



# Your CasaBlanca

January 2010

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## Annual Meeting Set For March 13

Our Annual meeting is scheduled to be held at the Hope Lutheran Church on Portola Ave. on Saturday, March 13. Two seats on the Board are up for election. They are the ones currently held by Lindsey Griffith and Gail Christiansen. Any one interested in running for one of these positions should turn the "Request for Service" forms sent to them in the mail to our Management Company, Whitestar Management.

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### Board Meeting Jan. 19

The January Board meeting was held at the US Bank and was called to order by President Gail Christiansen at about 10 AM. The meeting started out with a presentation by a special guest, Tim Hass of Vista Paint. He gave a presentation on how his company assists homeowner associations to receive quotes from paint contractors that will enable the board members to compare "apples to apples." This is done by developing a spec sheet that his paint company prepares using our exact job requirements and having the contractors fill in the sheets with their cost estimates.

The Homeowner Forum followed. Items mentioned were that the screening placed over the sump pump drain had been removed recently allowing debris from the rain to get into the sump pump's well. The pedestrian gate locks at both gates are not working properly. Jerry Winer indicated that he learned at a recent "Presidents Meeting" that it will be

important for owners to fill in the US Census forms correctly that they will receive in the mail. It will only have 10 questions, but there will be a space to indicate if you are a full-time or part time resident at your Casablanca residence.

Minutes: The minutes from last month's meeting were approved with one minor change to the date listed for the next board meeting being changed from the 15th to the 19th.

Finance: Lindsey gave the Treasurer's report. Several large bills have been paid so the totals are down from last month. We have \$481,000 total in our accounts. \$408,000 of this is in our Reserve accounts. Of this amount, \$210,000 of it is in the painting account. 3 CD mature this month. Current interest rates are just at about 1.1% on 6 month CDs. Up coming expenses are the tennis court wind screens and the west gate repairs. We have 6 delinquent accounts. Of these, three are getting larger but

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one home in foreclosure has sold, which is good news income wise.

### Committee Reports:

**Architecture:** Scott reported that they need to establish a proper procedure between the committee, management and homeowners on handling remodeling projects in order that everyone knows what is currently in process. 3 requests are in process at present.

**Communications:** The Communications meeting was held at pool #1 on January 12. The meeting was conducted by President, Gail Christiansen at 10 AM. Approximately 16 homeowners attended.

Issues discussed in the owners' forum were (1) the loop that opens the west end gate is out. A new loop which will have to be buried in the asphalt has been ordered from CalTrans. When it arrives, the gate will be repaired. Small round objects were reported to be on the bottom of our swimming pools. It has been discovered that these are calcium deposits that have formed because it has been a long time since the pools have been drained and fresh water put into them. Starting the week of January 18, pools 2 & 3 will shut down and drained. Pools 1 & 4 will be heated. After 2 & 3 have fresh water, they will be heated and 1 & 4 will be drained.

Gail announced that if the homeowners want the complex painted by the end of the year, planning needs to start now. We need to have a color theme to start with. Many ideas were discussed and Gail suggested that interested owners submit samples to her for the Architectural Committee to approve. It seems a majority were interested in a dual color scheme. Gail hopes to have the choices submitted to be narrowed down to a workable number by the Architectural Committee and have the owners' present at

the Annual Meeting on March 13, vote on them.

Randal Williams of Randal's Plumbing will make a presentation on earthquake gas line shut off valves at our February 9 Communications meeting. Joy Moore, a practicing Nutritionist, will make a presentation on health and good nutrition at our March 9 meeting.

Submitted by Syd Sonneborn

**Landscape:** Landscape Committee HOA Board Report for January 19, 2010

There are no particular landscape problems or situations to report.

We are still working on several projects.

The citrus trees are ripening and a lot of the fruit is ready to be picked. Please remember that all trees located in the common area belong to all of the homeowners in CasaBlanca.

Pick and enjoy!

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Butzer, Landscape Committee

**Management:** Patrick indicated that the roof cleaning is done and he has a report on the condition of the roofs on hand. The Utility equipment rooms at the pools need to have a better security system (locks) to keep people from fiddling with the temperature controls. A regular key lock mounted on a metal plate instead of a chain and padlock is needed. The Annual meeting is set up for March 13. The locks on both pedestrian gates also need maintenance work.

We have proposals for the new locking system on the pool utility room doors of \$865. for all four rooms. The board approved the bid.

The tennis court landscape proposal for converting to a desert landscape theme around the courts was tabled due to the expense of the bids. The quotes ranged from \$19,000 to \$13,000.

At the concluding Owners' forum, a suggestion was for the board to look into the cost of replacing the wood roofs on the pool utility rooms with alumnia wood which will not need constant maintenance.

The meeting concluded at about 11:15 AM.

## **Presentation on Automatic Gas Shut off Valves to be given**

*By Syd Sonneborn*

Your Communications Committee and the Emergency Preparedness Team will be sponsoring a presentation on automatic gas shut off valves at our February 9 Communications Committee meeting. The presentation will be given by Randal Williams, owner of Randal's Plumbing of Palm Desert. The meeting will be at 10:00 AM, in the pool #4 deck area.

An automatic gas shut off valve is designed to shut off the gas supply to your home at the time of an earthquake of about 5.2 or greater. Some of the advantages of having such a valve installed are:

- You don't have to be home at the time of the earthquake for it to operate.
- You must have the strength and dexterity to shut off the gas valve.
- You must know how to shut it off and be able to recognize when it is indeed off.
- You must have the proper tools to shut the gas valve off.
- Only the Gas Company should turn the gas back on.

In the presentation, Mr. Williams will illustrate how the valves work with the aid of a cut-away model. He is also prepared to offer home owners a discount on the cost of installation if enough people are interested in have the valves installed. The valves will be most effective in preventing fires after an earthquake only when both units in our duplex design have them installed. Remember your home owners insurance will not cover fire damage caused by an earthquake!

Randal, "The Plumber" has been in the plumbing business since 1980 and has owned Randal's Plumbing in Palm Desert since 1994.

### **Haiti Quake awakens interest in "Big One" Forecast**

I received an e-mail from David Mintzer on January 19, following the Haiti earthquake. A copy of the text from the e-mail follows:

Syd,

I guess the Haiti event has caused me to start to prepare rather than simply thinking about preparing. I know generally what has to be done but am unsure about some of the practicalities. For example, I have lists of what should be "stored" in case the need arises, but where do people store the materials, what sort of containers to hold it all, what does one do about rotating the perishables, etc.? Have you "attached" some of your furniture and TVs to the wall, etc.? I realize that how much each party does depends on their own view of what is worth doing, but I wonder what people actually do.

I also wonder if there are others who are in the same quandary—knowing what should be done but unsure of how to go about it. From a

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a previous Communications Committee meeting I had the impression that a significantly large number of our neighbors are as unprepared as we.

Perhaps a "practicalities meeting" might be in order? By the way, we have other commitments on Tuesdays (and Thursdays) as, I am sure, do others; can't we have alternate meetings on, say, Wednesday or Saturday, for example?

Any suggestions you can give would be most welcome.

David

### My reply:

David, you bring up many good questions that I am sure many homeowners are now wondering about. We do have much of the information you are asking about listed on our web cite [www.casablancahoa.net](http://www.casablancahoa.net) under **Emergency Preparedness** on the left side of the home page.

Where to store the items I guess, would depend on you as an individual, and how you tend to organize things. I have most of ours in the garage and kitchen. I have "tied down" the tall heavy furniture and heavy objects such as computer monitors. I have placed catches on the kitchen cabinet doors. Some items are held in place with "Museum wax" These types of hardware items are available at stores such as Home Depot or Lowes. I replace "expired" water annually in January. I personally still need buy a tent and sleeping bags!

I am open to the idea of holding an informational type of meeting at a different time than the Communications meeting. It just seems hard to communicate with our homeowners in general at other times but I can send out e-mails to our Emergency Preparedness Committee to see what type of response I get and then post it at our gates.

Syd

A Saturday meeting may work so that "working people" can attend this kind of meeting. Feel free to respond to me via e-mail at [www.sydsanson@aol.com](mailto:www.sydsanson@aol.com).

## The US Census is coming in March

*by Jerry Winer*

Here's the info I think our residents should have in order to avoid census takers coming in person to our units:

The 2010 Census is coming, and all of us MUST fill out the Census Forms coming in the mail, and mail them back. There are 10 questions, including the names, ages etc of EVERYONE living in the household.

If you are a full-time resident here at Casablanca, fill out the form, answer the questions, and list the number and names of residents at you address and mail it back.

If you are a snowbird, and live part of the year in another city where you vote, pay taxes and claim legal residence, answer the questions you can, BUT---list the number of residents at your Casablanca address as ZERO-0 ! DO NOT LIST THE NAMES etc-----BUT DO MAIL THE FORM BACK !

If you do NOT mail the census form back, a census taker will make a personal call at Casablanca looking for you, and create problems by interviewing you in person if you are here, and looking for you if you are NOT here.

PLEASE, WHETHER YOU ARE A PERMANENT RESIDENT HERE, OR A LEGAL RESIDENT ELSEWHERE, FILL OUT THE FORM AND MAIL IT BACK !

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**This issue of your Casablanca was  
produced by:**

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