

# R E P O R T

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## *Message from the President-*

*By: Bruce Tobis*

**G**reetings, River Piners. Let me begin my first message with thanks to the co-owners for my election to the Board of Directors; I appreciate the expression of your confidence, as well as that of the other Board members, who chose me to be President for the next year.

Since then, I've survived my first Board meeting as President, and can report a complete absence of drama. The insurance policy renewal, referred to at the Association meeting, was formally approved. The draft of a new policy to avoid Association liability in the event of co-owner negligence leading to frozen pipes in the wintertime was forwarded to our lawyers for review. The news that Farmington Hills is planning to revive the Neighborhood Watch program was brought up, and we'll be staying in touch to enable River Pines participation.

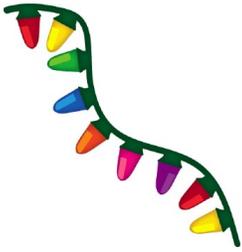
If you have a question or concern about River Pines, please speak up. Contact me, or any other Board member, or the management company. Our goal is to be so effective in the administration of River Pines, and to enjoy ourselves so much along the way, that we'll make our own re-election more difficult

due to the numerous co-owners who will want to volunteer.

The text above was posted on the River Pines web site, not long after our Fall Association meeting. Several co-owners have mentioned that they'd appreciate better communication, and our web site should be able to work as a good companion to this newsletter – faster response, if not greater detail. To that end, I'll post a President's message after each Board meeting, to at least let co-owners know what is being discussed.

It's not too early to think about the approaching winter. Look over the article in this newsletter about our Winterization policy, and give some thought to the precautions you'll take to ensure that your unit will not have water pipes freezing this winter. See also the article on holiday decorations. We hope that co-owners with an inclination to decorate their units will find enough scope within what is allowed; our rules are not adopted to be controlling or annoying, but rather to find a tolerable equilibrium for a large number of people who are sharing a small space. Finally, please make use of your garage to keep streets and driveways clear when there is snow to shovel.





## *Holiday Decorations*

**W**ith the holidays approaching faster than we can believe, it is time to review the rules for holiday decorations.

Mini-outdoors lights can be used either with or without roping on decks, wrought iron fences/gates, trees immediately adjacent to your unit, garage shrubs and/or statuary. Based on the updated rules and regulations that the Board approved in August and recently distributed to co-owners, no inflatable decorations will be allowed.

Wreaths can be used on the garage fronts but please make sure the address number can be seen, in case of emergency.

Christmas decorations can be used no earlier than the day after Thanksgiving and must be removed by January 6th. Above all, please use good judgement with holiday decorations and do not infringe on your neighbors.



## *Welcome New Co-Owners*

*By: The Welcoming Committee*

**R**iver Pines would like to welcome to our neighborhood the following new co-owners. Please update your latest directory, with the information below.

*Michelle Hewlett  
21980 River Pines Drive  
(248-346-6996)*

*Donald & Helen Meyers  
35275 Lone Pine Lane  
(734-525-8418)  
(734-812-0166 Cell)*

*Luigi & Assunta Petrucci  
35211 White Pine Trail  
(248-957-8248)*

*Eduardo Rodriguez-Bertaud  
21700 River Ridge Trail  
(248-231-3651)*

*Frank Stellon  
21830 River Ridge Trail  
(248-921-7073)*

### **River Pines Board of Directors**

<b>Bruce Tobis</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Jan Hall</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Barbara Lee</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Joyce Brandemihl</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Glenda Wilkinson</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Lin Whiteman</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Dennis Connolly</b>	<b>Director</b>

**[www.riverpinescondominiums.com](http://www.riverpinescondominiums.com)**

### **Management Company**

**McShane and Associates**

**6230 Orchard Lake Road, Suite 200  
West Bloomfield, MI 48322**

**Phone: 248-855-6492  
Hours—8:30am—5 pm Monday-Friday**

For Emergencies after 5:00 p.m. call: 248-456-0233

## *Revision of the Consolidated Master Deed*

**W**e've finally reached the finish for the revision of the Consolidated Master Deed. This is evident from the large packet of drawings that you received in the mail. The drawings are those that contain at least one edit, and I say "edit" instead of "change" because the purpose of the exercise was to correct errors and oversights, rather than to make any real difference.



Yes, it is expensive to do such a mailing, but that is the legal requirement. All co-owners must be informed of the revisions, and be allowed a 10 day period in which to comment,

before the revised drawings can be registered. An additional requirement is that all co-owners then be provided a copy of the registered drawings, and that is why you'll have a second copy which differs from the first only in that they have the engineer's signature.

Those of you with long memories may recall that this effort was inspired by the confusion over the "porch" and "deck" terminology. That has been cleared up, along with a few other odds and ends. Most importantly, we've made the drawings consistent with the defined extend of the Limited Common Element (LCE) of each unit.

The LCE is that part of the common element that is expected to be primarily used by a single co-owner; for example, your driveway is common element, maintained by the Associa-

tion, and you drive on it and I (usually) don't. But then when I change the light bulb on the front of your garage, there is no question that I'm allowed to be there.

Our controlling documents allow an LCE at the side of your unit that has your entry door (if there is not another unit attached to yours on that side), an LCE at the rear of your unit, and for some units an LCE at the front. These areas are most commonly made use of in installing a deck, but whatever use you have in mind for your LCE, please remember that it is still an area that the Association is responsible for, and that your first step should be seeking approval from the Association. The deck that you build in an LCE, however, is your responsibility. It has been pointed out that in the distant past there may have been instances of the Association maintaining such a deck. If this actually happened, it was in error, and contrary to our Bylaws (Article VI, Section 3, third paragraph).

We discovered along the way that there are a fair number of locations in which the stated size of the LCE is not possible, usually due to separate units being too close together. So the revised drawings include a list of adjusted values, in which we've divided the available space evenly. There were even a few instances of overlapping LCE's; we've adopted some guidelines, included in your new Handbook (in the section on Deck / Patio Construction and Maintenance), to show a way to proceed in such a situation, if it is ever necessary.





## ***New Policy—Winterization***

*By: The Board of Directors*

At the September Board meeting, a new policy was approved to protect the Association from possible financial loss in certain instances of co-owner negligence. The specific issue – what we’re calling “Winterization” – is that of failure to provide heat to the unit during the winter months.

When a burst water pipe is caused by some manufacturing defect, or by a part degrading over time, recovery may be handled by insurance policies. When the weather is cold, however, water pipes can freeze and burst due to the heat not being turned on during a co-owner’s absence. In November 2014 we had just such an event here at River Pines, and such personal negligence lets the insurance companies off the hook.

The damage from burst water pipes can be extensive, and it is easy to imagine a situation where the damage extends to Limited Common Element within the unit which is the responsibility of the Association. Hence the adoption of this policy, stating the responsibility of the co-owner to ensure that heat is provided to their unit.

Note that there is no restriction on how you attend to this. Several possible approaches are listed in the text of the policy. Another option, as mentioned in the Fall/Winter 2015 issue of the Farmington Hills Focus, is a voluntary water shutoff service, in which the City, for a fee, will shut off your water supply at the stopbox if you are going to be away for an extended period. To take advantage of this service, contact the Oakland County Water Resource’s Commissioner’s Office at 248-858-1110.

The official text of the policy, as approved by the Board is:

Whereas, Article VI, Section 13 of the River Pines Condominium Bylaws requires that each co-owner shall maintain his/her unit and any limited common elements appurtenant thereto for which he/she has maintenance responsibility in a safe, clean and sanitary condition. These include but are not limited to:

- . telephone
- . water
- . plumbing
- . electrical
- . utility conduits
- . other systems

Whereas, Article VI, Section 13 of the River Pines Condominium Bylaws states that each co-owner shall be responsible for damages or costs to the Association, or to other co-owners, as the case may be, from negligent damage to or misuse of any of the common elements by the co-owner, unless such damages or costs are covered by insurance carried by the Association in which case there shall be no such responsibility (unless full reimbursement to the Association is excluded by virtue of the deductible provision, in which case the responsible co-owner shall bear the expense to the extent of the deductible amount).

There is a possibility of substantial loss to the Association in the event that the heating, electric, water supply, sewage or other systems are neglected by individual co-owners. Therefore, co-owners are expected to take precautions during extended absences and/or during weather conditions when freezing of pipes might be reasonably expected. To avoid pipes freezing, for example, one could:

*(Continued on page 5...)*

(Continued from page 4...)

- ⇒ Shut off the main water supply and drain the pipes; or
- ⇒ Have a neighbor check in daily; or
- ⇒ Have a smartphone app that remotely checks a digital measurement of the condo interior air temperature;
- ⇒ Or, any other idea that is as effective.

If co-owner negligence is confirmed, the negligent co-owner will bear the Association's expenses.



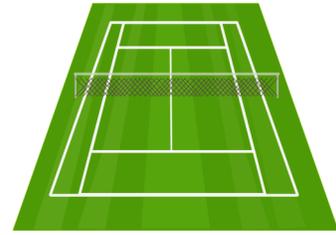
## *River Pines Social Committee News*

**T**hank you for all the survey responses we received. The data were compiled and groups are being formed for a variety of activities during the coming year. Some of the most popular activities include:

- Theater trips
- Euchre
- Block parties
- Dinner and a movie
- Summer concerts.

 Mark your calendars for the **Holiday Party being held at The Leather Bottle on Saturday, December 12th at 4PM.** Additional information and sign up will be at the mail stations soon.

Looking forward to a fun year here at River Pines.



## *Welcome Pickleball to River Pines!*

**E**xciting news for residents seeking to enjoy the paddle sport of Pickleball. One of our tennis courts is now modified for individuals to play regulation games.

To learn more about Pickleball visit the USA Pickleball Association (USAPA) website at [Usapa.org](http://Usapa.org)

Pickleball is a paddle sport created for all ages and skill levels. The rules are simple and the game is easy for beginners to learn. <http://www.usapa.org/what-is-pickleball/>

Pickleball is also available on indoor courts at the Costick Center. Drop in games are available Monday, Wednesday, and Friday through December 23rd, 8:30 am - 11:30 am. Equipment is provided.

Hope to see you next spring at the court.





## ***Salt Buckets Available***

*By: Bob Goodman*

To all residents of River Pines Condominiums salt buckets are available for your use on porches, sidewalks and driveways.

As part of our contract with Greenlawn salt is applied to the front deck, sidewalks, and driveways after shoveling or plowing. If you are in need of additional salt due to isolated icy spots, or want the added safety, the Association provides 5 gallon buckets of salt that you can keep.

Should you have a bucket that's empty and need more, Bob Goodman or Greg Nothnagel:

Bob Goodman (248) 756-3888  
Greg Nothnagel (734) 323-7594



## ***When Planning for the Holidays— Remember These Safety Tips—***

*By: John Fahrner*

- When preparing a holiday meal for friends and family be sure to wash hands, utensils, sink, and anything else that has come in contact with raw poultry. Keep in mind that a stuffed bird takes longer to cook.
- Never defrost food at room temperature. Thaw it in the refrigerator, in cold water or in the microwave.
- While doing holiday cooking, keep your knives sharp. Most knife injuries occur due to dull blades.
- When displaying a tree, cut off about two inches off the trunk and put the tree in a sturdy, water-holding stand. Keep the stand filled with water so the tree does not dry out quickly.
- Stand your tree away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources. Make sure the tree does not block foot traffic or doorways.
- When putting up holiday decorations, always use the proper step stool or ladder to reach high places. Don't stand on chairs, desks or other furniture.
- When you climb, always face the ladder and grip the rungs to climb – not the side rails. Always keep three points of contact on the ladder whether two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand.
- When climbing, keep your hips between the side rails and do not lean too far or overreach. Reposition the ladder closer to the work instead.



# *The Snow Season is Here*

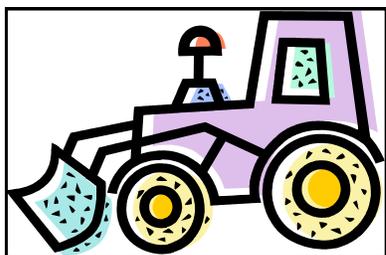
*By: The Grounds Committee*

**W**e have many new co-owners who may not have experienced winter in Michigan or in our complex. Snow removal and parking during the winter months can create many conflicts.

Our Bylaws state rules for parking in the confines of River Pines. They state that no vehicles are to be parked overnight on *any* street. This includes the hours between 12:00 AM and 6:00 AM.

**NO** parking *of any kind* (guests, visitors, etc.) is permitted on River Pines Court, Red Pine Trail, Silver Ridge Court and Court Ridge Court because of their narrow widths. Out of town guests must park within their host's driveway. Street parking for out of town guests will be limited and only with written permission of the Board of Directors. Vehicles may not be parked in the driveway under cover or protection from the elements. No driveway parking is allowed for any commercial vehicle owned or operated by a co-owner. These vehicles must be parked **IN** the garage. Trailers and recreational type vehicles cannot be parked in the driveway.

With the winter weather and all the ice and snow, parking is a big problem.



*Snowmen fall from Heaven—  
Unassembled!*

*When it snows you have two choices—  
Shovel or Make Snow Angels!*

*I love Snowy days, Frosty nights—And  
Warm Hearts!*



## *Speeding & Traffic Safety Reminders*

**W**ith all the activities that each of us tries to fit in the day we typically are hurrying to get things done. When in the car we tend to move forward in earnest and—speeding and short-cuts become the result.

With winter coming soon, everyone knows that the streets will be snow covered and slippery. Frequently, we see cars backing out of the garage and into the street without looking for oncoming traffic. Most of the time we are lucky and the oncoming traffic stops. As you know, in the winter, —stopping is not as easy as it is during other times of the year.

When backing out of the garage, or driving through the community, be careful and remember the grade school training to —Stop—Look and Listen.

McShane and Associates  
6230 Orchard Lake Road  
Suite 200  
West Bloomfield, MI 48322

Phone: 248-855-6492



**Happy Thanksgiving!**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**River Pines  
Holiday Party**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

4 PM

G. SUBU'S  
LEATHER BOTTLE