

LAKE COUNTRY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume VII No. 1 – October 2023 - Tom Maglienti, Editor

www.lcvillage.org



IMPORTANT REMINDER! TIME TO SHUT OFF WATER TO OUTSIDE FAUCETS!

By: Board of Directors

Greetings, LCV homeowners! The days are growing shorter, and colder... we are already experiencing frost, and soon we will have days and nights that are below freezing. For all homeowners, and especially for those who may spend the winter months elsewhere, now is the time for an important message regarding preparing your home for cold weather.

All units in LCV have two outdoor hose faucets – usually one in the front, and the other in the fenced-in backyard. Typically these faucets have water shut-offs inside the units, and before the weather turns cold, these need to be shut off, the outside faucets left open and hoses put away in order to prevent the pipes to the faucets from freezing.

A frozen pipe can burst, sending large amounts of water into your unit and potentially also the unit next door to you. You may be liable for damage caused to any units affected by a burst pipe. Even if your outdoor faucet has been ‘winterized’, leaving the hose attached will negate this benefit because the pipe cannot drain, so it could still freeze and burst! Hoses must be removed from faucets for this reason.

Not sure where your shutoffs are? Some possible shut-off valve locations are above the ceilings in the kitchen, under the sink in the downstairs half-bath or in the boiler room. If you can't find them, you can try asking your neighbor or the previous owner. If this is unsuccessful, we recommend contacting a plumber. Possible resources include:

- Merit Heating and Plumbing,
- Roto Rooter
- Bob's Instant Plumbing

all of whom have long histories with LCV and are knowledgeable about our plumbing systems. **(Please note, the HOA does not have detailed information about these locations. Some units actually have their shut-offs in an adjoining unit.)**

All homeowners are required to provide up to date emergency contact information to the HOA, partly because of this issue. This can be done by filling out the Homeowner/Tenant Information Form [found on our website by clicking here](#).

Remember also that thermostats **must be set at a minimum of 60 degrees** at all times and all utilities must be left on. Turning off the heat and water inside your unit is NOT allowed since a cold unit can still cause plumbing problems for a neighboring unit.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter!



From the Prez!

By: Randy LaMora, President

Hello everyone In Lake Country Village. I hope everyone is in good health, doing great and enjoyed the summer and fall weather.

Our meetings are on the second Monday of the month starting at 6:00 pm at the North Country Alliance Church, located on New York Rd. We also may have a second meeting on the fourth Monday of the month, depending on what is going on at that time. Homeowners are

encouraged to attend the meetings if possible.

The current Board Members are: Dave Andrews-Vice President, Tammy Favro-Treasurer, Ron Deragon-Secretary, Kathy Firme, Margret Felty, Dale Holzer and myself.

Please keep us updated with your current E-Mail address so that you can keep informed of current happenings in the village.

As many of you have seen, we are using a new software system, Buildium, to conduct HOA business. We are working to get all the kinks and bugs out of it, so please be patient. There will be more information on Buildium later in the newsletter.

In the message boards at the mail kiosks, thanks to Dale, there are now QRC codes that enable you to download the new Owners Handbook. We are hoping this document will answer many of the questions that you may have as homeowners. Dale has also been posting other important information to help keep everyone up to date. Please take a minute to stop and read them.

This has been a very busy summer. With all the rain, we have had more roof issues than usual. As soon as we believe we have repaired them all, it rains again and others pop up. We are trying to get to them as soon as possible to avoid any damage to your unit.

We have received numerous complaints about the lack of mowing in the village. With all the rain we had it was difficult for Hart's to stick to any type of schedule, but all in all it seems he has done a good job with it despite the rain.

We continue to receive complaints about dogs that are running loose in the common areas, playgrounds, and tennis courts. Please, make sure your dogs are always on a leash. Remember, it is a violation of our rules to allow your dog to run loose and as well, there is a leash law in the city of Plattsburgh. Also remember to pick up after your pet and to dispose of the waste bags at your residence, not in other people's trash cans, yard waste bags or in the storm drains. We are also receiving complaints about nonstop dog barking. This is also a violation of HOA rules and the

owner could be subject to a fine so please if you must leave your dog inside while your away make some sort of arrangements to stop the barking.

The ST. NICHOLAS CHRISTMAS TRUCK will once again be in the Village **on December 1, 2023 at approximately 6:00 pm** at the flag pole. The exact time can't be known since they make other stops on the way, so we recommend arriving a little early. Their route in the village is down Kansas then onto Maine, directly to the flagpole. If you would like to see this amazing truck adorned with lights and Christmas Music, please make a point to stop and see it.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Property Manager, visit our website, reach out to a Board member, or attend a meeting, whatever is convenient for you.

We are always looking for committee members. If you would like to become a committee member, please let us know what committee you would like to be a part of. And yes, you can be on more than one committee at a time.

We are always looking for new ideas for the community. If you think you might have one to make this community a better place than it is right now, feel free to contact us with your ideas. If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter; your favorite recipe(s), gardening tips, an article that you might think would be interesting or helpful to the homeowners, feel free to contact the Communications Committee.

In closing I would like everyone to have a fantastic Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Moratorium on Level II EV Chargers

By: Board of Directors

Due to the many unknowns regarding the electrical capacity in our homes, and the potential for serious consequences to owners, the Board enacted the following policy on January 9, 2023.

Effective January 31, 2023, no new Level II EV chargers will be permitted in any units



(except for the 10 newer units on Maryland Rd.) until further notice. Level I chargers, which plug into a standard 120-volt outlet and which typically draw 15 amperes or less are allowed, subject to an approved Work Request.

Owners who install Level II chargers after the effective date may be required to remove them at their expense and will be responsible for damage to, or maintenance of electrical systems supplying them, including emergency callouts of electricians or utility workers.

For more information on why this is needed, see the article “How ‘bout them Wires” in the January 2023 Newsletter.



My Garden is NOT a Mess.
It is a Habitat!

By: Rachelle Armstrong¹, Landscape Committee

A national movement is growing that proclaims: leave the leaves and seed heads in the fall; resist the trained urge to tidy up your yard because a so-called clean yard is a sterile yard that defies the laws of nature. Groups such as Healthy Yards and the Xerces Society as well as scientists like Dr. Doug Tallamy, entomologist (author

¹Rachelle serves as the Coordinator of the City Climate Task Force which helps the city with its sustainability efforts through the NYS Climate Smart Community (CSC) program. The city recently was awarded Bronze Certification by the state, a distinction

of *Homegrown National Park*), are working hard to educate the public about the benefits of leaving nature alone and letting it take its course. The stakes are high: the landscaping customs we’ve practiced, encouraged in part by the makers of landscaping products, are contributing to the alarming decline of insects, birds, and other wildlife. In considering this one aspect of the decline in biodiversity, it’s important to confront the grim facts. Reporting for the UN Foundation, MJ Altman reports, “[A]ccording to the United Nations Environment Programme, biodiversity is declining faster than at any other time in human history. Right now, more than 1 million species are facing extinction.”²



Leaving the leaves and letting your garden age throughout the winter is not the result of homeowners’ laziness, but rather their active encouragement of those wildlife populations. In a National Wildlife Federation article, Laura Tanglely³ writes that, in addition to keeping about 33 million tons of leaves out of the landfills, which produce methane, “Removing leaves also eliminates vital wildlife habitat. Critters ranging from turtles and toads to birds, mammals and invertebrates rely on leaf litter for food, shelter and nesting material. Many moth and butterfly caterpillars overwinter in fallen leaves before emerging in spring.” According to Mary Tebo Davis, UNH Urban and Community Natural Resources Field Specialist, “The seedheads of

earned by only 121 communities statewide and 5 other North Country Communities.

² [Leave the Leaves - United Nations Foundation](#)

³ [Why You Should Leave the Leaves - National Wildlife Federation](#)

perennial plants provide food in the winter for seed-eating birds such as finches, chickadees, juncos, and sparrows, along with wildlife viewing for you and your family. Leaving all stems and stalks standing gives the native bees shelter for hibernation through the winter.”⁴



Instead of bagging your leaves and disturbing the insects that are burrowing there trying to hibernate for the winter, please consider raking at least some of them into your garden beds. Over the winter, they will decompose, providing nutrients to your soil. When spring arrives, master gardeners suggest not disturbing the leaves until temperatures are consistently about 55 degrees. You can also protect bee populations, as Tebo Davis suggests by, “[cutting] perennials back to about fifteen inches above the ground. This will give the native bees places to lay eggs and complete their life cycle. It will also help to give a more uniform look to the garden or landscape.”

Unfortunately we humans have been too slow in recognizing that we are part of nature. Perhaps too late, we’re understanding the danger of living in ways that go against nature. Let’s take

whatever small steps we can to nurture and preserve it.



Treasurer’s Tidbits

By Tamara Kelsy-Favro

Hello Homeowners! This is your new Treasurer, Tammy. Hope all is well with you all.

A few comments about our finances. First, we have had a few months experience with Buildium now and from an accounting perspective, things are going along fairly well. All existing autopay owners have been successfully transferred to Buildium and a few new autopay sign-ups have been received. We have not yet fully transitioned all transactions to Buildium, with a portion of our bills being paid directly through Buildium and others still being paid by the previous methods while we work out the remaining kinks in the system. But we will get there soon and we are hopeful this change will be of great benefit.

Our Board has authorized two extra payments of \$10,000 apiece to be made against the principal of our fence loan. This will be a month by month decision and the funds are coming from the Reserve allotment approved in the 2023-24 budget. If we continue to make these extra payments, we will be shorting our reserves needed for future repairs and these will certainly need to be made up. However we will save almost \$300,000 in interest over the life of the loan and will shorten the term from 15 years to just under 5 years.

That’s all for now. See you in the next newsletter. If you have any questions about our finances, please feel free to contact me at tammyf@lcvillage.org.



Are You A Candidate?

By Gerry Eagan, Elections Committee

LCVHOA Homeowners: Once again, we need your help! Please consider running for an HOA Director seat next year starting July 2024. The Elections Committee accepts applications for

⁴[Leaving The Leaves - U. of New Hampshire](#)

Directors from January 1 to March 15th. You can easily submit your application online on our website at www.lcvillage.org. We update our Homeowners contact list right after that and put together information for the ballot in March so that we can start the elections via an email (some paper ballots if you do not have email) around April 15 when we start the election for Directors. At the first meeting in May we announce the winner(s). Please ask around and consider becoming a Director to help with the leadership of the LCV HOA. Thank you!



LCVHOA Owners Handbook Update

By: Judy Barcomb

Hi Everyone! In the last newsletter, we mentioned that there was a new, all-inclusive Owners Handbook that would be coming your way soon. Well, lo and behold, the Handbook became effective July 1st, 2023, and emails were sent to all owners **with a copy of the handbook attached**.

Since that time, we have had several inquiries about rules and we have done our best to refer owners to the Handbook, which is also **located on our website**, to find answers to their questions.

The Handbook includes sections on:

- **General Information**
- **Rules and Regulations**
- **Assessments**
- **Fees and Penalties**
- **Policies and Procedures**

We encourage all owners to become familiar with the book, particularly the section on Rules and Regulations.

Keep in mind that **this Handbook supersedes all other published rules**, definitions, procedures, etc. except for the Declaration. Note that we will be issuing a revision to the Handbook once we develop procedures for the new Buildium software.

As always, please contact the Communications Committee at communications@lcvillage.org for any questions or concerns.

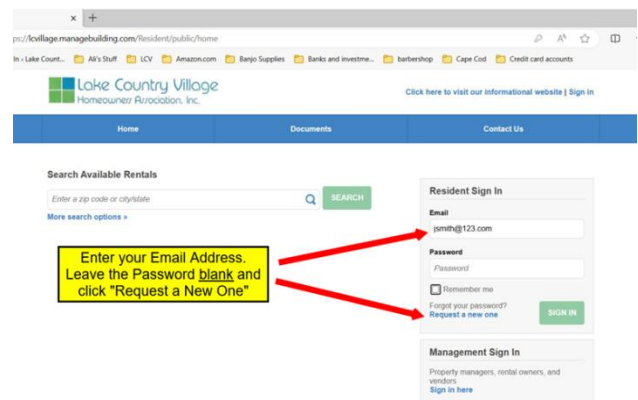


Buildium Update!

By: Judy Barcomb & Tom Maglienti

Happy Autumn, folks! As most of you know, Lake Country Village rolled out our new “Buildium” Property Management Software on 8/1/23 and as of this writing, over 220 of your neighbors have activated their personal portals in the Buildium Resident Center.

Members of the Communications Committee have been challenging each other to conquer the learning curve and have become somewhat competent in its “inner workings”. However it is a comprehensive system that sometimes gives unintended results and we ask for your patience as we get to know the system and make modifications needed to accommodate our particular needs.



For those owners that have not yet set up their personal portal in the Resident Center, there is still time. Just click on this link: [Home - Resident Center \(managebuilding.com\)](http://Home-Resident-Center.managebuilding.com), enter your email address, click “Request a new one” and follow the instructions. If you are having ANY trouble, please do not hesitate to contact the Communications Committee at communications@lcvillage.org and we will be glad to help.

So, what is your personal portal? While we are using Buildium behind the scenes, to take full advantage of this system, you will need to set up your own personal portal. This is the way you can directly interface with Buildium. Your personal portal is password protected so that only you can see your information. It affords you the opportunity to view all your information including your email address, phone number, and

contact information and to update it whenever needed.

You can view your account balance, see a statement of charges and set up or modify your payment methods at any time. You can now pay your dues using autopay (as before), make a single online payment or even use a credit card. Of course, you can still send a paper check by regular mail if you so choose.

You can also view current and past “Announcements” that are initially sent to owners via email (and in some cases via text messages as well.)

You can submit any type of request from a general inquiry about a policy or happenings in the village, to a maintenance request for something the HOA is responsible for like repairs to siding or pruning of common area trees, to a work request for something you would like to do that requires HOA approval, like adding “mini split” AC units or planting something in the

common area. You can view the status of each type of request, upload additional information or ask a question. All your inquiries are tracked by the software and are viewable at any time.

For those owners who have set up their portals in Buildium, we ask that they submit any Maintenance Requests through their portals, rather than the LCV Website. This enables the automatic tracking of your request from the beginning so you can see its status and progress every step of the way. It also saves us the task of transferring the request manually. As of this writing, we plan to stop accepting maintenance requests via the website form on March 1, 2024.

Last, but not least, you will be given the opportunity to receive (opt into) text messages on your cell phones, which would include receiving “up to the minute” text Announcements such as snow removal updates, leaf bag pick up dates, rule reminders, etc.

