



# THE PELICAN BRIEF      Oct., 2011

*Serving the Community of Pelican Pointe*

Board of Directors

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**Don't miss this!** It's not too early to put this on your calendar: Our **Annual Homeowners Meeting** will be held on Monday evening, December 5, 2011, at Augustana Lutheran Church (about 7 minutes away), where we held last year's successful annual meeting. As usual, from 6:00 to 7:00 we'll feature a social hour and sit-down catered dinner. The business meeting will begin at 7:00. This is another great opportunity to meet and greet your neighbors; hear succinct reports from your directors and manager; ask questions or make statements of community interest or concern; vote (homeowners only); or just enjoy someone else's cooking for a change. There will be no charge for our residents and homeowners (two persons per townhome). **RSVPs are required, to Mary Mulholland, [marymul43@yahoo.com](mailto:marymul43@yahoo.com), or (303) 973-9018, by December 1.**

Book Club. Our Pelican Pointe Book Club will meet on Friday, October 14, 2011, at 6:30 p.m., at the home of Christy Long, #W-103. To be discussed: **Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption**, by Laura Hillenbrand. This non-fiction work is the story of Lt. Louis Zamperini and his endurance and survival after his aircraft is shot down over the Pacific Ocean and he is captured by the Japanese. All who enjoy reading are welcome. RSVP to Christy at [christy.long@encana.com](mailto:christy.long@encana.com).

Lunch Bunch. Join this interested and interesting group of Pelican Pointe men and women for lunch at **Brio Tuscan Grille**, 2500 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, on Thursday, Oct. 13, at 11:30 a.m. The Lunch Bunch greatly enjoyed its previous luncheon there. Treat yourself to a good meal and sparkling conversation. New faces (and the hungry bodies to which they are attached) are cordially encouraged to attend! RSVP to Susan Million, (303) 316-7190.

**SUSMAN UNLEASHED**  
by Steve Susman

**“The Lord giveth, and the actuaries taketh away”** [Prophets, 14:92]. Your Board of Directors on September 19 enacted our 2012 Operating Budget, which includes a **dues increase of \$10 per month**, beginning January 1, 2012. Our present dues level of \$190 has obtained for three years. Your directors and manager have worked intensively with a view to maintaining our dues at that level into 2012. However, our Association is facing at least the following substantial increases in our operating costs:

a. Our anticipated annual wastewater assessment, payable in November, was increased with little notice by a whopping 20%, an increase of \$4,000-\$5,000.

b. Denver water rates were sharply increased last February, and will be increased again in February 2012. This means an increase from about \$27,000 per year to about \$36,000 -- all in only two years. Water conservation is a Catch-22: The more users conserve, the higher must be the rates to compensate the Water Board for the reduced revenue.

c. We carry five insurance policies, covering various risks of our operations. Of these policies, the primary policy premium (building and liability) is expected to rise in this month from \$35,400 to about \$42,000 per year. And we anticipate an increase in that premium in Sept. 2012 of another \$5,000. These quantum-leap increases are caused by the staggering claims suffered by most underwriters from natural disasters on our coastal areas, in Missouri, and elsewhere -- as well as by high claims in Colorado for wind-and-hail damage.

d. We expect our new primary insurance policy, to be issued in late September, to carry uncomfortable deductibles for wind-and-hail losses. This means that we must accelerate the build-up of our Reserves, to lessen the financial impact of substantial wind-and-hail damage for which our HOA and/or our homeowners would be self-insured to some extent.

Yes, we carefully budget for our operating costs and our anticipated capital costs (i.e., Reserves). However, the above examples are major hits to our careful budgeting process which arrive, and will arrive, upon very short notice -- and after our budgets have been prepared.

“If everyone lit just one little candle . . .” what a great fire we could create. OK, so that’s not a sensible way to enhance our lighting at night. Rather, we have completed Phase I of our new LED lighting program, garnering considerable praise from those residents whose heretofore dark porch and sidewalk areas are now bathed in brilliance. The installations at these 26 townhomes comprised a pilot project. The Board has approved the extension of this program for our entire community. As I previously reported, the process involves removing your porch bulb and lens; re-wiring it with a photoelectric cell (similar to the ones in our driveways); and bypassing the switch in your living room that controls your porch light. In this manner, your porch light will go On after dark and will go Off at dawn, automatically. These LED fixtures consume only 14 watts, but cast light

very much brighter than our existing incandescent and fluorescent bulbs. To view the results of these first installations, visit after dark the sidewalks between Bldgs. #J-K, #N-O, and #W-X. Phase II of these installations will commence on Sept. 26, continuing this year as weather permits. Townhomes not converted before winter sets in will receive their installations when winter ends. Each installation requires the electricians to enter your living room for only 15 minutes, to effect the wiring changes behind your switch plate there. It's extremely difficult to schedule these brief visits because most of us are away during weekday business hours. Therefore, you will be contacted in advance of the intended installation at your unit, to select a Saturday of your choice for that process.

*In Marine Corps boot camp, we were trained to crawl beneath live machine-gun fire.* At Pelican Pointe, there is little need for you to simulate that training by crawling on your belly through your crawl-space. At this time of year, many harbor the reasonable opinion that their crawl-space vents should be closed for the winter. Each townhome has at least one -- and usually two or three -- such vents. These can be closed from the *outside* by moving the hidden grate beneath the outer screen, horizontally; or by re-installing for the winter the vent cover that you may have purchased during the HOA's program a couple winters ago. Those custom-designed covers are easy to install and remove. The purpose of closing the vents in winter is to keep the cold air from entering and, perhaps, from affecting your lower-floor room temperatures. Others, though, reasonably contend that the vents should remain open all-year, because that allows air to circulate in the crawl-space; the circulation inhibits dampness and mold from forming there.

*Before you leave for Boca Raton, Hawaii, or Cancun, to replenish your summer suntan,* it is essential that you protect your townhome from frigid winter weather. We recommend, first and foremost, that you shut off your master water valve if you'll be away for a couple days or more. Each townhome has a master shut-off valve, located very near the trap-door of your crawl-space. Turning off that valve cuts off the flow of water entering your unit -- in all toilets, tubs, showers, and sinks. If an incoming water pipe bursts in your absence, only a small amount of residual water will flow from that breach. If that valve isn't turned off at that time, your unit will be flooded. We've already experienced that in our complex; it's devastating. Now, not when you are departing, is the time to test that valve. Many of those valves have been corroded from non-use since original construction; they will not operate. Whether or not yours now works, you should have your plumber replace it with the latest version -- a simple lever (called an "in-line valve") rather than a knob. Contact me for more information. And, by the way, keep your thermostat set at least to 60 degrees F. before leaving. Some suggest turning down the temperature setting on your hot water heater, too.

*Those cute little bunnies with the fluffy white tails:* They should all be caught and deported to Guantanamo. This recent summer saw much of our flower beds substantially damaged by these voracious pests, along with the voles (rodents which tunnel beneath our gardens, eating the roots). Some of our flower beds wouldn't qualify for prizes at a Home Show; others escaped relatively unscathed. Your Landscape Committee and its involved members are researching significant new ideas for our 2012 flower gardens --

with a view to enhancing and protecting them. We all cherish the beauty of such displays.

*A chicken in every pot; a car in every garage; and a roof over every townhome.* Your Board's responsibilities relate only to the latter item. Our asphalt roofs are 12-13 years old. They endure Denver weather -- hot sun; rain; snow and ice. As our physical assets age, the Board takes careful consideration of our Reserve funds. These funds are segregated from our Operating accounts, and are maintained solely for capital projects (such as concrete and asphalt repairs and replacements; painting; lighting; roofing replacements). Our Reserve budgets are, necessarily and mostly, estimates of future costs. These estimates are based on our periodic professional reserve studies, advice from other professionals, and our own experience in managing our complex. Not only do our operating costs increase over time (for example, insurance, tree-pruning), but our roofs (among other assets) will eventually have to be replaced. The replacement date(s) are conjectural at best. Your Board has contracted for a professional opinion on the roofs' general condition and projected effective life (assuming, of course, no subsequent natural disasters). The eventual costs of completely re-roofing our 46 buildings will be astronomical. Hence, the Board must balance the pressures on our Reserves for relatively-current needs (e.g., asphalt remediation) against longer-term needs (such as roofing). The bottom line: Our 2012 Operating budget includes an increase in our monthly transfers to Reserves (from dues).

*Halloween is the time for creepy-crawly spiders.* Sonny and his crew have been power-washing the exteriors of our buildings, with emphasis on the areas around our driveway light fixtures. These areas attract cobwebs and assorted other crawlies. Also, we'll be paying more attention to the crawlies in our mail kiosks. We can't utilize power washers there, and our power-blowers are too strong for cleaning our bulletin board areas. A plain ol' broom or brush seem to be the necessary tools. On October 31, if the crawlies don't get you, the werewolves certainly will.

*October trash pick-up:*            October 5, 12, 19, and 26.

*Recycling pick-up:*            October 12 and 26.

*Pelican Pointe townhomes For Sale:* , #LL-104 and #V-101.

*Weird behavior:*

- Life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.
- Don't argue with an idiot; people watching may not be able to tell the difference.
- If love is blind, why is lingerie so popular?
- Why do we sing "Take me out to the ball game" when we are already there?
- The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back into your pocket.

*October Board Meeting.* This Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Lighthouse Clubhouse, on October 17. ALL RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.

