

TowerTalk

News By and For the Park Tower Condominium Community

Governance

Your Board at Work

by Michael Parrie



Earlier this year, Draper and Kramer, our longtime management company, sold its condominium division to First Service Residential. Having been happy with DK's management, Park Tower elected to transfer its contract to FSR. But as the year progressed, the Board came to believe it should examine a full range of management options.

The Board invited bids from four management companies (including First Service Residential) experienced in managing buildings the size of Park Tower. All four expressed interest and received walk-throughs of the building. Based on their preliminary bids, and with input from an independent management consultant, two were selected as finalists and interviewed by the Board in closed session.

The resulting three-year contract was awarded, in open session, to **The Habitat Company**. Annual extensions, agreeable to both parties, would contribute to stability and budget planning for years four through seven.

THC will oversee management, with our property manager, three office staff, and both building engineers expected to remain. And, a pleasant surprise: David Barnhart, a familiar face from DK, will serve as our property supervisor.

Constructing bid requirements, walking company reps through the building, reviewing the resulting bids and negotiating a final contract – all this

happened within a period of just a few weeks. It was a telling illustration of how your Board works together, as a team, to ensure the best possible management practices for Park Tower.

And an early thank you to Owners and residents as we begin now to work with The Habitat Company. **TT**

Michael is president of Park Tower's Board of Directors.

Committee Focus

ASCO



This year, the **Association of Sheridan Road Condominium/Co-op Owners** has participated with Alderman Osterman's office on three North Sheridan Road development proposals – 5356 (Wing Ho), 5440 (\$10/day parking), and 5950 (next to Colvin House). All three are seeking the zoning variances and permits required for new low to mid rise apartment buildings, with construction to begin in the spring.

Rising Waters




The high water level of Lake Michigan has concerned those of us who regularly use the Lakefront Trail. But how lucky we are to live west of the park and Lakeshore Drive! Rising water is a far more serious problem for residents further north whose buildings sit almost at water's edge.

In an ASCO meeting this fall, we heard from the Alderman and Chicago's Office of Emergency Management that sandbags and pumps are at the ready. Also, Jersey barriers (concrete partitions) have been installed along the shoreline to help break the waves. Longer-term solutions will require time and funding sources.

As TowerTalk went to press, [this story](#) appeared on the Block Club Chicago website describing how the city will spend millions to fortify the Far North Side's shoreline after early winter storms accelerated erosion.

Chicago's home rule authority

Readers will remember the close call we had when House Bill 29 – which would have challenged Chicago's home rule authority as it relates to condominiums – was introduced late in the last Illinois legislative session.

Quick action by ASCO member associations had a lot to do with forcing the withdrawal of that bill, and we're prepared going forward. Proposed legislation will be reviewed by ASCO's legal counsel, Michael C. Kim, and brought to the attention of its member associations in public meetings held for that purpose. **TT** 

Cheryl Ronnett, Board liaison

To read **TowerTalk** online, Google **[towertalk-dec-feb-2019-20](#)**

The online edition is in color, with bold, underlined links to referenced online resources.

Employee HOLIDAY Fund



by Tim Patricio

The holidays, a time for family, reflection and thanks. As you make your own plans, may we ask that you also remember Park Tower's team of 32 employees? In the Office, Garage, Health Club, and throughout the building, they work hard to make living here a quality experience.

It's been a busy year. Major projects have included riser replacements, heating-air conditioning and plumbing repairs, a new Package Room, the arrival of Go Grocer and now, our transition to a new management company. Having such a skilled staff for these, in addition to routine tasks, means we have less need for outside contractors. And that saves money.

You may show your appreciation by making a donation to the **Employee Holiday Fund**, either by having that amount added to your next assessment, or by providing a check or money order.

To have the donation added to your assessment, please make that request in writing. If by check or money order, please make it out to "Park Tower Condo Association." Written request, check or money order can then be delivered directly to the Management Office, or dropped in the mail slot at the Doorman's desk, or mailed to ..

Park Tower Condominium
5415 N. Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60640
Attn: Management Office, #107

Distribution will be via our payroll system, with tax withheld consistent with the law. **To be sure our staff receives your gifts in time for the holidays, please make your contribution by Monday, December 16.**

Thank you! On behalf of our staff, we wish you, your family, friends and neighbors the very best in 2020. **TT**

Tim is Park Tower's property manager.

Welcome Aboard

Jason Delgado, Chief Engineer

by Jeff Hauser

The chief engineer position is critically important here at Park Tower. How we hire – and that search in particular – were the subjects of a [front page story](#) in the previous issue of *TowerTalk*.



Jason comes to us from Edgewater Plaza Condominium, right next door, where he had been assistant chief engineer. A Chicago boy with a Brady Brunch blended family – 3 brothers, 3 sisters – Jason grew up in the southwest suburbs, not far from Midway Airport.

He graduated from Reavis High School and attended Moraine Valley Community College. Jason then enrolled in two training programs with SEIU (Service Employees International Union). First came the two-year apprenticeship program, then the union's four-month stationary engineer program.

While pursuing this professional training, Jason worked for Carl Sandburg Village Condominium on Chicago's Near North Side. He stayed on at Sandburg after receiving stationary engineer licensing, then moved to Edgewater Plaza about four years ago.

At Edgewater Plaza, he worked on projects similar to ours, including the replacement of water risers. Jason notes that Park Tower's infrastructure is in good shape. When it is necessary to make repairs or replace a component, he will favor solutions that lend themselves to automation, are upgradable and environmentally friendly.

Jason is enjoying the new job, especially the positive vibes from co-workers and residents alike. After work, he likes being outdoors and was inspired by his "ultra runner" brother to complete his first Chicago Marathon a couple months ago. Fishing is fun, too, and what might you expect from a South Side baseball fan? Go Sox! **TT**

Jeff is a member of the Newsletter Committee.



Committee Focus

Social Committee

Only three months into our current season, and the Social Committee has already presented six events. Here's a quick review and, to the far right, a reminder of events just ahead.

Born in Relationship with Eve Brownstone focused on the experience of being a twin. Interweaving psychology, statistics, narrative, photos, poetry and a video, the presentation led to insightful give and take at evening's end. Thanks, Eve, for leading the discussion.



Explore Restorative Justice grew out of a recent *TowerTalk* Profile story on Judge Martha Mills (retired), a Park Tower resident. Attendees sat in the typical RJ peace circle and discussed with Martha how restorative justice resolves contentious issues by bringing together those in conflict, with reconciliation acceptable to all. Thanks, Martha, for your creative leadership.

A **September TGIF** attracted a lobby full of folks eager to enjoy snacks, drinks and one another's company. And thanks for the donated mooncakes that disappeared all too quickly!

The **Fall Potluck** brought warmth and happiness to hearts and tummies. A good mix of main courses, appetizers, salads, entrees, and desserts made for a neighborly evening.



Star Trek - The Motion Picture and **The Music Man** were our first two Movie Nights. The former brought trekkies young and old. Thanks, Kirby Chappell, for the idea. The latter is a classic, and we chose it to present a real slice of Americana especially to residents who may not have grown up here.

The Born in Relationship and Restorative Justice evenings were experiments for the committee and of special interest to me personally. Both required skillful presenters and active participants. And it worked! Going forward, the committee would like to plan more such events matching talented Park Tower residents with empathetic audiences. Suggestions are welcome. TTT

Sheldon Atovsky, chair
(s_atovsky@sbcglobal.net)

Remaining 2019/20 Social Committee Events

Dates and details subject to change

December 6 (Friday) Holiday Cheer
5:30 to 7:30 pm, Lobby Lounge

January 11 (Saturday) Movie Night
Aladdin (2019 Disney)
4:45 to 7:30 pm, Party Room

February 2 (Sunday) Super Bowl Party
by Management & Maintenance
Time & Details TBA, Party Room

February 23 (Sunday) Cultural Evening
Details TBA
4:30 to 7:00 pm, Party Room

March 21 (Saturday) Dance Party
Line & Ballroom dance training, followed by dancing to recorded music. Additional details TBA, Party Room

April 11 (Sat) Easter Egg Hunt & Brunch
Saturday to encourage participation
9:30 to Noon, Party Room & Deck

May 16 (Saturday) Movie Night
Classic film or Golden Oldie TBA
4:45 to 7:30 pm, Party Room

June 5 (Friday) TGIF
Wine & Snacks, 5:30 to 7:30 pm
Lobby Lounge

July 4 (Saturday) 4th of July Celebration
5:30 to 8:30, Party Room & Deck



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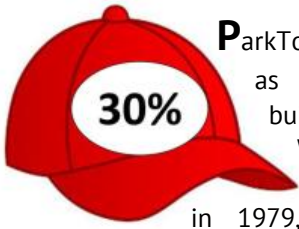
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Inching Closer to Park Tower's Rental Cap

by Sheldon Atovsky, Frank Muldowney and Bob Shamo



ParkTower was built as an apartment building in 1973. When it became a condominium in 1979, it had no leasing policy. Rentals were not yet a problem for the association because they were few in number.

This situation began to change with the recession of 2008. Nationwide, six to eight million workers lost their jobs during the next few years, and 4 million lost their homes to foreclosure.

At Park Tower, as in other condo buildings, more Owners began generating income by renting out their units. Particularly troubling were the large number bought by investment companies at distressed prices and then managed as rental properties.

By 2014, the percentage of leased units at Park Tower had grown to 37%, and the Board became concerned. Would unit resale value and general quality of life be negatively impacted by having more tenants? Might the building's insurance rates go up, or mortgages become harder for Owners to get, with increasing numbers of tenant-occupied units?

Given these concerns, and the rising costs of managing a building with so many rentals, the Board created an Ad hoc Rental Policy Committee, tasking it to develop a leasing policy that is fair and achievable. Adopted by the Board and effective March, 2015, that policy can be read in its entirety in our [Rules and Regulations Handbook](#). Briefly, the policy provides as follows ..

For so long as the percentage of rental units is below 30% (the so-called "rental cap"), and provided they have lived in the building themselves for at least two years, Owners may rent out their units. When higher than 30%, Owners who wish to become landlords are placed on a waitlist, then allowed to proceed, in the order listed, when the percentage drops below 30%.

The good news? We are very, very close to that 30% rental cap.

As of November 15, rental occupancy stood at 30.8%

Now, what some take to be benefits, others see as restrictions. It will take considerable time to work through the 46 units that have been waitlisted while maintaining the 30% or less target. The very best result, for the association, will likely be that some of these units have been sold to eligible buyers. But other Owners, disappointed, will have given up or made other arrangements. Some will have moved out of Park Tower rather than wait.

Condo ownership requires that the interests of the individual Owner be balanced against those of the association. In the case of occupancy ..

- Condo buildings with a high percentage of Owner occupied units are, by and large, in better shape physically. Less move in/out activity reduces equipment failure and routine maintenance expense. Most important, Owners understand the critical importance of maintaining an adequate Reserve Fund for major planned and unplanned expenses.

- Owner occupied units in up-and-coming neighborhoods retain their resale value. While the rental cap may have a slight negative effect on resale prices, that same restriction also makes the building more attractive to Owners who buy with the intention of living here themselves, long term.

- A less transient, more stable residency encourages all of us, tenants included, to make a bit more of an effort to get acquainted. A smile and quick hello seem natural for folks who keep running into one another at the elevator and in the Health Club. Conversations develop and ideas percolate at association meetings and Social Committee events.

But to the almost one-third of Park Tower residents **who are tenants** and may have read this story with concern ..

We're glad you found your way here. Enjoy the building and respect your neighbors. Good advice for all of us, by the way, Owners and tenants alike! 🙄

Sheldon and Bob are Owners, Frank a tenant. Thanks to property manager Tim Patricio for additional research. In addition to the Leasing Policy itself, linked in the story above, read [this piece](#), written by Sheldon when the leasing policy was adopted in 2015. **TT** 🌐

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Sue Burke, Writer in Residence

by Bob Shamo

Confident, focused, purposeful? Yes, that is Sue's manner, but also warm and enthused as she relates how she and her husband, Jerry, found their way to Park Tower from Spain. And positively glowing as we engaged on her work as a writer of the award-winning science fiction novel, *Semiosis*, and its recently-released sequel, *Interference*.

Like all good stories, we began at the beginning. Sue grew up in Milwaukee, WI and lived for a time in Austin, TX. For so long as she can remember, she wanted to be a writer. Her first job was reporting for her local newspaper while still a teenager. Since then, she has continued to report and in addition to edit, freelance, write essays, haiku and poetry. Sci-fi was a favorite subject, and the first of her 30+ short stories appeared in 1995.

Even before they married, Sue and Jerry had wanted to live abroad, experience that culture as fully as possible, and immerse themselves in the language of the country. So when the opportunity presented itself in 1999, they moved to Madrid, Spain.

For a time, Sue taught ESL classes (English as a second language) to Spanish teenagers. And to become fluent themselves, she and Jerry attended eight years of language classes – helped along by TV and everyday social interactions.

Meanwhile, she never missed a beat in terms of her own work. Sue continued writing in her accustomed genres, and in English. But encouraged by that intensive language study, she added translations to her portfolio, and in the years that followed rendered a variety of Spanish texts into English. Among the most widely read are her translations of classic Medieval and Renaissance works.

In 2016, after seventeen years abroad, Sue and Jerry moved back to the States. The European economy was sluggish, a reality both for Jerry who works in IT and for writers who, like Sue, appreciate being paid for their work! With roots and family still in the Midwest, they decided to return and live in Chicago.



Which brings us to Sue's current projects. They are many, but the ones she invests the most time in nowadays are novels. *Semiosis* has been nominated for several awards and made *Forbes* list, *Best Science Fiction Books of 2018-19*. Its sequel, *Interference*, was published just this past October. They are her first novels; others are in the works.

Semiosis is a word linguists use to describe the relationship between language and behavior. These two sci-fi novels introduce and dramatize the challenge of semiosis on a fierce new planet where humans must learn to communicate with plants, the dominant life form that enslave animals and aim to do the same with these pioneers from Earth. Read the shaded box!

As you might guess from the subject matter, Sue is fascinated with plants and has a gorgeous array in her living room. And she has made an interesting offer: **To exchange house plant care with other Park Tower residents who, like her, sometimes go on vacation. Email her at sue@sue.burke.name**

Sue likes to write at home. Her schedule depends a lot on publication deadlines, so a typical day might see her laying down 1000 new words, revising an earlier chapter, or even making a midcourse correction in the flow of a book. "It's really hard work," she says, "but it's what I love more than anything else in the whole world!"

Recent Review of *Semiosis*



Semiosis is a multi-generational story that takes place over the course of many years, following a group of human colonists who have traveled light years from Earth to settle on a planet they dubbed Pax. The first pioneers, made up of mostly young scientists and activists who were saddened by the plight of their polluted and war-torn world, hoped to start over and establish a peaceful society on this newly discovered planet. However, they were wholly unprepared for the alien environment that awaited them, nor did they anticipate Pax's bizarre flora and fauna and the surprising ways they interacted with their surroundings ...

Despite the settlers' lofty goals to live in harmony with the land, Pax's plants and animals behaved in strange and unpredictable ways, causing the humans to adjust and alter their game plans on the fly. With every new generation also came new challenges, both biological and social ... Society adapted to the planet, and Pax adapted in turn.

This review is from [BiblioSanctum](https://us.macmillan.com/series/semiosisduology), a book blog for speculative fiction. *Semiosis* and *Interference* are published by Tor Books (specializing in science fiction) and can be purchased from local bookstores and online booksellers. Samples and audio excerpts are available at ..

<https://us.macmillan.com/series/semiosisduology>



Having learned about our building from a friend, Sue and Jerry now live in an 11-tier unit. Among their delights are the ever-present lake to the east, weather fronts moving in from the west .. and the many friendly residents who've made them feel welcome here at Park Tower.  

Review & Presentation of the 2020 - 21 Budget

by Tim Patricio



Part One of this series appeared in the previous issue of *TowerTalk** and described Management's preparation of a proposed budget for fiscal year 2020-21. Board members received the draft in early fall, all 175 pages of it, in hard copy and also as PDF's for those who preferred studying it on their computers.

There followed three Saturday morning Board meetings in November at which the budget was reviewed, edited, and then approved for presentation to our Owners.

Editing the proposed Operating Budget

The November meetings were announced in advance, with agendas, and open to Owners. Also participating were the two remaining members of the Budget & Finance Committee, currently inactive due to an absence of volunteers. The three meetings were led by the Board treasurer and focused, respectively, on ..

- Administrative, contracted operating, general operating, maintenance/repairs, and recreational expenses.
- Garage income and expenses, payroll and legal expenses.
- Projected revenue, reserves, assessments, final review and questions.

Management was present to address questions, take notes and keep track of changes. We went page by page through the categories above, stopping for

questions, feedback, and to consider proposed changes that would either decrease or increase the proposed budget. Here are a couple examples from past years to illustrate the point.

Two years ago, as an experiment, we cut back on window washings, then waited to hear from residents. They seemed satisfied, so ever since we've contracted for three rather than four washings, thereby saving about \$7,900 a year.

Six years ago, following an infestation of "outside the windows" spiders, we budgeted for a deterrent to be added to the window washing suds. Would the rain wash it away? Would it even work?

Yes! Resident feedback was affirmative, and ever since we've included spider deterrent in two of those three window washes, thereby adding an additional \$3,200 to the budget in the interests of Owner and resident satisfaction.

Refining the Reserve Fund

The Reserve Study plots the age, life expectancy and projected replacement cost of just about every major component and fixture in the building. The study is updated from time to time, 2016 being the most recent.

The dollars needed to pay big ticket costs — the ongoing water riser replacement project being an example —

are accumulated in a Reserve Fund, the purpose of which is to make sure the money is available when needed, without the need for a special assessment. In our November meetings, the Board reviewed the balance between Reserve needs and funding.



Funding the Budget

Park Tower budgets are funded by a combination of non-assessment and assessment income — typically, about 25% and 75%, respectively. To illustrate, here's how the current year's budget is being funded ..

\$7,101,600 total budgeted expenses
- 1,861,500 non-assessment income
5,240,100 required assessments

Owners can multiply that bottom line number by their percentage of ownership** to determine assessments for the year. For example, a 00.15% ownership would have required, for the current year, an annual assessment is \$7,860, or about \$655 per month.

Owner review and Board vote to adopt

Owners may expect to receive the proposed budget by mail in December and comment or ask questions about it at the Board meeting on January 13. It's expected, then, that the final budget will be approved by the Board, effective March 1, 2020.  

Tim is Park Tower's property manager.

** Budgeting, Part One, [TowerTalk](#), page 11.*

*** [Declaration](#), scroll down, must be an Owner and logged in.*



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The Mansions on Sheridan Road

by Frank Muldowney & Bob Shamo

Have you ever wondered at the elegance of some of our large, nearby homes? From a bygone day, they remain dotted along north-south streets from here to Clark Street and most notably on Sheridan Road. Wing Hoe, across the street, was built as a private mansion in 1916.

The Sheridan Road mansions were built in the early years of the 20th century. They exemplify John Lewis Cochran's goal, when he began developing Edgewater in the late 1800s, that it should resemble Evanston and other prosperous suburbs north of the city.



By the 1920s, Sheridan Road had acquired many distinctive single-family homes. Quite a few of them were, in fact, mansions with expansive landscaped grounds and, for those on the east side, direct private access to the lake.

Many up-and-coming families lived on the seven-block stretch between Bryn Mawr and Devon. They included industrialists, businessmen, doctors and politicians who, while they may not have had social pedigrees, did have substantial bank accounts.

Of the dozens of Sheridan Road mansions from that period, only a few remain. Two are in Berger Park, 6205-6219 N. Sheridan, another across the street from the park, and two more on the campus of Loyola University, a bit further north.

The **Downey** and **Gunder** mansions are located at either end of Berger Park and serve as administrative and facilities centers. Situated right on the lake, they are now owned by the Chicago Park District and are complemented by a state-of-the-art playground, theater, cafe, mature trees, and meandering walkways.



Downey House and **Coach House** were built in 1906 in the American Four Square architectural style, which emphasized cubic form, hip roofs, overhanging eaves and handcrafted woodwork. Its projected cost was \$20,000, and it was viewed as an up-to-date house, turning away from the more ornate Victorian era style.

Gunder House & Coach House,

built in 1909, are tan brick with gray limestone trim. With its low-relief stone ornament and decorative metal grillwork, the Gunder House is part of a trend among the American well-to-do for houses mirroring the Italian Renaissance.



The **Wheeler House** (now Piper Hall) comes into view as one heads north on Sheridan toward Loyola. Built in 1909, it is constructed of white Vermont marble and trimmed with copper.



The **Schmidt House** (now Burrowes Hall) dates from 1917. Designed by local architect George Maher, it hints at the



later Prairie style of Chicagoan Frank Lloyd Wright.

Perhaps the most beautiful of these mansions, and certainly the one most visible to North Sheridan commuters, is the **Conway House**. At the corner of Granville and Sheridan, it was built in 1906 for the owner of the company that constructed Lake Shore Drive.



The enormous Tudor-Revival home is the work of architect William Carbys Zimmerman. He designed many nearby mansions on this posh stretch of Sheridan Road. In 1959, Sacred Heart Schools purchased the house, sparing it the fate that befell most of its neighbors. A \$4-million restoration, completed in 2010, brought the house back to its original splendor. Highlights include beautiful oak and mahogany woodwork, ceiling beams in geometric patterns and 19 restored leaded-glass windows. The house now provides offices and event space for Sacred Heart Schools.

The decline of North Sheridan Road as a prestigious area of single-family houses began as early as the 1920s. The Great Depression that followed made it impossible to manage these large houses and the staffs it took to run them. Finally, the extension of Lake Shore Drive north to Hollywood brought much more traffic and with it the many high rise apartments and condos that now line North Sheridan. 📺 🌐

Frank researched this story. Bob chairs the Newsletter Committee and edits Tower-Talk. Three of our sources will be of interest to readers who want to learn more.

[**A visit to the Berger Park mansions**](#)

[**History and architectural detail**](#)

[**Open House Chicago - Dreihaus Center**](#)



And always Edgewater Historical Society, corner of Balmoral and Ashland, open Saturdays and Sundays, 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

Committee Focus

Ad hoc Rules & Regulations Review Committee

From time to time the Board convenes this committee to review and help make recommendations for refining and amending the [Rules & Regulations Handbook](#). This was last done in 2015, so the time seemed ripe for a fresh look.

In July, by email and in public notices, a call went out for Owners to participate. Three followed through, and the first step was for each to read the current rules and regulations cover to cover. We also had in hand recommendations by Board members and Management.

With this preparation, then, the four of us met in September, discussed and agreed on our recommendations. These have been submitted to the Board for its consideration early in December. Sincere thanks to all who participated!  

Jean Shamo, Board liaison

Committee Focus


Home Improvement

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The building will continue its riser projects in fiscal year 2020-21, with a proposed budget of \$500,000.

- '07/'08 bathrooms (floors 30 to 55)
- '06 kitchens (floors 30 to 55)
- '09/'10 bathrooms (floors 3 to 29)

Looking way ahead, we plan to interrupt riser replacements during the 2021-22 fiscal year and focus instead on residential hallways.

Specifically, it is proposed we budget \$205,000 for hallway light fixtures, which was voted on by all owners during September 2019 – \$520,000 for hallway carpeting, and \$250,000 for hallway painting and decorating. 

Michael Parrie, Board liaison


Committee Focus

Rules & Regulations

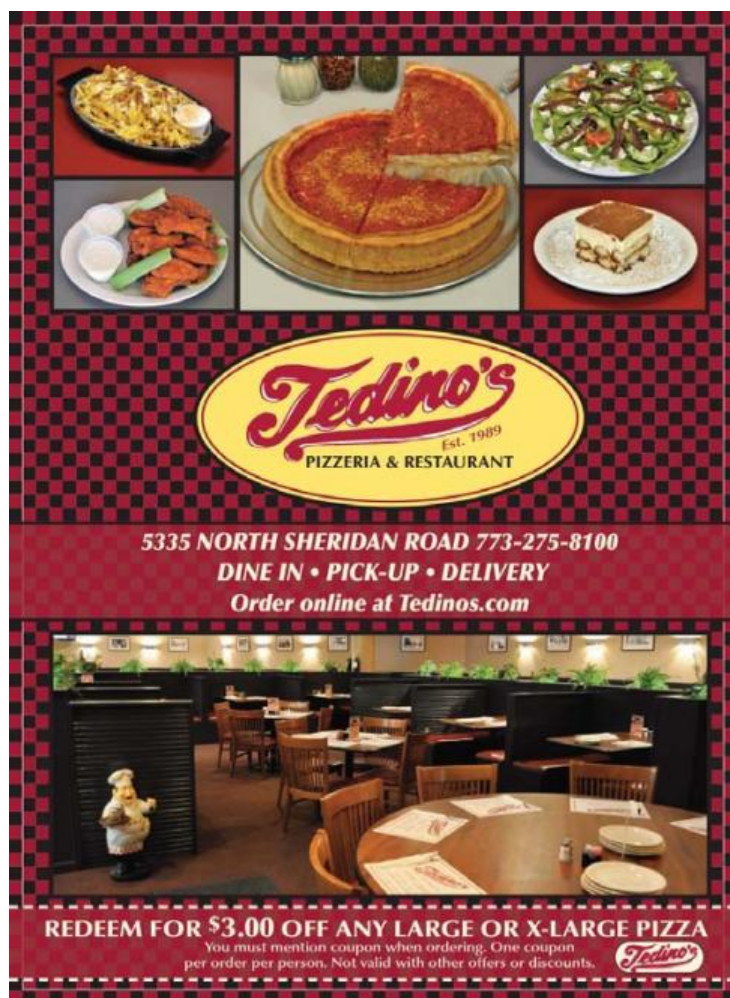


Smoking marijuana becomes legal next year. However, Park Tower's rules still apply.

The release of smoke, fumes, or any toxic gases or particles from a unit due to cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, vaping, marijuana, incense, or any other tobacco products used in an individual unit that permeates any other unit or the common elements is hereby classified as a noxious or offensive activity pursuant to Paragraph 11(g) of the Declaration.


Please be considerate of your neighbors. Be aware that opening one's window actually makes the smoke situation worse by forcing the smoke to enter the unit via fresh air vents, along the curtain wall, and under the hallway door. 

Michael Parrie, Board liaison



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A talented stylist, Armani, has joined the staff just recently and is offering a complimentary shampoo and styling with your first hair cutting appointment. Just mention having read the offer here, in Park Tower's TowerTalk newsletter.

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From Our Readers

For These Owners, An Assessment Gladly Paid



A few years ago Owners Dan Johnston and Catherine Kestler sent along a list of facilities and services residents enjoy here at Park Tower. We've updated it annually because every item – and no doubt some we haven't thought of – is supported in one way or another by Owners' monthly assessments.

A proposed 2020-21 budget will be arriving in mailboxes soon, to be discussed in an open Board Meeting and then adopted by the Board. **Are these facilities and services -- available to Owners and tenants alike -- worth your assessment dollar?**

- Bicycle Room (subsidy)
- Cable & Internet including high speed broadband (a separate uniform charge, otherwise like an assessment)
- Doorman 24/7
- Dry Cleaning and laundry pick up by Tide Cleaners via lockers across from Package Room (subsidy)
- Elevator maintenance by Otis
- Go Grocer Market and Le Café (subsidy)
- Guest parking (subsidy)
- Health Club (subsidy)
- Heating & air conditioning
- Hikers (car parkers) 24/7
- Insurance (common property and liability)
- Landscaping & snow removal
- Laundry Room (subsidy)
- Lobby furnishings & décor
- Lock out service (free when office is open)

- Maintenance 24/7
- Management onsite team (property manager, two assistant managers, office assistant, chief and assistant chief engineers, plus back-office support)
- Package Room (rebuilt this year and modernized for delivery and pickup)
- Real estate tax appeals (periodic)
- Reserve Fund (never had a special assessment)
- Rooftop deck & garden
- Security equipment & personnel
- Social Committee, 14 events this season
- TowerTalk (quarterly newsletter)
- Utilities in common areas
- Waste removal & recycling
- Water & sewer
- Window washing (exterior)
- Work orders (materials & labor below market price) **TT**

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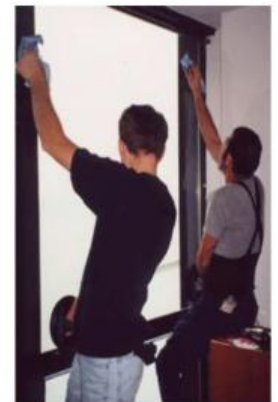
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RCN - Bells & Whistles

by Jim Jardine

Last issue, I wrote about **RCN2Go**, an app for mobile phones and tablets. Here are three additional RCN options I personally use and appreciate.

Wishlist Searches Exclusive to RCN TiVos, this feature prompts you to create Wishlists by entering movie titles, actors, directors, and film categories — or virtually any keyword on any topic, sports for instance. Up will pop a listing of relevant RCN offerings that includes past shows and those just ahead. Furthermore, this is a “dynamic” listing that adds new, relevant shows as soon as they’ve been scheduled. The default setting is to record everything automatically, but that can be toggled off if you prefer. [Go to TiVo Central, scroll down to Search, OnePass & Manage > Wishlist Searches](#), etc. By the way, only one keyword per Wishlist, even if you’re invited to add another word!

TiVo Extended Storage On the back of your TiVo is an eSATA port where you can plug in a 1 TB (terabyte) hard drive (HDD), thereby quadrupling your storage capacity. You’ll need to provide the hardware, but TiVo walks you through the set up. [Go to TiVo Central, scroll down to Settings & Messages > Settings > Remote, CableCard & Devices > External Storage](#). A compatible hard drive can be found by searching Amazon for **Fantom Drives 1TB External Hard Drive - USB 3.0 & eSATA**. Don’t forget the eSATA cable. I recommend a 3 footer.

RCN Phone Service Some folks are holdouts for those copper landlines. But Internet phones are a lot more reliable nowadays, even coming with their own modems and battery backups so operation is assured during a power outage or TV cable interruption. I’m paying \$30 (including fees/taxes) for a full-featured RCN plan that allows me to keep my previous number, displays Caller ID on my TV, and provides unlimited long distance. It can also block numbers, and a free add-on, Nomorobo, blocks robocalls. **TT**

Jim is a Park Tower resident, and we thank him for his contributions to this column.

Whoa!

I thought this would make for a heart warming TowerTalk story. Shortly after spotting a skunk running around out back, we found another one in front on the plaza, its head in a rat trap. Animal Control never showed up, so custodians Wally and Jesus grabbed and held it down — honest! — while chief engineer Jason cut away the trap. Off it ran to find its friend and, together, we’re told, were last seen racing together into the park.

We’ve had all sorts of animals nearby over the years — deer (picture on my desk), racoons, coyote, falcons — even a cougar (though that was later said to be unlikely). Doorman Josh even had a bat in the lobby not long ago.

Tim Patricio



Back When

Does your unit have wall outlets like this?



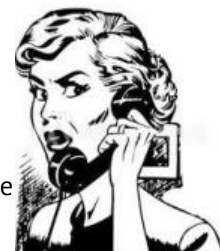
Obviously, two sockets are for electrical plugs, but what’s the strange round one with four holes? It’s for a telephone: a Bell 504A wall jack. When this building debuted in 1973, it offered multiple phone plugs in every room. You’re never far from your phone! But only a few years later, that plug became obsolete as phones switched to the plastic modular connector still in use today — if you use a land line at all.

Sue Burke

Ending Robocalls

This email arrived several weeks ago, from Consumer Reports. Looked to me like the real thing, so I clicked [on the link provided](#), filled in my contact information and hit Send. Sure enough, it went to Illinois senators Durbin and Duckworth, and representative Schakowsky. Want to join me?

Mike Magliane



Both the House and Senate have passed bills to help us stop robocalls. Now they’re combining those bills into one final version to send to the president. Your lawmakers need to hear from you right now before they vote! Send your quick message to your representative and senators now. Use our words, or write your own, asking for the strongest possible law to help end robocalls!

More Info = Better 911 Service

80% of emergency calls come from mobile phones and provide only your general location. Register free at www.smart911.com, and emergency workers will see on their screens your name, address, medical and home layout information, emergency contacts numbers — anything you choose to include on the easy-to-fill-out form provided.

Jim Jardine



Park Tower Unit Sales & Leases, January through October, 2019



Studio Sales ('03, '07, '10, '12 Tiers)

Floor	Tier	Purchase Price
24	03	\$ 75,400
40	03	\$ 117,500
15	07	\$ 109,000
32	03	\$ 105,000
23	03	\$ 130,000

Total **5** Studios Sold
Average Price **\$ 107,380**

Small 1-Bedroom Sales ('08, '09, '14, '15 Tiers)

Floor	Tier	Purchase Price
25	15	\$ 155,000
39	14	\$ 139,900
36	08	\$ 136,500
36	14	\$ 137,000
49	09	\$ 155,500
55	09	\$ 165,500
30	08	\$ 132,500
44	09	\$ 130,000

Total **8** Studios Sold
Average Price **\$ 143,988**

Medium 1-Bedroom Sales ('02, '05 Tiers)

Floor	Tier	Purchase Price
17	02	\$ 145,000
38	05	\$ 175,000
54	05	\$ 195,000

Total **3** Medium 1-Beds Sold
Average Price **\$ 171,667**

Large 1-Bedroom Sales ('04 Tier)

Floor	Tier	Purchase Price
43	04	\$ 218,500
31	04	\$ 160,000
45	04	\$ 201,000

Total **3** Large 1-Bedrooms Sold
Average Price **\$ 193,167**

2-Bedroom Sales ('01, '06, '11 Tiers)

Floor	Tier	Purchase Price
15	06	\$ 275,000
21	06	\$ 218,500
14	06	\$ 206,000
22	06	\$ 230,000
36	11	\$ 195,000
51	01	\$ 305,000
27	11	\$ 215,000
31	06	\$ 255,000
18	06	\$ 261,500

Total **9** 2-Bedrooms Sold
Average Price **\$ 240,111**

Combined Unit Sales

Floor	Tier	Purchase Price
46	10/11	\$ 415,000

Total **1** 2-Bedrooms Sold
Price **\$ 415,000**

Commercial Sales (none)

Overall Sales 29

Overall Average Sale **\$211,885**



Data provided by
Management.

Within the Sales Report,
units are listed in the order sold.
To compare, [here](#) is a link to last
year's sales and rental summary
(page 11).

Studio Leases

('03, '07, '10, '12 Tiers)

Lower levels (floors 3 - 19)
8 leased, averaging **\$1,111**

Mid-levels (floors 20 - 39)
3 leased averaging **\$1,142**

Higher levels (floors 40 - 55)
6 leased, averaging **\$1,024**

Small 1-Bedroom Leases ('08, '09, '14, '15 Tiers)

Lower levels (floors 3 -19)
9 leased averaging **\$ 1,303**

Mid-levels (floors 20 - 39)
10 leased averaging **\$ 1,380**

Higher levels (floors 40 -55)
3 leased averaging **\$ 1,417**

Medium 1-Bedroom Leases ('02, '05 Tiers)

Lower levels (floors 3 -19)
4 leases averaging **\$ 1,303**

Mid-levels (floors 20 - 39)
1 lease **\$ 1,725**

Higher levels (floors 40 -55)
3 leases averaging **\$ 1,500**

Large 1-Bedroom Leases ('04 Tier)

Lower levels (floors 3 -19)
1 lease **\$ 1,715**

2-Bedroom Leases ('01, '06, 11 Tiers)

Lower levels (floors 3 -19)
3 leases averaging **\$ 1,918**

Mid-levels (floors 20 - 39)
5 leases averaging **\$ 2,090**

Higher levels (floors 40 -55)
1 lease **\$ 2,500**

Combination Leases

Higher levels (floors 40 -55)
2 leases averaging **\$ 3,050**

Building Contacts

Office	773-769-3250
Fax	773-769-0047
Doorman	773-769-3083
Garage	773-271-8859
Health Club	773-769-1513

Park Tower website
www.ptcondo.com

Mall/Business Contacts

Go Grocer & Le Café
 Suite 114 773-944-1414

Dralyuk Real Estate
 Suite 103A 773-275-8520

Healing Center of Chicago
 Suite 103A 773-784-0339

Lettuce Entertain You
 (Gift Certificate purchases)
 Suite 105 773-924-4438

Park Tower Management Office
 (parktowercondo@fsresidential.com)
 Suite 107 773-769-3250

Elizabeth Todorovic, Attorney
 (Real Estate)
 Suite 110 773-271-2110

Stephen J. Feldman, Attorney
 (Criminal & DUI Defense)
 Suite 113 312-371-5522

Roger Philip Feldman & Co. CPA
 Suite 113 773-944-0664

Dates to Remember

* Open to Owners only and may be canceled if no agenda ‡ Social Committee

‡ Holiday Cheer Party	5:30 pm	PT Lobby	Dec 7
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	Party Room	Dec 9
‡ Movie Night (Aladdin—Disney 2019)	4:45 pm	Party Room	Jan 11
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	Party Room	Jan 13
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	Party Room	Jan 27
Resident Forum	11:00 am	Party Room	Feb 1
Super Bowl Viewing & Party	TBA	Party Room	Feb 2
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	Party Room	Feb 10
‡ Cultural Evening	4:45 pm	Party Room	Feb 23
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	Party Room	Feb 24

Management Office Hours

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursdays	8:00 am - 6:00 pm
Saturdays	7:00 am - 11:00 am

Holiday Schedule

Friday, Dec 20	Office closes at 1:00 pm for employee party
Saturday, Dec 21	Office closed
Tuesday, Dec 24	Office open 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Wednesday, Dec 25	Office closed Christmas Day
Saturday, Dec 28	Office closed
Tuesday, Dec 31	Office open 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Wednesday, Jan 1	Office closed New Year's Day

Contributing to this Issue of TowerTalk

* Newsletter Committee Member ** Editor *** Board liaison

* Sheldon Atovsky	Frank Muldowney	*** Cheryl Ronnett
* Jeff Hauser	Michael Parrie	** Bob Shamo
Jim Jardine	Tim Patricio	Jean Shamo

Occasionally, we invite a resident to write on a subject we know is familiar to him or her. If you think you'd like to write a story – or suggest an idea for someone else to write – please email us at bobshamo@rcn.com

TowerTalk is published four times a year (Sep-Nov, Dec-Feb, Mar-May, Jun-Aug) and delivered in black and white to Park Tower's 700+ residential units. Stories are also posted in full color at www.ptcondo.com Currently we're accepting photo-ready business card, quarter-page, and third-page ads for the Mar-May, 2020 issue. To inquire, email bobshamo@rcn.com

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Third-page (\$125) = 3-1/4" tall & 7-7/8" wide