenance	=	\$1163.97
6. Liability Insurance for Board	=	\$1190.00
7. Private Mailbox [272 nd & Pacific Highway South] =	=	\$ 192.00
8. Web Page 2009 Cost	=	\$ 513.72
[Note: This was a two (2)-year charge paid Through 2011]		

Total Expenses (2009)	=	\$6265.31
<u>Cash on Hand 31 December 2009</u>	=	<u>\$4246.64</u>



Activities and Accomplishments *(cont. from page 1)*

The vast majority of these inquiries and complaints are now readily addressed by the covenants and frequently-asked questions (FAQs) provided on the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee's website <http://www.MHACC.net>, which has helped immensely to lessen the jobs of the property monitors. The following issues, matters of import and neighborhood challenges that have been dealt with by the property monitors of the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee on behalf of the residents of Marine Hills are not all-inclusive nor limited to the examples given.

- Inoperable or "junk" cars (or other vehicles) parked interminably on Marine Hills' streets, in driveways, or on yards
 - Note:** The City of Federal Way Code Enforcement Division needs proof that a vehicle parked on a driveway, on yards, or along a Marine Hills' street is truly an inoperable or "junk" vehicle before any citation can be issued calling for its removal.
 - The Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee property monitors cannot ascertain in two (2) drive-around inspections a year whether a vehicle is inoperable or a "junk" vehicle. *For such determinations, we need input from Marine Hills' residents, who can help us provide the City of Federal Way with such documentation.*
- Trailers, pop-up campers, etc. parked on Marine Hills' streets, in driveways, or in yards
- Razing and removal of the burned-out house on the southwest corner of South 293rd Street and 8th Avenue South
 - Note:** Through the persistence of several members of the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee, the City of Federal Way finally relented and removed the burned-out house at a substantial cost to the City. To recover the expense associated with this work, the City of Federal Way has placed a lien against the property, to be recovered at the time of future sale.
- Trash and societal detritus accumulations in yards that are at once unsightly and attractive to vermin
- Trees/bushes/shrubs that are not trimmed and which affect the views of other Marine Hills residents, within the language of the plat-specific covenants
- Motor homes or trailers that are beyond covenant-acceptable lengths parked in driveways or yards and not parked behind a fence or trimmed shrubs
- Forbade the construction of children's play equipment in the front yards of Marine Hills' properties
- Heavy moss accumulations on roofs of homes and/or adjoining garages/carports
- Boats parked in driveways or yards that are not behind a fence or trimmed shrubs
- Additions/modifications to existing structures, especially as it affects setbacks and/or views
- Vacant lots kept cut to discourage vermin and predatory animals [principally the coyote (*Canus latrans*)], minimize growth of non-native plants and weeds (i.e. - tansy ragwort), and reduce the potential risk of fires
 - Note:** The City of Federal Way Code Enforcement Division has been very helpful to Marine Hills by "encouraging" owners of the remaining four (4)- five (5) vacant lots to keep these properties trimmed once or twice a year
- Use of roof materials that are outside those specified by the covenants, as interpreted by the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee
- Cutting or removing wild blackberry bushes and other uncontrolled woody or herbaceous growth of native plants from Marine Hills' properties
- Signage which is larger than that specified by the covenants
- Advertising signs removed, except for garage sales and home sales on weekends
- Removal of commercial vehicles

On behalf of the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee, our sincerest thanks is extended to all those residents of Marine Hills who take our neighborhood covenants seriously and do their individual part to make our neighborhood community special.



MARINE HILLS ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

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A Hero in Our Midst

In the weeks preceding Christmas 2009, both outgoing and incoming mail was being stolen with disquieting regularity from mailboxes in Marine Hills. Were it not for the keen awareness of irregularities on the part of our principal United States Postal Service mailman, Mr. Steve Pizana, the mail thievery would likely to have continued unabatedly.

On an especially egregious day of mailbox rifling by the perpetrators, Steve noticed that numerous mailboxes with flags up were devoid of outgoing mail. On this particular day, a suspicious white vehicle seemed to be ahead of him for a while, then it would turn around and circle back to mailboxes containing mail he had just delivered. Motivated by this unusual behavior, Steve temporarily abandoned his efficient mail delivery duties to fol-

low the white vehicle long enough to obtain the license number. A prompt 911 call to the Federal Way Police Department from Steve resulted in the arrest of the two (2) women perpetrators.

Two (2) additional facts in this case are worthy of mention: 1) the two (2) women perpetrators were found to have volumes of mail, packages, magazines, etc. in their possession, ostensibly to support a methamphetamine addiction, and 2) Marine Hills was only one of the neighborhoods where these women stole mail in Federal Way.

If you see Steve, be sure to thank this public servant for acting to protect further loss of mail from Marine Hills. He truly deserves a pat on the back!

Rumblings (cont. from page 1)

holes in the tortuous road from illusion to reality. Homeowners' Associations, while superficially enticing, can lead to power for a few and the imposition of demands that are intolerable from the misuse of that power. It can manifest in George Orwellian fashion to a numbing sameness enforced by those wielding a rapier in the shape of an attorney.

To reiterate, the Marine Hills Architectural Control Committee is not a Homeowners' Association. We ask for a voluntary annual contribution of only \$30.00, as opposed to a mandatory annual membership fee of \$300.00 if we were the Marine Hills' Homeowners' Association.



Opportunity for Disaster Training

On Sunday, November 29th at 2:00 p.m., neighbors gathered at the Nowicki home on 7th Place South in Marine Hills for a discussion and DVD viewing of Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET) training. They learned the difference between an emergency and a disaster. First responders are available in an emergency. In a disaster, they are not. Neighbors must rely on neighbors for help. They also learned about individual skills, knowledge and resources. They identified a gathering site and alternative site to meet after a disaster.

The materials used and distributed at this meeting came from the City of Federal Way's Emergency Management Department and are available to anyone willing to organize a small neighborhood learn on their street. It's an opportunity to get involved and actually put in place an emergency plan for their

home and neighborhood. Did you know in case of an emergency residents can tune into AM 900, the City's radio station for pertinent information?

The City of Federal Way continues to offer NET training at their offices, for team leaders or anyone interested. For individuals interested in arranging such a training session with neighbors on their street, Mary Hobday is the contact person at the City of Federal Way's Emergency Management Department. Her e-mail is Mary.Hobday@cityoffederalway.com.

It's critically important to have a disaster plan in place. Get involved. Get a team going on your street. NOW!!!

Bonnie Nowicki