

August 2009 Newsletter

Welcome, New Members!

The Association has been enhanced by the arrival of new Members this year, to whom we extend a warm welcome! A recurring question has been “what are my maintenance responsibilities as a unit owner here?” The answer lies in Section 5.5.c and Exhibit B of the Bylaws, which require Members to keep all unit-specific appliances, equipment, plumbing connections, HVAC and ductwork in clean working order.

To minimize malfunctions and leaks into neighboring units, Members are encouraged to contract for preventive maintenance, thus providing regular professional inspection and servicing of systems under their purview. And, as a precautionary measure, Members are encouraged to keep their HVAC running year-round, even when on travel, to dehumidify the air and minimize development of unsanitary conditions. Keeping the HVAC running year-round in penthouse units is especially important as this helps to prevent overhead pipes from freezing in winter and overheating in summer.

Day-to-day cleaning of limited common elements – windows, balconies/patios, patio drains and fences assigned for sole use of individual units – is the responsibility of Members, who should report any repair needs to Association Management and not attempt to perform the repairs themselves. Section 5.5.c and Exhibit B also stipulate that Members need to keep limited common elements free of leaf and other debris, snow, ice, and any accumulation of water.

Colecroft Station regularly uses reputable HVAC, plumbing, electrical and duct cleaning contractors to maintain Association systems. The On-Site Office will share with Members the names of these contractors, as well as any information on special rates. Members and residents may contact the On-Site Office at 703-684-9064 or at colecroftstation@verizon.net.

“Green” Initiatives at Colecroft Station

Long before “green” was fashionable or easy, Colecroft Station made every effort to choose planet-friendly options. Residents have been able to recycle glass, plastic and paper for many years. We use recycled paper products in the public restrooms, exercise room and kitchen. Lobby tile and other floors are cleaned with a steamer that does not require soap. Glass doors and mirrors are cleaned with micro-fiber cloths that do not require cleaning liquids. When necessary, Staff uses “green” soap solutions. The incandescent bulbs and 90% of the sodium vapor bulbs on the property have been replaced with Energy Star-qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs. Wherever possible, the Association chooses contractors whose approach is eco-friendly, and ensures quiet, clean and energy-efficient function of common equipment – such as exhaust fans and lobby HVAC – through ongoing preventive maintenance. At the center, directing all these planet-friendly efforts, is On-Site Manager Marlene Jose, whom some at Colecroft Station have dubbed the “Queen of Green.”

25th Annual National Night Out Celebration

On August 4, 2009, neighborhood residents celebrated the **25th Annual National Night Out**, with free hot dogs and ice cream provided by the Inner City Civic Association, at Hunter-Miller Park – on the corner of Fayette and Queen Streets. ICCA is the civic group that represents our section of Old Town Alexandria.

National Night Out is an event whose objective is to celebrate neighborhood spirit and to strengthen relationships between law enforcement and local communities. Always a popular event in Alexandria, National Night Out provides neighbors and City officials an opportunity to meet and catch up on matters of local interest in an informal setting.

The neighborhood party at Hunter-Miller Park was exceptionally well attended this year by single professionals interested in making new friends and by young couples with small and teen children. Depending on their ages, the children variously swarmed over playground equipment, participated in soap-bubble blowing, chalk drawing and hula hoop contests, or competed for prizes on the basketball court, while their parents visited.

The Colecroft Station contingent munched happily on ICCA's great food offerings and chatted with ICCA hosts, Members of City Council, the City Manager, the Acting Police Chief, the Sheriff, the Fire Chief and the U.S. Marshall. Our group also thanked those Patrol Officers who walk Colecroft Station during their neighborhood rounds. Officer McGruff ("Crime Fighting Dog!"), the K-9 Unit, the Bike Patrol Unit and the Motor Unit provided added thrills with special demonstrations.

Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan Update

City Council recently established two accounts, the Braddock Open Space and the Braddock Community Amenities Funds, and approved a formula for developer contributions to implement the **2008 Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan**. This plan for our neighborhood is based on seven "guiding principles:"

1. Create a sense of neighborhood identity, vitality and diversity.
2. Provide a safe, pedestrian-friendly place.
3. Provide a variety of community-oriented open spaces.
4. Encourage community-serving retail and services.
5. Promote a variety of mixed-income housing.
6. Manage multi-modal transportation, parking and road infrastructure.
7. Achieve varying and transitional heights and scales.

For additional information, please contact City Planner Veronica Davis at 703-838-4446 x330.

Additional Service Hours at Charles Houston

The Charles Houston Recreation Center at 901 Wythe Street is now offering additional hours of service – from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. on workday mornings. New early-morning fitness and other classes are available, as well as access to the computer lab, gym/basketball court, crafts room, etc. For more information, please call the Charles Houston Recreation Center at 703-838-4814.