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The View

from Vantage Point East

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July/August 2020



Allium blooms are sentinals at the corner of Leisure World Blvd. and the Administration Building.



Lunchtime for Fawns on the golf course.

—Photos by Suzie Offit

President's Message

Summer is upon us and the temperature and humidity are going up. Please be careful and keep hydrated when you are out and about.

I want to welcome all the new residents that have moved in over the past year. We would like to welcome you officially at a reception. Unfortunately, with the virus situation ongoing we must postpone any social activity until we can open the Community Room. We hope to meet with you at a social reception in the near future.

If you need help with any issue, please feel free to talk to the Property Manager and she will try to assist you. Emergency property-related assistance is always available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Just call the front gate when the office is closed.

Information was provided and discussions have taken place about raising the amount new buyers are required to pay into the Resales Fund. The Leisure World Board recently voted to delay any action on the Resales Fee until February

2021 due to the effect of the virus.

There were indications that the deductible on the master insurance policy was going to be raised from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This has not taken place and remains at the current \$5,000 through July 31, 2021. Please be sure to read and return the Insurance Information Acknowledgement Form issued by the office on July 2, 2020.

Balconies get extremely hot in the summer if the windows are closed and the doors are shut to the interior of the unit. If the temperature gets too hot, the sprinkler will activate, and your unit will get water damage. Please remember to allow fresh air onto the balcony.

Emergencies do happen and we may have to contact persons who support your family. Please make sure that the contact information is correct in our files at the Property Manager's office.

Stay cool and have a nice summer.

—Henry Jordan

Property Manager's Corner

In our continued battle with COVID-19, I want to remind you that now, more than ever, you must keep vigilant. Keep using your mask every time you leave your unit, even if you are just checking the mail or taking out the trash. Make sure to wash your hands when coming from the outside and try to maintain your distance when meeting with others. You should also strive to maintain yourself healthy, physically and emotionally. Try to stay active and don't lose touch with your friends and family.

Please keep an eye out for information on the following projects that are scheduled to take place within the next few months:

1. **Power Shutdown:** In August we will be scheduling a power shutdown to perform preventative maintenance on the electrical equipment. You will experience approximately four hours of no power at all and four hours of intermittent power outages. Once a date has been confirmed with Pepco, you will receive a notice.
2. **Annual Hydrojet Cleaning:** Our annual cleaning of the kitchen drain lines will also take place in August. If you own a garage space, you will not be able to park your car in the garage on a designated date. Again, more info to come.

Please be sure to keep us informed if you are going away for a period of more than three days so we know how to get in touch with you if needed. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

–Cris Juarez

May Board Actions

The Board approved:

- Payment to A&A Restoration for water clean-up in Unit 101 in the amount of \$409.53. Payment to come from Insurance Deductible Account.
- Bill Unit 101 for the insurance deductible related to water cleanup in the amount of \$409.53.

–Ann Ferren, Secretary

June Board Actions

The Board approved:

- distribution of an Insurance Information Acknowledgement Form to unit owners effective July 1, 2020.
- the T-Mobile lease agreement for yearly renewal.
- the Mt. Airy Glass Invoice in the amount of \$325.00 for replacing a window glass in Unit 1020. Funds to come from Replacement Reserves Account.
- the Dynalectric Invoice in the amount of \$704.06 for replacement of a leaky sprinkler head in the balcony of unit 518. Funds to come from Replacement Reserves Account.
- the Dynalectric proposal in the amount of \$1,808.00 to replace the gauges in the sprinkler system. Funds to come from the Fire & Security Account.
- payment of the Federal and State Tax return from 2019 totaling \$4,878: \$3,592 for Federal and \$1,286 for State. Funds to come from Income Taxes Account.
- payment of the first two quarterly estimated tax payments per the Auditor's recommendation for 2020: \$3,030 each for Federal and \$1,000 each for State. Funds to come from Income Taxes Account.
- Appointment of the following residents to the VPE Election Committee:
Suzie Offit-Chair
Mike Baum-Board Liaison

–Ann Ferren, Secretary



–Photo by Fred Shapiro

June 18, 2020 Education & Recreation Advisory Committee (ERAC) conducted via Zoom

This is the first meeting that E&R has had since March.

Here are the highlights of the E & R meeting on June 18:

- ◇ **Kevin Flannery and Maureen Freeman** gave us an update on Administrative items for the Phase 2 reopening in Montgomery County. These include: opening of the restaurants, the fitness center, pools, and volleyball. All of this information was announced in the Leisure World News, June 19.
- ◇ **Fitness Center:** opened Monday, June 22. Motivational Fitness, current contractor, will provide two staffers for the proposed hours of operation. The new hours are: Mon – Fri. 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – closed noon to 1 p.m. for cleaning; Sat. 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; Sun. closed. Depending on the number of participants, clients may have to make a reservation before coming to the Fitness Center and will be required to wear masks. To hire additional staff will require a change in the budget.
- ◇ **Unfinished Business: Trust Agreement:** Kevin discussed the proposal to amend the trust agreement from its current 2% to 3%. He explained how the money is used and that there has not been an increase in 19 years. The money is used for current and proposed projects such as the pool area, upgrading the auditorium and other projects. (A decision has been postponed until February 2021.) Kevin noted that project planning could be an opportunity to be creative in renovating such areas as the outdoor pool.
- ◇ **Unfinished Business: The outdoor pool** was scheduled to reopen on June 29, but the date can change. Maureen discussed the issues with reopening of the pool such as cleaning the furniture, preparing the staff to deal with the coronavirus and other unknowns. Also, the pool contract is up for renewal, but Kevin is considering a one-year extension given all the current issues with the virus and staffing. There will be a competitive bid in 2021.
- ◇ **New Business:** 1) 2021 E&R Budget—at the July 7 meeting, ERAC was scheduled to discuss the proposed 2021 budget. 2) Update on indoor pool—it has been closed for repair for several months. For residents who have annual passes, Leisure World will issue a refund. Also, a motion was passed to give Kevin authority to extend the pool contract for one year until 2021. I noted this item under unfinished business. A full report of the July 7 meeting was unavailable at press time.

–Submitted by Sandy Robinson



Please let the **VPE Sunshine Committee** know of any ill, bereaved or new residents who should be acknowledged. Call Marylin Jordan (301) 598-0174 or Barbara Eisen (301) 598-8658.

At left, A great blue heron attends a picnic in back of Greens II.

–Photo by Marti Iacono

Wildlife In LW



–Photos by Dan Gutstein

When I consulted Google about fox behavior, it assured me that when a fox crosses your yard in the middle of the afternoon, it doesn't mean a thing, except that he might be staking out a new hunting route. A couple of years ago, a vixen dropped her cubs on the frozen edge of her hole probably to rearrange her chambers. A vixen can have two, three, up to eight cubs in the winter. They are born blind, but after four weeks they emerge from the burrows, holes, or earth under the close supervision of the mother to learn how to forage for grub and catch insects.

A year ago, a groundhog dug a burrow into the soft dirt of the berm above the stream, and then the groundhog disappeared. Foxes took over his burrow, adding four or five connecting holes. The first hole has been located at the foot of a tree at the edge of the woods. Judging from the movement this spring, the top hole appears to have been expanded with diagonal downward connections with access and exits for each family. Google says that the burrows are 3-10 feet deep, with chambers and tunnels leading to a main and an emergency exit. Foxes build their habitat just about anywhere, yet sheltered under floorboards, decks, trees, shrubs, gardens, and logs.

This spring through the beginning of summer, the berm was alive with cubs of differing sizes. Adult foxes came and went across the golf course and our stream appearing to head toward our patio or into the loading dock for a break. Photographers in hunting gear and with telephoto lenses sat against trees on the greens and behind our building for hours to get a picture of the action. Walkers took pets to sniff the holes, and the foxes either scrambled back into their dens or reacted with their characteristic bark. Foxes fear humans, but rabbits, squirrels, and very young pets might be game. They are carnivores and, true to their nature, five young cubs gnawed on the carcass of a small deer and then hid it in one of the holes.

Foxes can carry rabies and, as they age, are afflicted by mange. The five new cubs (probably now undistinguishable from the adult foxes) have scattered, but might use the den during occasional sleep-ins. In the fall they might be back to prepare for a new breeding season or skip the old den for a couple of years. Fox behavior is unpredictable.

–Elizabeth G. Tremaine

Where Did Our Hornbeams Go?



Dead hornbeam

—Photo by Mary Telford



Hornbeam showing borer infestation

Photo by Aron Tenley

In early spring, the Landscape Committee assessed the VPE plantings for any needed replacements or maintenance issues. All trees were budding out, bushes showed increased growth, daffodils popping up soon to bloom. All plantings appeared to benefit from minimal snow in winter and above average rainfall. Within several weeks, a resident called, stating “Two beautiful trees outside our window have suddenly changed from healthy green leaves to brown leaves dropping to the ground.” The virus? No, TLCB, an insect called “Two-lined Chestnut Borer,” which originated with the chestnut tree but now is a threat to many species. No warning but within two weeks, two hornbeams were lost with the two remaining in the same area also show-

ing decline. After consults with Aaron Tenley and Richard Jones of LW Landscaping and Grounds Dept. and tree specialists from McFall and Berry, landscaping contractor, it was determined that all four hornbeam trees/stumps needed to be removed.

These trees have graced VPE for almost twenty years and are appropriate with their pyramidal shape.

The VPE Committee will get advice from LW Landscaping and Grounds Dept. and McFall and Berry as to the appropriate plantings for this sizable area.

—Mary Telford

Representative needed to the Leisure World Government Affairs Advisory Committee

Are you interested in state and county government affairs that effect your community? Our community needs a representative to provide:

- The LWCC Board and Leisure World residents with information about all aspects of government that can affect our Community.
- Advise the LWCC Board and Leisure World residents about legislation or other governmental actions which may affect the Leisure World Community and recommend actions by Leisure World to protect the interests of Leisure World residents.
- Make recommendations and take such other actions as will help the LWCC Board and Leisure World residents be as effective as possible in all dealings with elected officials and governmental bodies.

The term of appointment of the Leisure World Government Affairs Advisory Committee begins on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following year.

If interested, please give me a call.

—Henry Jordan
301-598-0174

Circumnavigating the World

When I heard about the cruise ship “Columbus” going to circumnavigate the world, I decided to put my life on hold for 120 days. I was motivated. The plan was for the ship to stop in 35 countries in five oceans. Although I have been to all seven continents and travelled to over 160 countries, I had never sailed around the world. We embarked on the “Columbus,” at Tilbury (London), on January 5, 2020, with 1,300 passengers and 700 crew. Our scheduled return was to be on May 5, 2020. We headed west.

Our first stop was to be the Azores. With 30-foot waves in that vicinity and many passengers already seasick, the captain decided to skip that island. Instead we docked in Funchal, Madeira. After a rough Atlantic crossing, we made stops in Curacao and Cartagena, Colombia. Then we went thru the Panama Canal. After passing through that engineering marvel, we were out on the Pacific Ocean where the seas were calm. After a few days of sailing, we crossed the equator into the Southern Hemisphere. After stops in many Polynesian islands, we crossed the International Date Line on February 11. We lost the 12th forever. By then we had heard about the dreaded virus. Our first port of rejection was Tonga. The rumor on the ship was that there was an infection in the island. We were happy we did not go there.

We continued on to New Zealand and Australia. Excitement came with the helicopter evacuation of a sick passenger. Then the problem when another cruise ship’s infections started to spread. Nobody wanted us to stop at their port, not even Papua, New Guinea. Our last port of call was in Indonesia. The inspectors came onboard, checked our temperature, etc. and allowed us into their country. We did not have any case of coronavirus. Unfortunately, countries around the world closed their ports for cruise ships. The company had no choice but to take us back to Tilbury, our starting point.

First, we sailed to Phuket, Thailand to swap some European and U.S. passengers who were going to Europe. Then, we had to transfer some Australian and New Zealand citizens to another ship, which was heading to Australia. This transfer maneuver was done in the middle of the ocean. The trip to London was supposed to take 30 days with the expected arrival of April 13, which was later changed to 14. We stopped in Colombo, Sri Lanka before crossing the Indian Ocean and Red Sea to the Suez Canal, then at Malta and Gibraltar. All stops were for fuel and other supplies. We were not allowed to disembark the ship, even though we did not have one case of COVID-19. About a week before our arrival in London, we were told that we would have to make our own flight and hotel arrangements. The company would not be able to help us. The 92 Americans on board wanted to charter a flight and get to any U.S. port that was open. Since we were arriving three weeks before our original plan, everybody had to change their flights. People with satellite phones started to make new reservations. Then came the message telling us that our flights were cancelled and no flights till May 1. I could not reach the airline or travel agent using a borrowed satellite phone which worked occasionally. I managed to book a room in a hotel near the airport. On April 14, I received a mail telling me that my room reservation was cancelled, and the hotel would be closed. The cruise would allow us to stay one more night on board, and we would be required to get off the ship on the 15th.



Pattu on the Panama Canal

—Photo provided by Pattu Durairaj

Since London was in lockdown, no hotel was open. One of our friends from Mexico had reservations at a small hotel in London. I was able to reserve a room at the same hotel. Imagine a small room with no chairs and not knowing how long we had to stay there. There were two restaurants nearby

(Continued on page 7)

Around the Neighborhood



A VPE flower

—Photo by Fred Shapiro

VPE remembers

**Stewart Kaplan
And
Bert Marks**

who recently passed away.

Thank you to all the thoughtful residents of VPE for the cards and calls expressing sympathy on Bert's passing.

—Arlene Marks

The Plain Facts

By Ruth Pitter, a British poet

See what a charming smile I bring,
Which no one can resist;
For I have found a wondrous thing –
The Fact that I exist.

And I have found another, which
I now proceed to tell.
The world is so sublimely rich
That you exist as well.

Fact One is lovely, so is Two,
But O the best is Three:
The Fact that I can smile at you,
And You can smile at me.

Ruth Pitter (1897-February 29, 1992) was a British poet. She was the first woman ever to receive the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry (in 1956), and was appointed a Commander of the British Empire in 1979 to honor her many contributions to English literature. In 1974 she was named a Companion of Literature, the highest honor given by the Royal Society of Literature.

—Submitted by Ruth Gutstein



Circumnavigating the World

(Continued from page 6)

that allowed carryouts, one Italian and one Egyptian. You could order any hot meal you wanted, as long as it was pizza or chicken or falafel wrap. A nearby supermarket was handy. All our friends from South America, who were staying with us, had flight problems because they were transiting through the U.S. By then no transit passengers were allowed into the U.S. With no idea how long our stay would be, I kept extending my checkout date. After the first five days, they told me that they have orders to close the hotel. With no place to go, I begged. The owner decided to keep the hotel partially open. Relieved, we extended five more days. Even though we were staying as friends in the hotel, we were not al-

lowed to congregate outside our rooms. I was the only English-speaking guide for our Hispanic friends. Not able to contact the travel agent or the airline, we decided to go to the airport in person. Heathrow airport was totally deserted. Our biggest worry at that point was staying healthy and avoiding quarantine. The end of my ordeal came with a phone call. I found a flight to Newark, NJ with a connection to Dulles. I was advised that after I got home to stay self-quarantined for two weeks. I was surprised to receive a follow-up call from the Maryland Department of Health. I am happy to be back in heaven called **VPE**. My adventure is now part of the past.

—Pattu Durairaj

COMMITTEE/BOARD MEETINGS

Notices will be posted or members called when committee meetings are able to resume.

Stay safe!

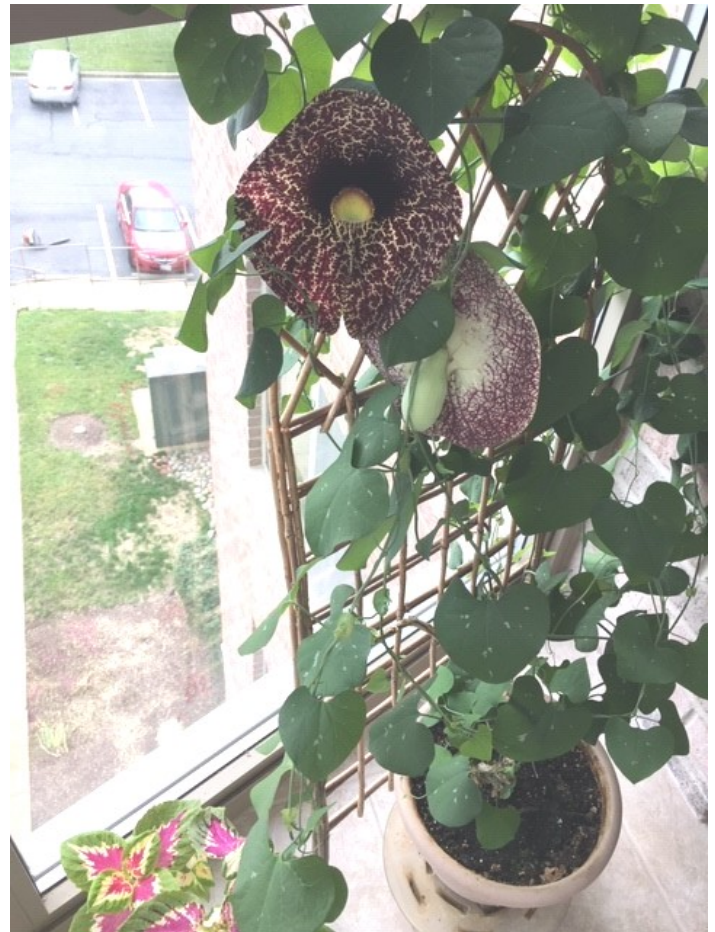


Important!

All electronic submissions for *The View* should be sent to:

lenirenesil@comcast.net
and
tom@mcgrathusa.net

Submitting to any other email chances that your article will not be considered for publication.



Ruth Gutstein's pelican flower (also know as Dutchman's pipe). The flowers last for only one day!

—Photo by Ruth Gutstein

Building and Grounds

The Building and Grounds Committee met on June 18 via Zoom. We discussed and passed replacement of sprinkler system gauges and sent it to the Board. We approved the decision to get engineer cost estimates to evaluate roof and exterior of building. We did not approve Amazon proposal for entry system. We reviewed RFP for bids on heating and air conditioning and sent it to the Board to be sent out for bids.

—Marvin Wolf, Chair

***The View* is bi-monthly for now.**

Residents may notice that this issue of *The View* is for July/August. The Communications Committee is taking a break and is not meeting in July. The next issue will be for September. Please note that, although we will not publish a separate newsletter for August, look for an August calendar.

The View Crew

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