

# The Sierra Post

VOLUME I, ISSUE 7

THE SIERRA AT JACK LONDON SQUARE

July, 2005

## HOA Meeting Summary

### HOA Organization

#### Board of Directors

Russell Wilsey, President  
Bach Nguyen, Vice President  
Ron Siengo, Treasurer  
Mary Tilbury, Secretary  
Frank Schultz

#### Social Committee

Dan Rice  
Jackie Luckett  
Spontaneous Russell

#### Architectural Committee

Veronica Welch  
Gene Blis  
J.D. Lin

#### Newsletter Committee

Curtz Lam  
Phil Ting

### Merit Property Management

Lee Crowell  
925.855.3240  
[lcrowell@meritpm.com](mailto:lcrowell@meritpm.com)

### Crescent Heights

Lorraine Shmulik  
415.343.4415  
[ishmulik@crescentheights.com](mailto:ishmulik@crescentheights.com)

### Contact Information

Front Desk 510.285.3515

Mario Brown 510.663.1245

HOA President  
[president@sierrajacklondon.org](mailto:president@sierrajacklondon.org)

Newsletter Committee  
[news@sierrajacklondon.org](mailto:news@sierrajacklondon.org)

**The next HOA meeting  
will be held on Jul 19,  
at 6:30 pm in the  
lobby.**

The last Board meeting was held on Jun 21. Check the bulletin board for the official meeting minutes.

President Russ Wilsey called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. It was noted that the Board met in Executive Session immediately prior to the meeting to discuss delinquencies, third party contracts and violations. Action was taken regarding the approval of the prior meeting minutes and third party contracts.

**Financial report:** The financial report through April Financial report was presented, noting there was \$53,201.16 in operating funds, \$170,315.72 in working capital funds and \$332,845.49 in reserve funds for a total of \$556,362.37. It was resolved that financials are accepted for placement on file for audit.

The Board asked Management if the financial reports could be prepared on an accrual basis. Management advised they could be, but there may be a small cost for full accrual. Management will investigate and advise the Board.

**Committee reports:** The Parking Committee reported that the current idea seems to be pointing in the direction of having the street parking in the neighborhood be limited to 4 hours during business hours. The Committee will advise if this is formally adopted.

**Possible Late Fee Change:** The Board has authorized a letter to be distributed to all homeowners explaining an increase from \$10 to 10% for late payments made on assessments. Once the letter has been mailed and the owners given 30 days to respond, the Board will vote on the matter at the next regular meeting following the 30 day period.

**Board Update:** The Board discussed that it is investigating hiring a full time onsite

General Manager as the time needed to properly manage the community appears to exceed what can be provided by a portfolio management contract such as that currently in place.

### Homeowner Forum:

- A request for removal of footprints on the exterior wall of the building located on Oak Street. Alicia from Savage Building Maintenance was present and agreed to have it done.
- Complaint of musty smell in Media Center. The cause is believed to be because of poor ventilation. A suggestion was made by homeowner to use a device that collects water from the air in a concealed container to see how much moisture is visible in the air, then proceed with further action if necessary. Mold could be a huge factor if not addressed. Cleaning or replacement of the carpet may need to be done if continued moisture is evident.
- Security issue for stolen bikes in the parking garage. A homeowner asked how was the Board going to address the issue. Mr. Siengo suggested creating a locked area for storing of all bikes with Fob access only.
- The use of fresh flowers in lobby instead of artificial was mentioned, the board has requested that the Architectural Committee look into a local florist that can provide flowers weekly at a reasonable cost. The owners were advised that the developer had been paying for the prior flower arrangements.
- A question was posed about a cover for the pool. Management advised that liability concerns (should someone fall into the pool they could not be seen under a cover) led to other communities not having them. The Board agreed with that concern, along with the problems related to a cover at a frequently used pool.
- A request was made to have an arrow added to the sign on Oak Street pointing to the lobby. The Board asked the Architectural Committee to pursue the request.

# Our Neighborhood

Greeting neighbors....

It has been another eventful month here at the Sierra. Most of the "events" have been minor and pretty much go unnoticed by most homeowners. Many of the events require some type of follow-up which, I will admit, has been hit or miss in many cases. I would like to make it clear to everyone that the current contract with Merritt Property Management does not include day to day property management functions. The Sierra is a "portfolio" client, that means Merritt is mainly responsible for financial functions and contract oversight. Mario, HOA volunteers and Merritt address many of the issues that need action as time allows. Unfortunately, many other items in need of attention do not make it up to the top of the list. What can be done? If you have followed the discussions at the HOA meetings and my past rants in this newsletter, you know that I have always advocated the hiring of a full time manager for the Sierra. After considerable effort, we are at the point where the board can take action on filling the position. Stay tuned for details....

I have received calls from more than one homeowner regarding a property tax amount that was reported as delinquent on their properties here at the Sierra. The amount is a supplemental property tax assessment that is owed by the developer, 311 Oak Street Associates, LLC.

The Alameda tax collector has sent the notices to the developer, but the amount owed is recorded against the property address. I would advise all homeowners to give the tax office a call to check that there are no past due amounts that you may not be aware of. Their number is: (510) 272-6800. You will need your parcel number when you call. Contact Crescent Heights if records show there is an outstanding balance owed by the developer.

If you or any of your guests have tried to find parking on the street during the daytime recently, you know that what was difficult a while ago is now nearly impossible. Construction workers are now also using the limited neighborhood parking resources used by BART commuters and area business employees. As a result businesses in our neighborhood are suffering because customers cannot find any parking, paid or otherwise. I would ask Sierra residents to be considerate and please use your assigned parking spot in the building whenever possible. If you don't have parking for that second vehicle that seldom gets used, check with some of the nearby lots for monthly parking at reasonable rates.

If you or someone you know has "borrowed" the printer from the business center, please return it as soon as possible.

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# Sunny and Mild

Now that summer is here and the weather forecast is sunny and mild, it's time to spend some time outdoors. Here are some outdoor activities in and around Oakland.

## Home Grown Blues Series

In July and August, each Wednesday between 5:30 and 7:00 pm. a wide range of blues artists will perform on Ninth Street between Broadway and Washington St. This is the tenth anniversary of the Home Grown Blues series. Schedule of performers: July 6 Caravan of Allstars featuring Wylie Trass, Teddy Blues Master Watson, Willie G July 13 Ron Thompson & the Resistors, July 20 Tom Rigney & Flambeau, July 27 Dr. Loco & Hot Jalapeno, August 3 Birdlegg & Tightfit Blues Band, Aug 10 Jackie Payne & Steve Edmondson Band, Aug 17 EC Scott, Aug 24 JC Smith & Ella Pennewell, Aug 31 Caravan of Allstars with special guests. [www.bayareabluesociety.net](http://www.bayareabluesociety.net)

## Woodminster Amphitheatre

The 39th season of the Woodminster Amphitheatre presents Oklahoma, Hello Dolly and Jesus Chris SuperStar. This theatre is a classic open-air performance facility which was constructed as a WPA project and dedicated in 1940 to California writers. The setting is beautiful Joaquin Miller Park, which is home to picnic grounds, miles of hillside trails, and one of the only urban second-growth redwood groves in existence. Relax with a picnic at sunset and enjoy a musical under the stars. For more information call 510-531-9597 or <http://www.woodminster.com>

## Bruns Amphitheatre

The California Shakespeare Theatre presents Othello, the life and adventures of Nicholas Nickleby and the Tempest at the magnificent Bruns Amphitheater. Located in Orinda, just after the Caldecott Tunnel, this is one of the most beautiful and unique settings to experience live theater. Stroll through the groves before the show and enjoy the sculptures on display by local artists. For tickets call 510-548-9666 or <http://www.calshakes.org>

## East Bay Hills

Check out activities at the East Bay Regional Park <http://www.ebparks.org>. Take a walk along one of the many trails, go fishing at Lake Chabot, <http://www.ebparks.org/parks/lakechab.htm> or visit "Nellie", the new 36" reflector telescope, at the Chabot observatory <http://www.chabotspace.org> And don't forget the beautifully landscaped grounds at the historic Dunsmuir Estate, <http://www.dunsmuir.org>

## Jack London Aquatic Center

Just three blocks away from the Sierra, the Aquatic Center offers classes in kayaking, sculling and rowing. <http://www.jlac.org>

## Neighborhood Events

### Harry Potter Midnight Magic

Jul 15 9pm at Barnes and Noble Event Loft. The Harry Potter Midnight Magic Party will feature trivia contests, games and giveaways; dress up as your favorite wizard.

### Bike Tours of Oakland

Jul 17 10am. Explore Oakland with the Oakland Museum's bike-tripping docents and learn about the incredible history of Oakland and its visionaries and scoundrels—who were often the same people. The leisurely paced two-hour tours are about five miles long, with no hills. Meet at 10th Street entrance at 10 a.m. The tours are free, but advance reservations are required. Participants must be over twelve years old and provide their own bikes, helmets and repair kits. Reservations: 510/238-3514 or [jcollignon@museumca.org](mailto:jcollignon@museumca.org). Free.

### Race for Treasure

Jul 23. An event to benefit the Oakland Parks and Recreation Department, as well as the Jack London Square Aquatic Center. For more information contact the sponsors of this event, California Canoe and Kayak at 510-893-7833.

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## Neighborhood Events

### Cruise to the Golden Gate

Jul 28. Cruise out to the Golden Gate bridge on board the Presidential Yacht Potomac to view the parade of Tall Ships as they enter the Bay. Ships from all over the world will be attending SAIL SAN FRANCISCO. Ticket price of \$75 includes gourmet box lunch, beverages and 3 hour cruise. For more information and reservations, call 510-627-1215.

# Mario's Corner

## Fire Alarm

I received many questions regarding our fire alarm system in light of the recent false alarm incident. A fire alarm inspection is scheduled for this month. I will have more information and hopefully most of the answers after the inspection. Check the next newsletter for more details.



## Window Washing

Window washing will occur in the next few weeks. If you are going away for a long summer vacation, be sure to keep your windows shut tightly. Official notice will be posted once the dates are finalized.

## No Grilling

I would like to remind our residents that the building code does not allow for outdoor grilling. This includes all common areas as well as balconies attached to individual units.

## Earthquake Awareness

April is earthquake awareness month, we are a little late for that but it's never too late to prepare for earthquake. Be sure to have a survival kit ready and always know where it is. Identify the closest stairway from your unit and plan for the fastest exit from the building. Please come to the front desk to pick up additional information on this subject.

## Energy saving lights

We are in the process of replacing all common area lights with energy saving bulbs and sand blasting fixtures. This process will continue for the next few months.

## HOA on the Web

The Sierra now has an official HOA website at <http://www.sierrajacklondon.org>. Here you will find the meeting agendas and minutes, online copies of The Sierra Post newsletter, contact information and other items of importance to our homeowners. And don't forget the community chat board will continue to be hosted at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sierracondos>

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