



# THE PELICAN BRIEF FEB. 2012

*Serving the Community of Pelican Pointe*

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## **Chili Dinner**

Our first social event for 2012 is the annual Chili Dinner on Sunday, February 26, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at The Lighthouse. Look for an *evite* invitation or you can RSVP with June Hanley at 303 955-0904 or hanleyjune@yahoo.com.

Book Club. Our Pelican Pointe Book Club will meet on on Friday, February 10, 2012 , at 6:30 p.m. , at the home of Mary Mulholland, EE101. To be discussed: **Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter**, by Tom Franklin. A girl's disappearance in rural Mississippi forces two boyhood pals, one black and one white, to confront the turbulent past they had long buried. All who enjoy reading are welcome. RSVP to Mary at (303) 973-9018.

Lunch Bunch. Join this interesting group of Pelican Pointe men and women for lunch at **Andre's Restaurant and Confiserie Suisse** at 370 S. Garfield Street. The date: Wednesday, February 8, 2012, at 11:30 a.m.. Treat yourself to a good meal and sparkling conversation. RSVP to Susan Million at (303) 316-7190.

2012 Social Events at Pelican Pointe: It doesn't matter whether you use a Playboy calendar; a Day-Timer; an electronic calendar; a calendar in the digital "cloud"; or a laundry marking pen on your forearm. Our Social Committee will be sponsoring four events of fun, food, and fellowship this year. Keep track of them. Plan to attend:

- Chili dinner, on a Sunday in February, at The Lighthouse.
- Happy Hour, TGIF, on Friday, June 8.
- Annual picnic at The Lighthouse on Sunday, September 9.
- Annual Homeowners Meeting in November (tentatively on Thursday, November 15).

You'll receive more details as these events approach.

## SUSMAN UNLEASHED

by Steve Susman

More than navel lint. Your clothes dryer can be a major property and personal injury hazard. According to the U.S. Fire Administration (a division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security), clothes dryers were involved in an estimated 15,600 U.S. structure fires, 15 deaths, 400 injuries, and \$100 million in direct property damage, *annually*, during a recent two-year measuring period. The leading cause of clothes dryer fires was lack of maintenance (lint build-up in the exhaust system).

Improper use. Oil-soaked clothing, tennis or athletic shoes (sneakers) and foam-backing on throw rugs introduce potential for fire if the appliance is overheating. Mop heads can be ignited from the cleaning chemical residue.

Ventilation and ducting. As the dryer heats, water in the load evaporates. What is left is the familiar lint created from the clothing material. Venting of dryer air and lint is sent out to the atmosphere by ducts. Wire-embedded foil-type flex ducts and wired-bound vinyl ducting may lead to dryer failures.

Lack of maintenance. Appliances left to collect lint and dust may become less efficient with reduced airflow, leading to high operating temperatures, possible overheating, and ignition --causing lint or other materials in the dryer to ignite.

Signals. Are your clothes still damp or hotter than usual after the cycle is finished? Are your clothes taking longer than usual to dry?

Best practice solutions. Clean the lint trap after every load. Check the exhaust pipe for lint-build-up. You probably won't be interested in disconnecting the ducting from the dryer and re-connecting it. Consider having that done for you by a competent commercial firm. I am investigating a possible arrangement with one of our trusted subcontractors whereby he would perform that vent-cleaning for you at a "group rate." Stay tuned.

Put on that funny-looking apron that you received as a gift on Father's/Mother's Day; get out your meat thermometer; check your propane level -- and create a dramatic conflagration! Outdoor barbecuing is quintessentially American. It is also the cause of disastrous explosions and fires. Common sense can prevent most of these disasters. Here are some additional tips:

- Occasionally, check the tubes running from the propane tank to the burners for blockage from food grease, insects (gross!). Use a pipe cleaner or wire to clear blockages.
- Move gas hoses as far as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease. If you can't move the hoses, your appliance should have a heat shield.
- Keep the grill a least ten feet away from any wall. This is standard advice, and may not be feasible on our patios, but at least provide *some* distance.
- When lighting the grill, keep the top open. If the grill does not light in the first several attempts, wait about 5 minutes to allow gas to dissipate.
- When storing the gas containers, keep them upright. Never store a spare gas tank under or near the grill. Never store a full container indoors.
- While transporting a gas container, keep it upright. Never keep it in a hot car or trunk.

*You're inviting the burglars into your home.* Well, not quite. But how difficult is it to adopt the following habits?:

-- After dark, never leave your townhome without turning on an inside light or two. It is recommended that you purchase one or two inexpensive timers, and connect each of them to a lamp. If you have a second story, a lamp should be on in that upper story -- because it's harder to determine if someone is home when an unreachable window shows light.

-- Consider installing a burglar alarm. Two types exist: One is connected by your phone line to a central monitoring station. If the alarm is tripped, the phone is pre-empted, and sends a signal to the station. The other type is passive, without a monitoring station. However, both types emit a loud, disturbing noise when tripped. We've had experiences in our complex in which we believe that the intruder was spooked by the unexpected sound, and fled without fulfilling his mission. Every townhome in Pelican Pointe was wired for an alarm in its original construction. Some alarm companies can utilize that wiring (and keypad, if still in place) to activate a system for you, without having to begin at square one.

-- Owners of townhomes *on our perimeters* generally receive approval from our Design Review Committee and Board to install motion-activated light(s) on the *outward* side of their home. That location will not disturb other Pelican Pointers if the light is aimed correctly. Those devices do have some drawbacks, but are worth investigating. A recent burglary of a perimeter townhome, combined with our prior statistics, indicates that such units are more prone to be burglarized than units elsewhere in our complex.

-- Of course, there are several other strategies to employ, some of which are plain ol' common sense.

*This isn't an assisted-living facility,* but our primary insurance carrier has reasonably recommended that we install metal hand-railings on the descending side of all townhome entrance sidewalks, if that sidewalk has three or more steps. Presently, we are accepting proposals from reputable iron-railing fabricators. Each railing must be custom-made, since the lateral measurement of each of the affected stairways is unique. We have identified 19 such sites, including one at our western-most mail kiosk.

*"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of [darkness]"* . . . Our program of installing new LED light fixtures on every porch has generated (besides much light) considerable praise from most of the recipients. About 75 of our 190 townhomes are awaiting this installation. Our electricians will continue with this program, weather permitting, in early February. As you recall, part of the installation requires the electrician to enter your living room (for a maximum of about 13 minutes) in order to deactivate your wall-switch controlling that fixture. We will continue with our plan to schedule these living-room admittances with a view to maximum efficiency, as well to your convenience. That is, we generally offer a series of two-hour windows-of-time on several Saturday mornings, asking that you select one of them as your 1<sup>st</sup> choice and another for your alternate choice. In *extraordinary* circumstances, we will try to be sensitive to your plea for an appointment that is outside those parameters.

*The primary rule of dating (and other socially-acceptable situations):* You have only one chance to make a good first impression. Our after-dark entrance at Pelican Pointe is somewhat gloomy. This is not the fault of purchasing bulbs from technologically inept Third World factories. Rather, we are advised that our wiring and fixtures, which focus

on our white tile walls, our name/address, and our flags, are almost obsolete. In any event, they don't satisfactorily do the job. The Board will soon consider proposals to upgrade portions of these lighting systems, with a view to providing a bright, cheerful ambiance after dark. By the way, such improvements should be implemented for safety, as well as cosmetic, reasons.

Your piggy-bank may earn more interest on your funds than we can earn on federally-insured bank accounts. The Federal Reserve announced that it intends to "keep" interest rates very low -- essentially at their present level -- through 2014. This may present attractive opportunities for borrowers, but it doesn't do diddly-squat for our Pelican Pointe reserve funds. In fact, rates offered on commercial savings plans are so low that your Board, in its budgeting deliberations, doesn't plan to receive any significant sums from interest for the next two-three years or so. We invest our reserves into CDs and money-market funds. The latter deposits earn interest for us at better rates than CDs currently, but we are limited in the amounts we can retain in such investments by FDIC account-insurance limitations on interest-bearing accounts at any one institution. We do spread our largesse among institutions other than our primary bank. We are reluctant to enter into longer-term maturities because of residual uncertainties in the financial markets, and for other business reasons. As you know, our reserve funds, by definition, are aggregated solely for "capital expenses." These are expenses for non-recurring items not properly included in our operating budgets (such as painting; concrete replacement; stair-railings; perimeter fence rehabilitation; asphalt road remediation.)

February trash pick-up: February 1, 8, 15, 23, and 29.

Recycling pick-up: February 1, 15, and 29.

Denver Large Item Pickup: Not until March 14.

Pelican Pointe townhomes For Sale: None (of which management is presently aware).

Good Help is Hard to Find: **Carpet cleaning.** Strongly recommended by two homeowners: All-Ways Flooring & Furniture Care. Attn: Brian. (720) 352-1269.

Weird behavior:

- Help someone when he is in trouble, and he will remember you when he is in trouble again.
- Money does not buy happiness, but it's more comfortable to cry in a Mercedes than on a bicycle.
- Forgive your enemies, but remember those scoundrels' names.
- An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.
- Deja Moo: The feeling that you've heard this bull before.
- I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day, but I couldn't find any.
- We have enough "youth." How about a fountain of "smart"?
- It's not whether you win or lose, but how you place the blame.

February Board Meeting. This Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Lighthouse Clubhouse, on February 20. ALL RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.