



Newsletter: May, 2022

This edition of the newsletter contains miscellaneous information about wildlife, a caution if you intend to sell your unit, an announcement of the return of the little library, one last appeal regarding a garage sale, and finally, an exhortation to consider service on the association's board of trustees.

The presence of wildlife is a sign of a healthy ecosystem

This is baby duck season, and there are at least two groups of babies and parents on the pond. Life for a baby duck is precarious: most will not survive the next few weeks. Predators abound, including bass in the ponds which will happily eat them. In addition, some mother duck always decides to parade her brood across the road, heading from our ponds to the ones to the west at Silver Ridge, or to the wooded pond behind the Catholic church. Sometimes they are hit by cars; sometimes they fall into the drains. Please watch out for these animals, and enjoy watching the cycle of life.

Something else from the news: The Michigan DNR has identified cases of bird flu in both domestic and wild birds this spring. In April, the DNR advised temporary removal of bird feeders. Subsequently, they backed off a bit on that recommendation. Since there is more natural food available to songbirds as the weather warms, you may decide to take down your feeders anyway. Here is the link to the story: <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/about/newsroom/releases/2022/04/20/temporary-removal-of-bird-feeders>

Thinking of selling?

If you plan to sell your unit, there is a commonsense guideline to follow: fully disclose to any prospective buyer the rules and regulations of the association. This includes the one-pet-only rule; conditions under which the unit can be leased; parking boats, RVs, or business vehicles in the driveways; and many others.

On the association website, there is a summary of advice for selling your unit: <http://www.wwpines.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/resale.pdf>

There is also information for prospective buyers: <https://wwpines.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/prospective-buyer.pdf>

Failure to be upfront about the rules and regulations is unfair to the buyer as well as to your neighbors.

The Little Library, located on the west end of the bridge, has returned. Thanks to those who organized, and who continue to oversee this delightful addition to the community. Take advantage of the opportunity to pass along a good book to the next reader, or to browse the collection for your own pleasure.



Garage sales—maybe yes, maybe no

In response to the April newsletter, only one co-owner indicated interest in having a sale this year. This is a last call: anyone else on board? If yes, please email bamezeske@gmail.com

The association board remains committed to having garage sales on only one day of the year. If you want to participate, you must let us know so that the date, the publicity, and the traffic can be coordinated.

Serving as a volunteer on the association board

What is the situation with the board?

There are currently six people on the board. We are one person short, because of a recent resignation. The terms of two of the six current members expire in at the end of the year. Because we are one of the largest condo associations in the county with 148 units, we shouldn't have trouble recruiting volunteers. However, it seems that some co-owners are shy about stepping up. If that describes you, then read on.

Why would I want to serve on the board?

When you serve on the board, you participate in making policies and decisions that affect us all: modification requests, snow plowing, lawn care, insurance providers, and many others. You are in the know about what's happening in the community, like where the problems with insects or invasive plants are occurring. You are genuinely serving your neighbors by shouldering some of the burden of maintaining our homes—the very burdens you gave up by joining a condo association in the first place. You will be doing work that matters.

But I have no skills! What qualifies me to serve?

Lots of qualities make good board members. Were you once a homeowner? Are you a good communicator? Are you organized? Have you had experience in business, especially with accounts or accounting? Have you had leadership experience at work, in the classroom, or in other volunteer settings? Can you work with a team? Are you willing to learn new things, like how to manage mole infestations, or how to talk to landscapers, for example? Most importantly, do you have time that you are willing to give to make our community welcoming and well-functioning?

How much work is it, really?

It IS work, and that means it will take some of your time. In some positions, the work comes in fits and starts, is seasonal, or depends on whatever projects are underway. You can figure on doing something every week, and sometimes something every day. It is NOWHERE near the amount of work most of us did before retirement. And the workload is shared when the board is fully staffed: others cover for you when you are on vacation or out of town. Moreover, ZOOM has made it possible for some co-owners to serve on the board, even if they are gone for parts of the year.



What are the downsides?

Well, again, this is work. It will require time. You will be doing something for others more than for yourself. Sometimes you will encounter other co-owners who are upset or difficult. You will hear complaints. But you will often hear thanks as well.

Are there benefits?

Of course. Service is always worthwhile. You will contribute to the well-being of the community. You will help to maintain the property value of your own home. You will make new friends. You will help to shape the nature of this community.

What is the alternative to a volunteer board?

The alternative is a professional management company that would manage all board business: insurance, contracts with providers, interactions with co-owners, building maintenance, pond maintenance, etc.

Would a management company solve all our problems?

There would still have to be a board to interact with the management company. The board would be smaller, of course. We would lose some element of community, since requests from co-owners would go not to neighbors, but to an outside firm. There are costs involved with hiring professionals: estimates range from \$50 or more per month per unit—on top of what we pay now.

I'm thinking about it, but I'm not sure.

Anyone on the board, or anyone who has served in the past would be happy to speak with you.

