

TowerTalk

News and Information for Park Tower Condominium Association

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Budget and Finance Committee to Recommend PT 2016/17 Budget

by Paul Groeninger

At its meeting on January 25, 2016, the PTCA Board will adopt a budget for the coming fiscal year, which runs from March, 2016 through February, 2017.



In recent weeks, the Budget and Finance Committee has held five meetings with Management to review the 2016/17 proposed budget. As a result of those meetings, we are recommending some changes to the proposed budget originally submitted by Management.

We have scheduled two dates to review our recommended changes with the Board of Directors. These meetings will be held on November 30 and, if needed, December 7. Both meetings will start at 6:30 pm, will be held in the party room, and are open to all owners.

Several years ago we made a commitment to the owners to keep our assessment increases as low as possible, but no more than 3.5%. Over the years, we

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All Things Digital PTCA Activates SMS Text Notifications

by Tim Patricio, Property Manager

The Association has chosen a text notification service that now allows management to communicate important information more quickly and conveniently to owners and residents.



Be assured all current communication venues will continue: door-drops, posting of notices, the weekly PT News & Updates, and so forth. The new text service is just for those who prefer reading alerts, reminders, and other important messages on their cell phones.

Your cell phone need not be one of the newer "smart" models, but it must be able to receive SMS (text) messages. Be aware that while most cell phone plans allow text messages to be received free, some older plans may charge per message received. Wired and Internet phones will not receive these SMS (text) messages.

Subscribe to this new service by using your cell phone to text one or more of the following ...

- Text "PTCAalerts" and send to 94253 if you wish to receive emergency alerts about fires, floods, active shooters, power outages, and the like.

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All Things Mechanical Plumbing Project = Hidden Benefits

by Tim Patricio, Property Manager

Residents won't soon forget the massive plumbing project completed this past summer. In the small crawlspace above the lobby, we replaced several main plumbing loops running the entire expanse of the triangular perimeter of the building.



Each of these loops serves a specific purpose. One drains waste water and two provide hot and cold running water to the lower half of the building. With the exception of some isolated sections of pipe replaced or repaired over the years, the plumbing replaced was all original to the construction of Park Tower back in the early 1970's.

But shiny new pipes and a new ceiling are not the only benefits of this work. Where we could, we upgraded valves, improved the position of the piping and, in general, improved the technology. New valves and other mechanisms associated with the project are expected to save water, time, disruption and money in the future.

New shut-off valves were installed for all tiers. Those are the valves that control the flow of water from the main lines to every kitchen and bathroom riser. Many of the existing valves were too old to completely shut the water off. So each was replaced with a new valve, purported not to suffer from this type of problem as it ages.

But perhaps more importantly, the new valves will save many hundreds if not thousands of gallons of water that would otherwise be lost during the shutdown process – plus the many hours of labor it takes to deal with water the old valves could not hold.

Day-in, day-out there will be the additional capability of better isolating individual units that need shut-offs for repairs, installs and upgrades.

Two new main shut-off valves were installed as well, in new and more commonsensical locations than before. These valves isolate the lower half of the building and will mean we can better target most shut-offs which would otherwise require the whole building to be drained. This, too, will save thousands of gallons of water.

New "drain downs" were installed. These are interfaces where staff can hook up a hose to the water line and drain it so maintenance and repairs can be done on that tier. Also, old drain downs were replaced and repositioned in locations closer to access panels and areas within the crawl space where access is easier.

Because of this improvement and the new drain downs, we will be better able to target only the tiers we need to work on. They will result in thousands of gallons water saved and much less time needed to prepare and carry out water shut downs.

In repositioning those drain down lines, we deliberately bypassed a main holding tank. This holding tank acts as a reservoir which is pressurized and keeps hot water flowing.

In the past, water being drained would pass through this tank, stirring up years' worth of sediment. As our staff described it, it was sort of like a carton of high pulp orange juice. What happens when you shake and pour it? That pulp winds up in your glass! Then, to further complicate matters, the sediment got sucked back into the main line when the water was turned back on.

As we saw during our project this summer, this meant lots of units with loss-of-pressure problems. With the main holding tank being bypassed, we should experience far fewer pressure problems following shut downs.

Season's Greetings From The Board

The Holiday Season is upon us and the Board of Directors wishes all PTCA Owners and Residents a happy, safe and festive season.

As we look to give thanks and celebrate with our friends and loved ones, we encourage our neighbors to help us demonstrate appreciation to the team of workers who maintain and care for Park Tower. They answer our calls throughout out the year, whether as a Board, or as individual residents who need a helping hand.

To help show our collective gratitude, the Employee Holiday fund is established each year made up of voluntary donations from Owners and Residents. The funds collected are distributed to 32 employees including maintenance, door staff, garage and health club attendants, and the management office. In preparation for your holidays, we hope you remember these loyal and dedicated people. Keep in mind, some employees are highly visible, while others work behind the scenes or at very late hours. But they all deserve our recognition. As a team their combined efforts help promote a pleasant living experience at Park Tower.

To contribute to the fund, please make a check or money order payable to: **"Park Tower Employee Holiday Fund"**

Contributions may be placed in the drop box at the front desk, or dropped off at the Management Office. Please do not leave cash. The employees will receive their gift at the annual employee holiday party with a letter of appreciation and list of all the contributors. So funds are available in time, please make your contribution by Friday December 18th.

Thank you for helping us reward and support our staff. We wish you and your family peace, good health, joyful times and safe travels this season.

Happy Holidays to you and your family, friends, our staff and neighbors,

From The Park Tower Board of Directors,

David Nicosia, Michael Parrie, George Pauley, Jean Shamo, and Betty Terry-Lundy

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Condo Etiquette

Taking Out the Garbage - The Ins and Outs of Trash at Park Tower

by Jeff Hauser



In a building like ours, taking out the garbage involves way more than just hauling it to the alley for the city to pick up once a week!

Recently, I sat down with property manager Tim Patricio for a wide-ranging discussion about garbage – other disposables to be covered in the next issue -- and how it's handled in our building.

It all begins at the garbage chute. The chute is a 500 foot tall tube piercing the center of our building. At the bottom of the chute is a box that compacts the garbage. From there it goes into small dumpsters that accumulate during the day.

Every weekday morning, staff moves those small dumpsters to the dock where they – along with the contents of the big dumpster behind the loading dock – are picked up by PTCA's contracted scavenger service.

Back to the chute. It was reconstructed earlier this year, at a cost of about \$94,427. Though planned for in our reserve study, work of this sort is accelerated or delayed based on wear and tear over decades of use.

The chute is constructed of tube segments bolted together. Put the wrong items – or the right items wrongly packaged -- into the chute, and some very unfortunate things can happen on the way down.

Unbagged and poorly-bagged items catch on those nuts and bolts. Raw meat and dirty diapers thus snagged begin to smell. Given hot, humid weather, we quickly have a very stinky problem.

Ah, you say, not to worry because you live on an upper floor? Sorry. Due to the nature of high-rise buildings, air flows upward through the garbage chute. So you and your neighbors can fully share the experience 😊

Tim's suggestion: When you have such items, double-bagging them can insure that they get all the way down without leaving remnants in the chute. This is particularly good advice when bagging heavy, wet items. Imagine the explosion of lightly-bagged food remnants or kitty litter (in a pet-friendly building, which Park Tower is not) after a fall of several hundred feet.

Hard to believe, but occasionally even half-full cans of paint and other liquids are surreptitiously dropped down the garbage chute. Washing down the chute, whether by staff or paid professionals, can itself contribute to wear and tear. The pressurized mix of water with detergent and enzymes prematurely ages the chute and infiltrates gaps in the surrounding walls.

Cardboard boxes sometimes get lodged in the chute. Though lightweight, they are also stiff. When stuck just right, they can support hundreds of pounds of garbage that gets deposited afterward, with ensuing smells and significant structural dam-

age. Actually, this wouldn't be a problem if residents recycled cardboard as required by our Rules and Regulations (also to be covered in the next issue).

Besides the damage they can cause the chute itself, heavy objects can be a menace if dropped down the garbage chute while the small dumpsters are being moved around. A chunk of granite cut during a remodeling project becomes a formidable projectile by the time it gets all the way down the chute!

Ashtrays are yet another potential hazard. A still-smoldering butt could flare up and start a fire in the chute or a collection dumpster.

Lastly, one of the building's ongoing headaches is dealing with items left inside the service areas, underneath the garbage chutes or adjacent to them. That is not only a problem of etiquette; it is also a violation of our Rules and Regulations. The area around the garbage chute must be kept clear for both safety and good house-keeping.

So here's the word on the garbage chute: If it's for disposal but wrong for the garbage chute, bring the item along next time you come downstairs. Then take the short detour out back to put it directly in the dumpster around the corner from the loading dock.

And, cautions Tim, if you notice things stuck, stinky or otherwise improper, call the office. Someone will be up pronto to investigate 🏢

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B&F Committee to Recommend 2016/17 Budget

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have been able to honor that commitment while still completing major repair projects such as sealing the curtain wall, replacing the terrazzo, revamping the circular drive, remodeling the front lobby, completing plumbing projects in the lobby area, and continuing to replace the hot water risers. All this in addition to meeting our day-to-day operating expenses.

Our overall goal has been to get the reserve balance up to \$4,000,000. We are not there yet. In fact, we expect to end the current year with a reserve balance of approximately \$1,700,000. Park Tower is in very good financial shape, but we have not yet reached our goal.

So, what does that mean for next year, 2016/17? Well, we expect to spend approximately \$1,200,000 in capital projects, which include riser work, remodeling the health club (with some equipment), work on the kiddie pool and residential unit hot water heaters.

Also, our reserve study will be three years old in 2017 and needs to be updated. The funds for this update are included as part of the reserve project expenses for 2016/2017. The update is necessary to ensure we are on target to meet our goal and that our reserves are properly funded.

In addition, we will continue to meet our day-to-day expenses and are recommending an increase to the assessments of no more than 3.5%.

With that increase, we anticipate our re-

serve balance to be nearly \$2,000,000 by the end of next year.

When we reach that \$2,000,000 reserve balance, we will be at the half-way mark of our desired level. With a lot of hard work from our management team to keep expenditures in line, and with no more than a 3.5% increase in assessments over the years, we will reach our goal of \$4,000,000 in the reserves by year 2021/22.

Seems like a long time, but before we hit that year, we will have completed multiple years of reserve projects in excess of \$1,000,000 while having met our day-to-day monetary needs. Yes, Park Tower's finances are in pretty good shape and we will work to keep our financial position sound.

Since this article was prepared prior to the B&F Committee meetings with the Board, the final, planned budget for 2016/17 may change. However, we do not anticipate an assessment increase larger than 3.5% 

Paul Groeninger is the chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Got a Story Idea?

The News and Social Media Committee is looking for stories and people to help write them! If you would like to contribute contact the committee at: news@ptcondo.com

Did You Know? Leaving Home?

Parkers have alternative ways to leave the parking garage. The usual way is to use office-issued fobs – formerly, plastic cards –programmed to open the overhead door when touched to the sensor at the top of the exit ramp.

But a remote control allows drivers to open the door upon approach and not have to roll down the driver's side window. Programmable garage door remotes are available from big box retailers and from Amazon. Best to stop by the office first to learn the necessary specs.



Or, if you are driving a newer model car, it may have that remote capability built into it. Check your owner's manual, then ask the garage attendant to program it for you.

Climb a Few Flights

When Winter's chill and slippery sidewalks keep you indoors, consider an



exercise alternative: Get off the elevator early and take the stairs. Start slow – say just the last flight up – and add additional levels as you're able.

The (younger) reader who suggested this is now climbing the last 15 flights! 

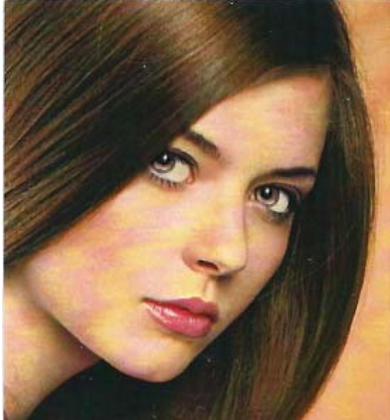
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Park Tower Profile

Ann Murray, Park Tower's Very Own "Classical Music Ambassador"

by Bob Shamo



Have a nice voice and a feel for classical music? Well then, join the thousands of other amateur musicians who sign up each December for Chicago's own **Do-It-Yourself-Messiah**. More on that later, but in truth the DIY Messiah is but one of many subjects I discussed with Park Tower owner, Ann Murray, when we sat down to talk one bright Sunday afternoon.

Ann is Executive Director of Chicago's International Music Foundation, an umbrella organization for presenting mainly classical music programs: 230 concerts this past year for almost 74,000 adults and children. She has lived at Park Tower since 1997, having come to us by way of Scotland, London, Paris and Turkey. Here's how it all happened.

Ann's interest in classical music was late in coming. Born in Scotland, she grew up listening to The Beatles and Rolling Stones. At the appointed time, she enrolled at St. Andrews University. But feeling not quite ready, she soon left for Paris where for the next year she worked as an au pair (live-in nanny), attended classes at the Alliance Française, and absorbed the culture.

Returning to London, Ann made two inspired choices. First, she took a full time administrative job, and second, she began attending orchestra concerts. Those experiences would, several years later, land her the coveted position of assistant to the general manager of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Set for life, right? Well, not really. At age 27 Ann was finally ready for college. Vacations in Greece had whet her appetite for archaeology, and that became her major

at St. Andrew's University. Upon graduation she was hired as Assistant Director of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara in Turkey where she spent 6 years.

While in Ankara, Ann renewed her friendship with a professor on assignment from University of Chicago. The two had worked together on digs in nearby Syria, and he was about to return to America. But they married first and then endured a two-year separation until she was able to wrap up her own work and join him in Chicago.

They lived first in the Ravenswood neighborhood while Ann continued her PhD studies as an "external student" of the University of London.

Then a friend told her about Al Booth. Mr. Booth was a much-loved producer of classical music in Chicago, and he needed some help. So, as she had once before, Ann interviewed for a music administrative position and in 1989 became Mr. Booth's assistant at the International Music Foundation. Today, as Executive Director of the Foundation, she manages its three initiatives.

The **Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts** feature young, up-and-coming musicians from around the world. These 45-minute programs are on Wednesdays at 12:15 pm in Preston Bradley Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center (corner of Michigan Avenue, between Washington and Randolph), and are also broadcast live on WFMT. The concerts are free – donations only – but arrive early; the 550 seats fill up fast.

Live Music Now! is the Foundation's educational initiative, and it has two formats. Kids can attend the monthly Young People's Concerts at Preston Bradley Hall and Kenwood Academy. Or, small ensembles will go to the children, performing at their own schools. Either way, the musicians include some of Chicago's finest, and generous materials are provided to teachers for preparation and follow up.

About its **Do-It-Yourself Messiah**, the Foundation's website says..

"A Chicago holiday tradition since 1976, the Do-It-Yourself Messiah brings together a world-class conductor and soloists, an

all-volunteer orchestra of local professionals and amateur musicians and thousands of chorus/audience in a thrilling performance of Handel's masterpiece."



For the timid, help abounds. While reading music is not essential, being able to follow it is! So musical scores are available at modest cost, as are "choral Tutor CDs" in soprano, alto, tenor and bass versions depending on the part one intends to sing at the performance. Read more at www.imfchicago.org.

Tickets are on sale now for performances on Monday and Tuesday, December 21 and 22, 7:00 pm, at the Harris Theater, at the northern edge of Millennium Park on Upper Randolph Street.

As we wound down our interview, I asked Ann about her time at Park Tower. She still lives in the 11 tier, two-bedroom unit she first occupied in 1997, enjoying the building's aesthetic, its backyard being the park, and the Red Line just a few blocks away.

But now, she says, the building is better managed than when she first arrived, the staff more forthcoming, and work orders more quickly attended to. "And," she adds, "I like that there are more young people here now, in varied family combinations, of different races and nationalities."

Ann is a delight to interview – careful but forthcoming, with a steady gaze but warm smile, and an obvious appreciation of our building and its residents. We're proud to have her as a neighbor **■**

The Devil is in the Details - Repairs and Small Remodeling Projects

by Sheldon Atovsky & Bob Shamo

What to do when a repair is needed in your condo, or you have a hankering for a small but significant structural improvement? We're talking here about unit owners who find a particular project beyond their skill level or requiring tools they don't have.

If, in fact, you are a renter, then you need to talk with your landlord. Your lease is probably pretty specific about alterations, and management requires owner direction/permission in all but the most obvious and emergency situations.

Our maintenance staff is equipped to do many commonly-needed repairs. Some are free to the unit owner, some are not. For instance, unclogging a plugged drain is "non-chargeable," while remounting a bi-fold kitchen pantry door will cost the standard \$40 per half hour or a portion thereof, plus parts.

If in doubt, a call to the office will bring a maintenance person to your unit, after which you'll be better informed about an appropriate fix.

For more extensive work, the Association's manual on Construction and Remodeling Policies and Procedures establishes three project categories. Category A Projects – minor ones not affecting the Common Elements (further identified in the manual) – are those being considered for this story.

Examples given in the manual are painting, wallpapering, replacing appliances, and removal and installation of carpeting. To these might be added replacing window sills, mounting television screens, and installing bookshelves, closet organizers and window shades.

Clearly, such projects are many and varied. If in doubt, ask. Category A Projects do not require Association approval, but management has witnessed a lot of them and may be able to help in unexpected ways.

Other than waiving the requirement for prior approval, all other Association rules, policies and procedures apply to Category A Projects. These are stated quite specifically in the CRPP manual and include deliveries, scheduling and noise control. In addition, certain tradesmen – for instance, electricians and plumbers – must be licensed.

Then, there's insurance. Contractors working in the building are required to carry general liability, vehicle, crime (theft), and umbrella coverage. Workers' compensation, another type of insurance, is also required for all but single-operator contractors. An insurance document, completed as a sample, is online at www.ptcondo.com/library/ under Useful Forms and Documents.

Given these guidelines and requirements, then, what are your options as an owner needing skilled help?

First, you may remember that in past years, certain of our maintenance staff accepted outside work. By and large, they do not do so anymore. While the Association allows it, our employees would likely not be covered by PTCA's own liability insurance should an incident occur outside their working hours. This limitation – and the occasional misunderstanding with an owner – have discouraged the practice.

How about a major remodeling contractor? Such companies are usually well qualified, employ licensed employees where needed, and have the necessary insurance. Park Tower has seen many of its units fully and beautifully renovated over the years.

If a major remodeler turns you down, it may be because the work you need is not sufficient to warrant making time for it and following through with the necessary paperwork. In other words, the job might not pay well enough to cover the company's very considerable overhead.

That leaves the solution many of our owners choose: Hire a handyman.

Yes, if you find an individual contractor with the right skills, licensing and insurance, he will be welcome in the building. In fact, while management does not recommend or list contractors, it can provide informal referrals given the nature of your

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- Text "PTCAmaintenance" and send to 94253 if you wish to receive notices of elevator, water and other service outages, as well as repairs, construction and project announcements.

Following your subscription(s), you will receive a welcome message. And thereafter – **provided we have your current cell phone number** – we will send text messages relevant to the categories you've selected.

To unsubscribe, text "STOP" to the last message you receive in that category. You may re-subscribe at any time.

The use of this service is for Park Tower Residents and Owners only. In other words, unless/until the management office enters your cell phone number in its registered owners/residents database, you will not receive the messages you've requested. To be sure we have your most current contact information on file, email us at parktowercondo@dkcondo.com.

The world being what it is nowadays, this messaging service comes with a few other disclaimers as well. Please visit the PTCondo website at <http://www.ptcondo.com/sms/> for terms and conditions related to use of this service. And contact the Management Office any time with questions or for help ☒

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- 38 employees
- 3005 work orders fulfilled
- 48 hours straight snow removal
- 3 weeks of garbage removed by hand
- 3 weeks of lobby riser repairs

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Show your appreciation and contribute to the Park Tower Holiday Fund!

Plumbing Project = Hidden Benefits

Continued from Page 2

Those are the highlights, but there are other benefits. More access panels were installed, all of them more logically positioned to reduce the need to cut into the ceiling when plumbing work is needed.

In our new and improved ceiling, all light fixtures were replaced with their equivalent or better in LED lighting. In general, this results in more light while using less electricity. Also, while the ceiling was open, we replaced the insulation on AC lines and vents. This will produce more efficient heating and cooling, with associated savings in energy costs.

Riser replacements will now recommence. These are more straightforward with fewer time and money-saving enhancements. However other projects – including non-plumbing projects – are on deck where such opportunities do exist.

Such projects and improvements are normal for a building such as Park Tower. As we consider future work, our focus will be on integrating new ideas and technology for better performance and efficiency.

The goal is to do better while aging gracefully, to get smarter and impact our environment less ☒

The advertisement for Tedino's Pizzeria & Restaurant features a red and black checkered background. At the top, there are five photos of food items: a skillet of pasta, a whole pizza with a slice being lifted, a plate of salad, a plate of fried chicken, and a slice of tiramisu. Below the photos is the Tedino's logo, which is an oval containing the name "Tedino's" in a cursive font, "Est. 1989" in a smaller font, and "PIZZERIA & RESTAURANT" in a bold, sans-serif font. Underneath the logo, the address "5335 NORTH SHERIDAN ROAD" and phone number "773-275-8100" are listed, along with the services "DINE IN • PICK-UP • DELIVERY" and the website "Order online at Tedinos.com". A large photo of the restaurant's interior shows several tables and chairs, with a small figurine of a chef on the counter. At the bottom, a red banner with white text reads "REDEEM FOR \$3.00 OFF ANY LARGE OR X-LARGE PIZZA" and includes the conditions "You must mention coupon when ordering. One coupon per order per person. Not valid with other offers or discounts." and the Tedino's logo.

Chef's Corner

Warm and Comforting, Mulligatawny Soup

by Taryn Heubner

It's that time of year again... as the weather gets cooler, we long for something warm and comforting. Soups and stews are at the top of my list this season and this recipe for Mulligatawny is the perfect marriage between the two.



This is my own spin on a classic Anglo-Indian dish. It is my most requested recipe and a favorite for dinner parties. You can make this as elegant or home-style as you like, and it can be easily modified as vegetarian or vegan.

Ingredients are:

- 3 T butter
- 2 White Onions, sliced (for caramelizing)
- 6 Cloves of Garlic, Crushed
- One 2 inch piece of Fresh Ginger, grated
- 1 Granny Smith Apple (peeled, small dice)
- 2 T Garam Masala
- 2 T (Madras) Curry Powder
- 2 t Ground Corriander
- 2 t Turmeric
- 1 t Cumin
- 1 t Cayenne
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 3 Cups Red Lentils
- 8 Cups of Great Chicken or Vegetable Stock
- 1 can of chickpeas (2 if you want more)
- 1 Can Coconut Milk

Garnish with:

- 1 cup of Scallions & Cilantro (chopped)
- 1 Fresh Green Apple (tiny dice)
- Zest and Juice of 1 Lemon or Lime

Mix above ingredients and set aside for 20 min or so. Then add 1 cup of Cashews (roasted and chopped), cooked Rice and cooked Chicken (either shredded or diced -- a rotisserie bird works great here.)

Melt Butter and Caramelize Onions until nice and brown. I add about 3 t salt to help them out. (About 30 min)

Add Apples half way through caramelizing.

Add Ginger, Garlic, and Chopped Cilantro Stems, and Dried Spices. Sauté for 3 minute, until fragrant.

Add Bay Leaf and Lentils, coat lentils. Add Chicken Stock.

Simmer until the Lentils begin to fall apart in 20-25 min.

At this point, I like to puree half of the soup and add back to the pot. You can also puree the whole thing or none at all--It's all a matter of preference.

Taste for salt.

Add Chickpeas and Coconut milk and simmer on low for 10 min.

Serve with Chicken, Rice, and Apple & Cashew Garnish, and a pinch of Chipotle or Ancho chili powder for kick.

Enjoy!! 🍴

Taryn is a private chef and lives here at Park Tower.

Do you have a recipe you'd like to share?

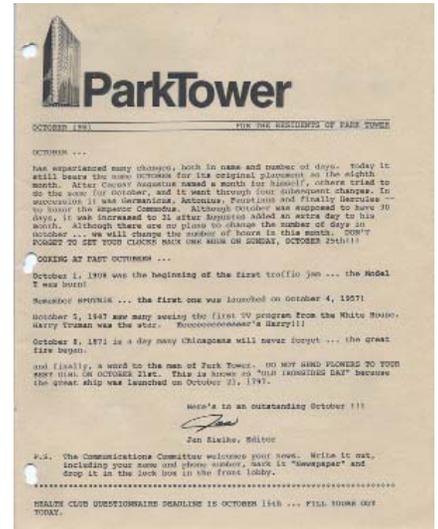
Let us know! We'd love to find out what delicious meals are cooked up here at Park Tower!

Contact the NSM committee at: news@ptcondo.com

TowerTalk Archives Social Activities Front and Center

by Bob Shamo

From back issues we've selected October, 1981. Interestingly, this particular newsletter was titled ParkTower, long before making one word out of two was common.



This issue has an extensive center-fold titled, "Whatever Your Interest, the Activities and Social Committee has Plans for You." Here are a few of the listings for the month of October.

- Culture Bus to the city's west side
- Evening of Literature, a monthly meeting on the Great Books
- Evening Social for Singles
- So Long Softball Party celebrating Park-Tower's "fabulous softball team"
- Indian Comes to Park Tower, a film
- Eat Your Way Through Ethnic Chicago, a series of visits to ethnic restaurants
- Midweek Afternoon Social and Thursday Evening Social, weekly gatherings to play cards, games and share conversation.

And all this for one month. Fascinating! Truly, it was a different era.

View this issue and others online at www.ptcondo.com, under the Library tab 📖

Health Club Committee Announces Upgrade in Two Phases

by Ken Anderson

The first phase of a project to renovate and upgrade the Park Tower Health Club is scheduled to begin about March 1, 2016.

This phase will include turning the existing weight room into the cardio room, and converting racquetball court #1 (south court) into the weight room. A suspended strut system and railing will be installed for lighting and ceiling fans in the to-be-converted racquetball court. A wireless network for TVs will be installed in the new cardio room. Most equipment will be replaced with new, Matrix brand equipment.

New in the cardio room:

- 5 Treadmills
- 3 Ellipticals
- Upright & Recumbent Cycles
- Rower
- Stretch Trainer

New in the weight room:

- Hip Abduction/Adduction
- Leg Press/Calf Extension
- Rear Delt/Pec Fly
- Bicep/Tricep
- Leg Extension/Leg Curl
- Abdominal/Back Extension
- Chest Press
- Multi-Functional Strength Trainer

Existing equipment retained:

- NuStep Seated Stepper
- AirDyne Cycle
- Life Fitness Strength Multi-Gym
- Life Fitness Vertical Knee Raise
- Life Fitness Seated Leg Press
- Weight Rack Cage & Bench
- Weight Bars and Weight Sets
- Weight Rack and Dumbbell Sets

The second phase of the project will be scheduled after the first phase is completed. It will include a complete gut rehab of the men's and women's locker rooms including replacing tilework and saunas; rebuilding the women's shower; updating plumbing and fixtures; and replacing the men's shower with a custom built walk-in shower with its own plumbing and fixtures.



The next meeting of the Health Club Committee will be in January, details to be announced.

Sketches of the cardio and weight room layouts accompany the web version of this story at www.ptcondo.com/health-club-upgrade/ 

Ken Anderson is the chair of the Health Club Committee.

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Edgewater Arts Edgewater Theater District Flex Pass, a Sweet Deal

In the last issue of TowerTalk we listed nearby theatres. But as more than one reader pointed out, we forgot the closest one. Sorry about that.

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Chicago, IL 60640

(773) 649-3186

<http://www.steeptheatre.com/>

If you are an avid theater-goer, consider the Edgewater Theater District Flex Pass. For \$75 – only \$30 for age 30 and younger -- the Flex Pass provides entry to most of the listed theaters. It also entitles you to a 10% discount at participating restaurants. Read more at

<https://www.buzzonstage.com/etd>

and check each theatre's home page to make sure the Flex Pass is accepted 

Like to Take Photos?

The News and Social Media Committee can use your help!

If you would like to contribute your photographic skills to the next issue of TowerTalk contact us at: news@ptcondo.com

Know Your Neighbors - Marathon Marvels, Gardening Galore, Bicycles and Books!

Of her first NYC Marathon, **Maggie Burnes** says, "The course was brutal, but overall it was such a great experience. The spectators really uplifted me at some very difficult points and were awesome! My sisters had sent a bottle of Champagne to celebrate the accomplishment. Yum!!"



One of our employees, **Leo Jimenez**, also completed the NYC Marathon.

Congratulations to both Maggie and Leo.

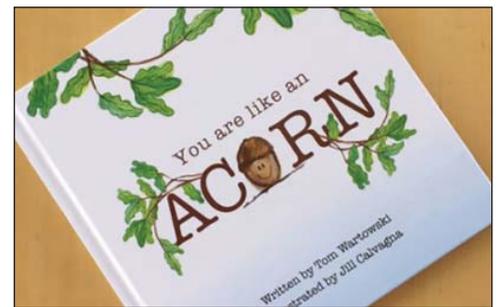
Our faithful volunteer, **Kent Brave**, getting the fall/winter display in place. Many thanks, Kent, for making Park Tower lovely every season, all year long.



3,000 Miles and Counting! That's how many miles our two avid bikers, **Terry Gorman and Sheldon Atovsky** have tallied up this year alone. To celebrate they made custom tee shirts that say "It Takes Two to Tandem".



Tom Wartowski has written a children's book, *You Are Like an Acorn*. He got the idea after seeing acorns scattered outside his home in Rockford. "I was intrigued at how different they all looked ... and when I look at my grandchildren, I marvel and am intrigued by what someday they may become."



Inquiries to news@ptcondo.com will be forwarded to Tom 



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Repairs and Small Projects Continued from Page 6

project.

But for a handyman, the rub is often insurance. Unless he has several projects lined up in the building, the typical handyman may see insurance as an unaffordable expense. And owners who hire an uninsured individual (or company) – if caught – risk being fined by the Association. Then, too, imagine the legal risk should there be an accident!

National online services offer something of a blended solution. An inquiry to Mr. Handyman revealed that in addition to facilitating contact with one of several small north Chicago contractors, it provides an insurance document that can easily be tweaked to satisfy our requirements, guarantees licensing when required, and promises satisfaction.

The downside? \$158 for the first hour of service, \$52 for each additional 30 minutes, plus any materials needed.

As we go to press, Park Tower is considering an innovative approach to one partic-

ular project. In response to a suggestion made at the November 7 Owners' Forum, the Association is considering how it might encourage owners who don't already have thermostats to install them. Were this to happen, the building could realize substantial energy savings, thus lowering operational costs shared by all owners.

The Association would solicit interest among owners, then vet and select a single contractor to do the work. Questions would be asked, information shared, a schedule determined and thermostats installed .. all facilitated by the Association but contracted and paid for by individual owners.

Were this project to succeed, it could point the way to similar, grouped endeavors in the future **tt**

New Offices Open in Park Tower's Business Mall

An attorney and his father, a certified public accountant, have set up shop in our Business Mall. They are at the 113A location, around the corner from the market, near the skylight and tables.

Attorney Stephen J. Feldman and CPA Roger Philip Feldman are sole practitioners. Stephen's primary areas of practice are criminal defense and DUI defense. He has had his own practice since 2003 and handles cases throughout Cook and the collar counties.

Roger's firm has provided tax services to businesses and individuals since 1970. He and his son have been sharing space since 2003 and moved here from a location in River North.

The office is open weekdays, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Contact information is at www.feldmancriminaldefense.com and www.rpfcpa.com **tt**

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ASCO, Your Community Organization

by Sheli Lulkin

Have you noticed any orange and white signs on Sheridan Road fences? They have a graphic of an old fashioned bicycle and say "Walk Your Wheels!" The signs are a part of a joint campaign sponsored by the Association of Sheridan Road Condo/Co-op Owners (ASCO) and Alderman Harry Osterman as a public safety measure for pedestrians on Sheridan Road sidewalks.

ASCO is your community organization and you are a member. There are 35 members in ASCO – each representing a community association on Sheridan Road between 5200 and 6400 North. Altogether we represent over 7,000 units and about 10,000 residents. We represent about 1/3 of the residents in the 48th ward. Our job is to protect and improve the quality of life on Sheridan Road.

Our members represent associations ranging from 31 units to 720 units. Our activities include working with elected

officials, Park District employees and each other.

Our major projects in the past years include arranging for infrastructure repairs on Sheridan Road, construction of a new children's park in the 5600 block, adding and planting planters and projects to improve public safety. All of this could not be done without the support and assistance of public officials.

We began well over 30 years ago as a group of four associations who united to fight for equity in property taxes and didn't win. We then fought to put a cap on nursing homes in what was known as the grey corridor and did win that.

ASCO has been very active in the community over the years and worked with many organizations such as the Edgewater Historical Society, Loyola University Chicago and Edgewater Artists in Motion.

Our major work has been with the State legislature where we fought mandatory

sprinkler systems. We have a two level educational program for Board members and residents. One of our goals is to increase participation in association business. We believe that your home is your business and as a major investment you should be aware of all aspects.

Right now we are carefully examining plans for new construction at 5440 N. Sheridan. The building, which will be known as The Overture, will target the burgeoning senior community of Edgewater. A community meeting, sponsored by Alderman Osterman, was held recently with designs, plans, and a chance to voice your opinions. Thanks for your participation! 

Follow ASCO at:
www.ascosheridanroad.org/

Sheli Lulkin is the President of ASCO

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Restaurant Review

Calo Ristorante: A Multi-faceted Italian Restaurant

by Terry Gorman

Calo Ristorante

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Sun 2 pm to 10 pm (dinner only)
Closed Thanksgiving & Christmas



What comes to mind when you think of Italian cuisine? Pasta? Tomatoes? Cheese? Pizza? Wine? For me, it's all of the above – and also, where to get the best of those offerings in the neighborhood. As it happens, there are three excellent Italian restaurants within walking distance of Park Tower.

Before getting to the featured one, let me mention **Francesca's Bryn Mawr**, corner of Bryn Mawr and Kenmore. Its menu changes monthly – with an emphasis on pasta and seafood – but both regular and stand-in dishes are wonderful. I've had five slices of their bread at a single meal, and I'm particularly keen on the tiramisu and crème brûlée. Valet parking is available, as is a budget menu midday Mondays through Fridays (order must be in by 4 pm).

Then there's **Anteprima**, 5316 N. Clark on the west side of the street. The rabbit is the best I've had in years, and during the summer you can be seated outdoors, at the rear of the restaurant.

And now to the matter at hand, **Calo's**, the Italian restaurant I visit the most. The menu is extensive and here, too, there is a delicious bread, toasted and topped with

roma tomatoes, cannellini beans, basil, garlic, and extra virgin olive oil.

But the dishes that really sing to me are Calo's mouth-watering ribs, the many Italian specialties, and the best French fries (ask for them crunchy!) I've ever had in Chicago.



And the pizza. Vegetarians, note that my usual choice is the truly vegetarian pizza with fresh broccoli, zucchini and carrots (giving it a slightly sweet taste) to which I always add garlic and -- bad-boy that I am -- sometimes even sausage!

Recently, six of us took Saturday night dinner at Calo. I sampled several dishes – thanks, guys! -- I hadn't had before. Delicious, as described below.

Bob started with Wedge Salad. Roasted corn, grape tomatoes, cucumber and bacon bits are mixed with iceberg lettuce – which he then smothered in blue cheese dressing and added bleu cheese crumbles.

From the oven, Calo's Special Pizza is thin crust and comes with sausage, onion, green pepper & mushrooms. Bob had pepperoni added and noted afterward how the crust was crunchy while the toppings stayed moist.

Jean ordered Farfalle Butera: Italian sausage, green peas, cream gorgonzola cheese sauce with bow-tie pasta and took half home.

David ordered a special, Pollo Milanese: three 5-ounce pan-fried boneless breasts of chicken with a cream lemon and caper sauce, served with fresh asparagus and lightly-breaded.

William mentioned that he often orders Vongole (linguini & clams) and appreciates the fresh, little-neck clams, to which

is added red or white sauce.

But this time he ordered Maiale Milanese: two pan-fried 8-ounce center cut Frenched bone pork chops, cannellini beans, rapini, garlic, and "EVOO" (extra virgin olive oil). The pork chops were crispy, and he enjoyed the combination of beans with bitter greens and buttery wine sauce.

Sheldon usually starts a meal at Calo's with Calamari alla Griglia, an appetizer of grilled squid over spinach, garlic, and EVOO. But this time he sprang for Pappardelle con Funghi: grilled shrimp with porcini, portobello and shitake mushrooms, cream chardonnay wine sauce, and drizzled white truffle oil. The dish was stuffed with mushrooms and bursting with mushroom flavor!

Yours truly ordered Pasta Italia: shrimp, broccoli, garlic and white wine over linguini. The dish was full with jumbo shrimp, lots of broccoli and a light sauce.

With these six dishes, we barely scratched the surface of what Calo's has to offer! And, oh, about those mouth-watering ribs I mentioned earlier ..

Three of us often have an enjoyable evening out sharing just two full slabs with an accompanying side and salad. A meal for three, \$40.



Calo's has a lunch menu with lower prices and some sandwiches not on the evening menu. Carryout and delivery are available, as are private group dinners.

The service was considerate, too. Three couples, three checks – not a problem! And the stiff Manhattan ordered by one of our party? The server offered to split it, half now and half in a glass to take home!

TT

Recently Rehabbed

An 02 Tier Unit Exposes the “Inner Beauty” of Park Tower!

by Bob Shamo, photos by Mike Magliane

With an inspired choice of materials and furnishings, this 02 tier, one-bedroom unit now looks and feels brand new. Its owner, Paula (who is fine with us using her name), bought her condo this past spring, rehabbed it over the summer, and moved in late September.

What sold her was the Lake view and the potential of all units in our modernistic building.

Sadly, the existing décor was less than inspiring. But knowing our iconic concrete pillars must extend all the way up, she imagined that exposing them in an unfinished state might be a good place to start. (See photos below)

Paula is handy, owns power tools, and had recently rehabbed her mental health clinic on the near north side. So she did the tear-down herself, though it took longer than expected due to the building's weekend noise restrictions.

Not wishing to hurt herself or “do serious damage,” she hired licensed and insured contractors (building requirements) for plumbing and electric. But hanging cabinets, tiling bath and kitchen floors, painting and sewing drapes – these and many other jobs she managed by herself with an occasional helping hand.

Flooring came from Lumber Liquidators: 3/8” tongue and groove strips, 4 1/2” wide and in random lengths, with acoustical dampening material fused to the bottom

of each piece. The floor was “floated” (not glued) over a 1/4” layer of cork. Grayish with a whitewashed look, it complements the pillars, appliances, cabinets, and counter-top.



| Continued on Next Page



◀ Concealed concrete pillars



Concrete pillars exposed ▶

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Recently Rehabbed Continued from Page 14

Other interesting features ..

- 18" dishwasher shaves 6" off the usual width.
- Kitchen cabinets (IKEA) attach with a single header thus reducing effort and holes in the walls.
- Original cabinet hardware was stripped and refinished in original black and antique gray.
- Old bathroom fixtures were returned to the building as a source of spare parts.
- Tub is an extra deep, "soaker" model, from the Jacuzzi company.
- An antique dresser found at a flea market serves as a stand for the washbasin.



One more thing: By sacrificing the bathroom linens closet, Paula was able to install a Bosch washer and dryer. These are separate machines, better than a "combo," with the dryer on top. Note that 220 volt electric service was required in the bathroom, plus extensive plumbing.



Paula calculates the cost of her rehab at \$32,000, split about equally between materials and labor. She has offered to address questions addressed to news@ptcondo.com.

Have you rehabbed recently? Or made just one or two significant improvements to your condo? Send us a pic and a short explanation. Units are identified by tier, and owners may remain anonymous if they prefer 



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Elizabeth Todorovic

(Real Estate Attorney)
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Dates to Remember

Board of Directors Meeting w/ B&F Committee	6:30 PM	Party Room	Nov. 30, 2015
Board of Directors Meeting w/ B&F Committee (No Board meeting Dec. 7 if work w/B&F Committee is completed on Nov. 30)	6:30 PM	Party Room	Dec. 7, 2015
Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM	Party Room	Dec. 14, 2015
Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM	Party Room	Dec. 28, 2015
Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM	Party Room	Jan. 11, 2016
Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM	Party Room	Jan. 25, 2016
Owners Forum	7:00 PM	Party Room	Feb. 2, 2016
Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM	Party Room	Feb. 8, 2016
Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 PM	Party Room	Feb. 22, 2016

Please watch the bulletin boards or ptcondo.com for any scheduling changes.
You can also contact the management office at parktowercondo@dkcondo.com.

Management Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday	8:00 am - 6:00 pm
Saturday	7:00 am - 11:00 am

2015 Holiday Schedule

Thanksgiving	Wednesday November 25, 2015	Office Closes at 3PM
Thanksgiving	Thursday November 26, 2015	Office Closed
Thanksgiving	Friday November 27, 2015	Office Closes at 3PM
Christmas Eve	Thursday December 24, 2015	Office Closes at 3PM
Christmas Day	Friday December 25, 2015	Office Closed
Christmas Holiday	Saturday December 26, 2015	Office Closed
New Year's Eve	Thursday December 31, 2015	Office Closes at 3PM
New Year's Day	Friday January 1, 2016	Office Closed
New Year's Holiday	Saturday January 2, 2016	Office Closed

Contributing to This Issue of TowerTalk

Bob Shamo (Committee Chair & Editor)

Ken Anderson (Health Club Committee Chair & Writer)

Sheldon Atovsky (Committee Member)

Terry Gorman (Writer)

Paul Groeninger (Budget & Finance Committee Chair & Writer)

Jeff Hauser (Committee Member)

Taryn Heubner (Writer)

William Kay (Committee Member)

Sheli Lulkin (ASCO President & Writer)

David Nicosia (Committee Board Liaison)

Tim Patricio (Property Manager & Writer)

Have Any Story Ideas? Like to Take Photographs? Want to Pitch In?

The NSM Committee is looking for Roving Reports, Photo Fanatics and Social Media Specialists!

If you are interested in donating your time and know how, Contact us at:
news@ptcondo.com