



The Shadoword

Special Annual Meeting Edition – February 2009

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow Shadowood Unit Owners:

For the past several months, you have probably been peppered with phone calls, letters, pamphlets and other communications falsely and inaccurately pleading doom, gloom, crimes and other actions that your elected Board of Directors allegedly has committed.

NONE of these allegations are true and are outrageous deceptive lies and **distortions of facts** that are readily available for any unit owner in good standing to review and confirm. Just a few of the many untrue fear-mongering statements you may have heard:

Fact: Not one penny of Association funds have been spent, let alone misspent, on “election flyers.”

Fact: No one on the leadership team has stolen any Association funds.

Fact: No one on the leadership team “laundered” or “misspent” any Association funds.

Fact: The books, minutes and expenses of your association are audited annually and are examinable according to the rules and regulations of SCA and the law. No anomalies have been detected since 2003, when a sizable embezzlement was discovered, and before ANY of the current Board Members were seated.

Fact: Shadowood operated significantly under budget during 2008 – in the worst economy ever.

Fact: All of the fat, including tens of thousands of dollars for staff “benefits,” have been cut from the budget.

Fact: Shadowood now has 4 accountable, insured, contractors who are paid to perform, rather than 10 association staff.

Fact: Shadowood is now funding its reserves at a level recommended by an independent reserve study specialist.

Fact: Shadowood has a plan to replace all HVAC common elements AND all water heaters, with NO special assessment or other fee assessments to unit owners. Far from a “screw up.”

Fact: for the first time ever, **Shadowood was awarded 2008 Association of the Year**. If your association was even a fraction as poorly managed as these candidates claim, no such award would have been granted.

You may have been approached to vote for, or assigned your proxy to, candidates with absolutely NO experience in SCA governance or any other condominium or common-interest community governance. None of the candidates spreading the inaccuracies have ever participated in any SCA committee work or any other beneficial work for your association. None of the candidates have approached any member of your elected leadership team or the management agent for anything at all. They meet in secret and exclude unit owners who disagree with their positions, in a divisive, harmful way. They proposed a “platform” containing illegal or impossible-to-achieve planks that have nothing to do with running or improving our condominium. Where is their plan? **Where is their experience? It’s just not there!** Don’t be fooled by fear-mongering and a false hope that any of these candidates can manage your association and bring about “change” that will involve yet more expensive litigation and significant boosts in the condo fee to pay for it.

The current Board of Directors is balanced, fair, and represents everyone in our community. The Board has achieved a great deal, and listed those achievements in the Annual Meeting Mailer and on the SCA Website. The Board of Directors removed ineffective staff, simplified the rules and has enforced them in a fair, consistent manner as requested by the vast majority of the community members.

The current board was fairly and justly seated, listens to those who bring issues forward and is committed to making YOUR community a better, happier, more peaceful place. The team works well and communicates transparently and legally. There is nothing to hide, nothing to discover, each member sleeps well at night and is proud of the hard, volunteer, work they do for your association.

The leadership team recommends you vote for your rights, fairness, experience and balance by voting in person, or by proxy, for the following, proven, fair, truthful and honest candidates:

Michael Santos and Doris Schaefer

If you cannot attend the annual meeting tonight, or if you have already signed a proxy to this group and wish to change your vote to a fair, balanced and experienced candidate based on these facts, notify the Shadowood office and the secretary and sign a new proxy. Legal proxy forms are available at the SCA management office at 11639 Stoneview Square and on the SCA website.

Brian Olivia, SCA Board President

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Don't forget to



one hour on March 8!

LETTER FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

The Dark Side of Service

Being a board member is not always a very pleasant job. You often find yourself being called upon to make decisions that serve the best interest of the community at large, but may have very harsh impacts to individual households or residents. These are the decisions that keep you up late at night reassuring yourself that you made the right call, but feeling little comfort from it. Here is an account of just one such case.

Over the past few years, SCA has been receiving a steady stream of complaints regarding the behavior of a young resident and her group of friends (to protect her identity, I will refer to her as Lisa). In the beginning the complaints were the simple things rambunctious kids do: running in the street a little too much, yelling a little too loudly, and challenging authority a little too frequently. Her mother and landlord appeared at hearing after hearing stating that the child was just full of youthful energy in need of an outlet and that the disruptive behavior would soon end. It didn't.

Months rolled into years and this young girl transformed from a spirited child into a rebellious young woman. Her circle of rebellious friends grew and simple behavioral violations turned into police reports. Residents were being verbally threatened and intimidated and they began reporting that they feared for their safety.

As the reports of behavioral violations rolled in, the BoD found themselves in an increasing awkward position. Lisa's mother was a well intentioned single mom whose job meant she could not be home to supervise her daughter. Fines/assessments were ineffective and interpreted by Lisa's landlord and family as personal attacks by an unfair and vengeful BoD. Lisa was reportedly placed in after school programs to help her to stay out of trouble, but the complaints kept rolling in. It seemed that the BoD had only one corrective action left at their disposal: an order of eviction.

As you know, before moving into a condominium, residents must sign a contractual agreement to abide by the association rules. Failure to abide by these rules could result in financial penalties or ultimately the revocation of a resident's permission to reside on the condominium's property.

Ordering the eviction of a family is in my opinion one of the most unpleasant things I could ever be asked to do as a director. This power is not taken lightly and, if memory serves me, has only been entertained a handful of times in my term as a board member. Sadly, most of these cases were linked directly to long-term behavioral violations and/or criminal activity. In most cases, these evictions could have been prevented simply by following Virginia law and the rules of the association. In the case of Lisa's family, the Board engaged in a lengthy, heated debate before agreeing that we had exhausted every reasonable corrective strategy. In the end, the antics of Lisa and her friends had escalated into a threat to the physical safety of SCA residents that could not be tolerated. Lisa's refusal to take advantage of the numerous opportunities she had been given to change forced an action that negatively affected her entire family.

I was once told that the mark of a good compromise is that no one leaves happy. By that criterion, I think SCA has had an uneasy string of successes of late. Being a director means being entrusted by unit owners to make difficult and often unpopular choices that draw a tough line and risk making you the 'bad guy' for the sake of the community. No one likes sending a neighbor's account to a collection attorney, evicting an unruly household, or ordering to foreclose on a unit owner who has lost their job and has not been able to pay their assessments. However, these things must be done to protect the physical and financial security of the condominium association. We take no joy in these actions, but they must be done to protect the community as a whole. As economic conditions drop our home values to a fraction of what they were just a few years ago and many unit owners struggle to make it from day to day, these duties remain unchanged.

I enjoy being a board member and feel like I have positively impacted to Shadowood since accepting my board seat, but being a director is not what I thought it would be when I first ran in 2005. I had hoped to spend my time helping to build community and help make Shadowood a fun place to live. Instead, I have spent the bulk of my time fighting for the survival of the association. I've been asked to balance the dire needs of the community with the fair and equitable treatment of its residence and have fought tooth and nail to insure that all SCA residents are treated with courtesy and respect regardless of the situation. It's been a messy process and it is has been impossible to please everyone along the way. In fact, I've learned that sometimes you have to really upset a few people in order to do what's right for the community as a whole... and I don't see that changing any time soon.

With current economic conditions, I think it is safe to predict that our decisions will not be getting any easier or more popular in the near future. What I can say is that the SCA management team will do our best to serve this community and to find ways to continue to move forward together.

Rod Newhouse, SCA Vice President

Letter from Secretary and Director

Brighter Days Ahead

My introduction into the Shadowood community began in April 2005 when I purchased my unit. I saw some things that were not so great, and I questioned what was happening and how things were the way they were. I decided to reach out to the Board of Directors by attending many meetings; some answers came immediately, some have come as time has passed by.

Participation inspired me to get involved. Joining the Hearings Panel in 2005, I learned that my language skills could help our community greatly; in October 2006 I was appointed the Association's Secretary. In December 2006, I expressed interest in a Board vacancy. I applied, and Mr. Galythly, Mr. Olivia, Mr. Parker and Mr. Newhouse, after reviewing my candidacy form and answering questions, appointed me to fill the vacant Board of Directors seat where I have served since. **Please allow me to continue serving you and our community by voting for Michael Santos for SCA Director.**

I believe in this community. Living in a diverse community where our professions include convenience store clerks, teachers, handymen, accountants, sales executives and attorneys, it's impossible to please everyone. **I have seen that all SCA Directors are together trying to make Shadowood a better place.** This property is big, and we have a lot of challenges ahead of us because of its age. I, with my fellow Board members, have uncovered many things that were not done right. We have addressed them in the best possible way to correct the problem now, but also ensured the fix is not a nightmare for future boards. **What drives me is this strong conviction of doing things better and right.**

When Shadowood needed me the most, I have been there:

- **When we transitioned** from self-management to professional management **I keep things moving.** All of our bills were paid on time and all services were timely provided.
- **When Koger Management's contract was canceled** at the end of June 2007, **I took time off to assist.**
- **When Armstrong took over, I spent nights and days assisting with the transition.**
- Not a single time has Shadowood failed to operate continuously.
- **During floods or leaks, I have been there** helping displaced residents file insurance claims and seek shelter.
- **When the power failed, I checked late that night** to see what progress was made and if the contractors needed assistance or questions answered from the Board.
- When a unit owner has come to my home with questions or problems, the door has always been open.
- **When Spanish-speaking residents needed assistance, I have translated for them.**
- **When I see that Shadowood has made administrative mistakes, I point them out and rule in favor of the unit owner.**

Some choices are tough and impact everyone. **Despite differences, the current Board I am privileged to work with has always done what's best for the majority of the unit owners.** Candid and passionate arguments have taken place between me and my fellow directors: sometimes I've won, sometimes I've lost, sometimes I've compromised. But the end goal has always been the same: **put Shadowood first, and I always respect and support the majority decision. Period.**

We need to focus on brighter days ahead. Should I be re-elected, I ensure that my focus will be that **this year we will begin implementing a new HVAC system** and these outrageous common gas and electric bills will be a thing of the past. **It's been a long process, but would you prefer a \$25 increase in your monthly assessment or a \$10,000 special assessment?**

Our reserve contributions are now made in compliance with our reserve studies. While we still have a shortage in reserves we will achieve success through prudent, modest annual increases in the condominium assessment.

No one had a crystal ball to predict the current world financial crisis, but because of the Board is operating Shadowood like the \$2 million business that it is, **Shadowood is in an excellent financial and operational position to continue investing and improving our community.**

My biggest pet peeve is maintenance and safety and it's my plan and agenda for the next three years to upgrade our mailboxes, complete the landscape program, renew the tot lot equipments, replace our water heaters, replace roofs, paint the stucco and improve the comfort and living conditions for all.

I am here to listen, but can only do so if you come forward. Perhaps we may agree or disagree on some points, but at the end of the day we're still members of an Association living and investing together. I encourage all our unit owners to attend board meetings, and take an active role by participating in committees such as HVAC, finance (budget), safety and hearings which will help understand our condominium and the challenges and issues of a common-interest community. Constructive participation is what helps build a better community. Get educated about your community, get involved, and we will positively continue enacting change.

I ask for your vote on March 2, 2009 and look forward to continue serving for the next 3 years. The best for Shadowood is yet to come!

Michael Santos, SCA Director and Board Secretary

Email Letter from Director, Jim Purvis

The following is an email I sent to Co-Owner Daniel Chambers on Friday, August 1, 2008.

Daniel,

In the 5 months I have been on the Board, I have seen the other side of the story. Concerning Mihai and Lois, we were backing the wrong horses because they brought their situations on themselves by seeking special privileges for which they had no right and depending on everyone else to foot the bill. I feel that I was lied to by both of them because they did not fully disclose the nature of their complaints against the Board. I have nothing more to say about them.

In your case, you are pursuing a path that has no positive benefit for anyone and I believe you are fixated on taking out Brian. When I have asked what your purpose is, the only coherent answer you have given me (other than removing Brian) is open communication from the Board. I agree that it needs to be improved but you are working against that cause and against yourself by continually fighting from the outside. I think if you used your imagination you could come up with cooperative ways to bring about what you desire. At this point, you have created a great deal of ill-will toward you since your actions appear self-serving rather than meant to benefit the community as a whole. As a Board member, I must seek what is best for the Association and not get fixated on vengeance and privilege. I'm sure you can agree with that.

That said, there is room for improvement on openness from the Board. However the biggest problem in our community is apathy. Back in March, we had a sizable group of people that wanted change in the community. Where are they now? A few showed up for the first Board meeting following the annual meeting, but that was it. From the inside point of view, you are the only one left who is doing anything and you are tearing the community apart with your vendetta against Brian and Michael. They no longer want to hear from you thru email because you have nothing to positive to offer. There are a few other co-owners that regularly show up for the Board meetings and have an interest in what goes. Generally, they feel that your activities are not the way to help the community.

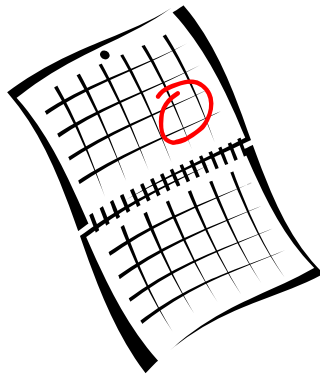
Concerning your search for misdeeds in the clubhouse renovation, Lois told me that Brian had the clubhouse redone so he could have a nice cushy office. That turned out not to be case. I have not yet looked into the expenses for renovating the clubhouse but I would expect to find that it would have been a lot more expensive to build something fancy if that was the desire. If this is your tool for taking down Brian, I suggest you rethink it. Is it best for the community or best for you to pursue that? Only you can answer that.

I asked you for a list of the things you wanted to see changed. All you could give me was 1) get rid of Brian and 2) open communication. You have no other ideas because you don't know what it takes to run the place. It's not rocket science and no one individual is indispensable, but you have to put people where they do the most good. It is not always best to "throw the bastards out". Despite the way Brian made me angry a few years ago, I can see where he has done many good things for the community. You need to open your eyes and see the situation from BOTH SIDES and look at the WHOLE PICTURE before you do things that will hurt everyone. I hope you have it in you to do that.

Yes there are problems that need fixing in Shadowood. And there are two ways to go about fixing them. You can work with what exists and make changes, or you can tear the whole thing down and start over. If you tear it down and start over you need to have a plan - and you do not. This is my biggest objection to your tactics. You only want to remove Brian, you have given no thought, that I am aware of, to what comes next. Even you must admit that in the few years Brian has been here, many things have improved. He has been heavy-handed at times and I don't completely agree with the way he has handled things, but I can see he and the other Board members keep what is best for the community in mind, as the priority in dealing with things. The main points of contention are rule violations and debt collection and this is the reason for the participation of most of the people who were with us in March. I suggest you look into that and understand what it takes to actually run the place - serve on the hearings committee. You might begin to understand things a little better.

Fighting from the outside WITHOUT full knowledge (which IS freely available) can only end up costing time, money and resources that could be better spent elsewhere. Think of the money being spent by the US to fight wars overseas. Could that money be better spent within the country? Here we have basically the same situation. The money you are going to waste for the association on needless fighting and litigation could be used to improve things in Shadowood. Which is better for the community, fighting or cooperation? You asked if I believed it was harmful and undemocratic to criticize an elected Board. No I do not. But I think it is foolish to fight anyone without full knowledge of situation and without an end goal which is hopefully an improvement on the old system. I do not see that in your tactics. I believe you would benefit from becoming involved (especially with the hearings) and seeing the situation from my viewpoint before you set things in motion that will end up benefiting no-one.

Jim Purvis, SCA Director



Shadowood Calendar

Annual Meeting
Monday, March 2, 2009
At the SCA Clubhouse

- Registration begins at 7:00 PM - Meet unit owners, enjoy light dinner and beverages
- Meeting called to order at 8:00 PM or when quorum is reached
- Meeting will adjourn at 10:00 PM
- **Only unit owners may attend - No guests, tenants, visitors, observers**
- Meeting packages with candidates' statements were mailed or delivered
- Two Directors will be elected to the SCA Board of Directors
- No other business will be conducted
- Prizes, including two monthly assessments, will be awarded - Must be present to win
- Guest Speakers: Dulles Metro; Ownes-Griffiths Insurance

Gracious thanks to the following meeting sponsors:
Bruce Ramsey, Owens-Griffiths Insurance, Valley Crest Landscaping

Hearings Panels and Board of Directors Meetings*

Third Saturday of the Month in the Clubhouse
Hearings start at 9:00am; Meeting starts at 10:00am

** Dates subject to change or cancelation*

March 21	June 20	September 19
April 18	July 18	October 17
May 16	August 15	November 21
		December 19



SCA WANTS YOU
to be involved!



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The Shadowword is published by the Shadowwood Condominium Association.

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Vice President

Rod Newhouse

Director/Secretary

Michael Santos

Director/Assistant Secretary

Christina Richards

Treasurer

Doris Schaefer

Director

James Purvis

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Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Ramsey

Maintenance Manager

Percy Chilin

Maintenance Assistant

Vacant

