

The Liberty Letter

Liberty Tower Condominiums

December 2005



Liberty Tower Owners Association

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Board of Directors

Scott Williams
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Bill Bland
(*vice president*)
David Somers
(*secretary*)
Walter Long
(*treasurer*)
Joe Miller
(*asst. treasurer*)

Virginia Walker
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Manager

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Dues Increase to Rebuild Reserves

This year has brought many improvements to Liberty Tower — including fire safety systems, structural repairs, window sealing and plumbing system improvements.

The work has come with a significant price tag — around \$110,000. Reserve funds are running uncomfortably low.

Much of the 10 percent dues increase approved by the LTOA Board of Directors at its November meeting will be used to restore reserves.

The increase begins with the January 2006 dues payment. Owners will soon receive a statement advising them of their new dues amounts.

Current reserves have dwindled to around \$10,000, according to LTOA Treasurer Walter Long. Monthly transfers of \$2,500 will be made into reserve funds to restore them to around \$40,000.

More fire compliance improvements will likely be necessary in 2006, according to LTOA President Scott Williams. The dues increase will provide at least a base of funding for

those projects.

The budget also provides a \$20,000 increase in energy costs. However, that is offset by a \$7,000 decrease in elevator maintenance costs resulting from a new vendor contract.

General operating expenses will change very little. And, \$50,000 is allotted for general maintenance and project costs.

Debt reduction will continue.

An independent watchdog committee will be appointed to assure prudent spending.

Residents Updated on Fire Protection Issues

The challenges of fire protection issues in Liberty Tower and other Tulsa high-rise buildings are ongoing with no resolution in sight.

Residents were updated on the status of the city's fire sprinkler ordinance and fire code compliance issues directly affecting LT during a Nov. 14 meeting sponsored by the LTOA Board of Directors.

Attorney Don Bingham reported he and others have been meeting with city officials to resolve the fire sprinkler issue.

"The city's position is sprinklers would enhance fire safety. But if you can't afford them, what is the enhancement," Bingham said. "We can't have people give up their homes in the name of fire safety."

Bingham is continuing to attempt negotiations to resolve the sprinkler issue to avoid litigation on behalf of LTOA and other building owners. Individuals in LT reported they have engaged litigation on their own behalf.

Most of the smaller fire code issues identified by the fire marshal last spring have been resolved. However, the issue of providing fire separations in plumbing chases and electrical closets remains.

Architect Roger Coffey reported the chases were constructed of wood

without fire stops between floors or adequate wall protection. The installation would not have been allowable when the building was built in 1964 but was somehow accepted by the city at that time.

Upgrading each chase to code requirements could be cost prohibitive — with one estimate exceeding \$70,000 per floor.

LTOA President Scott Williams assured residents that efforts are continuing to find a workable and affordable solution.

Elections Coming for Two Board Seats

Property owners will be deciding two LTOA Board of Directors positions during upcoming elections. The seats of Scott Williams and Walter Long are up for elections. Candidates were to submit resumes by Dec. 1, and informational packets on the candidates will be provided to residents later this month. Owners are encouraged to return their completed proxy/ ballot to the manager by 5 p.m. on Jan. 2, 2006. Ballots may also be cast at the annual meeting set for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2006.

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www.libertytower.us

(Maintained by Bill Johnson)

Happenings ...

OPEN HOUSE A BIG SUCCESS!

Many residents and guests spent the afternoon of Nov. 20 touring nine beautiful LT homes. They then gathered in the newly-painted 7th floor clubroom for a Thanksgiving dessert buffet. Mella Glenn organized the excellent event with help from several other Social Committee members. Thanks also to those who graciously opened their homes. They are outstanding examples of LT's quality living environment.

NO LIVE CHRISTMAS TREES

Residents need to remember that live Christmas trees are considered a serious fire hazard and are banned from units. Also, holiday decorations placed in hallways must be flame-retardant and must not obstruct egress. And, Christmas lights or other decorations placed on balconies must be well secured from wind.

CHRISTMAS PARTY DEC. 23

LT's annual Christmas party will be held on Friday, Dec. 23, beginning at 7 p.m. in the 7th floor clubroom. Residents and guests are invited. Signup sheets will be available at the front desk. There will be plenty of food, drink and fun.

SIGN HOLDERS HOLDING UP

Thanks to David Somers for making the new sign holders that are being installed in the elevators. They will keep residents attractively informed of upcoming meetings and events, and are more durable than their plastic predecessors.

LT JOINS HFFZ GROUP

LT Board members voted to join Homeowners For Fair Zoning, a grass-roots Tulsa group that monitors activities at City Hall on behalf of citizen property owners. Mona Miller, president of HFFZ, discussed the group's mission during the Board's November meeting.

Parking Policies Begin Jan. 1

Revised parking policies will be going into effect in January. Vehicle owners will be issued a permit for their space that will need to be hung from the rear view mirror. Each permit will have a number that corresponds to the assigned space. Permits are transferable between vehicles.

Vehicles can be towed for the following violations:

- Backing into a parking space.
- Unauthorized parking in a spot assigned to another.
- Parking in front of elevators.
- Blocking a parking space.
- Excessive fluid leaks.

Owners of towed vehicles will need to pay the towing company directly to recover their vehicle.

Other parking garage policies include turning on headlights, not exceeding 5 mph, making sure vehicles clear ceiling protrusions, and being very cautious when rounding corners and near elevator lobbies.

Also, cars backing out or descending have the right-of-way. Always park between the marked lines. All vehicles in the parking garage must be operable. And, parking spaces can only contain vehicles, bicycles, shopping carts or baby carriages.

Commentary ... A Peek Behind the Parade

For a dozen years, I chaired the Christmas Parade in Sand Springs. As Oklahoma's oldest and largest nighttime Christmas parade, it was always a sight to behold. We regularly had more than 100 entries and 20,000 to 30,000 spectators.

It didn't take long to get things down to a science. Simplicity was bliss! I often said we learned things by trial and error ... mostly error.

The first year as chairman had few glitches. The second year was far more humbling. A local school's shop class had built a set of reindeer to go with Santa's sleigh. I remember painting reindeer noses in near darkness the night before the parade.

We mounted the deer and sleigh on trailers covered with lights and cotton batting. Parade day dawned frigid with a stiff north wind. It took mere seconds to peel off the cotton batting. While making emergency repairs, a local TV meteorologist came up and proudly announced that he was there. Not one to watch his station, I turned around in a moment of angst and asked: "Who the hell are you?" Talk about ego deflation!

Horse drawn carriages were a popular Santa conveyance for several years. One year, we rented a beautiful surrey for the big guy. On parade

night, high humidity zapped the battery lights. Santa declined to ho, ho, ho, leaving many spectators to miss him. That Santa was fired.

I worked with a bunch a good-hearted people over the years. Sometimes, their demeanor got the best of them. A business had called seeking a last-minute entry. I asked the secretary to kindly explain that we would accommodate them if they paid the entry fee. I soon heard: "He says you can be in if you pay up." Bah humbug!

The fact that there is only one Santa at the end of the parade is not by accident. One year, six different entries had Santas. Imagine being a little kid — there's Santa, no there's Santa, no there's Santa. Oops!

I got a letter from a lady one year saying she enjoyed the parade but wished the mayor was more careful with his cigarette butts. It seems he was riding in a car and threw a lit cigarette out the window ... right into the crowd. Watch your butt Mr. Mayor!

The logistics were enough for an ulcer, but somehow it all worked out. One year after the parade, I slipped anonymously into a local convenience store. A woman was going on and on about how wonderful the parade was. There was no better pay in the world.

Andy Templeton