

On the Prom

Spring Edition

Promenade Towers Quarterly

April 2008

Protecting Your Investment

A strong reserve fund and owners who understand the need to protect their investment—that's what sets our association apart from many that were mentioned in a recent New England Condominium magazine article. The article is about owners and boards that postponed or ignored needed maintenance and repairs. A condominium in Massachusetts is empty after being condemned by city inspectors. Owners of one in Miami had to move out of their homes for 2 ½ years while continuing to pay their monthly fees. Unlike these associations, ours has a strong reserve fund and a budget that projects costs for maintenance and improvements for the next 18 years.

In June 2006 our condo community came together and approved an assessment for a \$3.6 million project to fix structural problems and resolve a water infiltration issue. As our project nears completion, we're hearing compliments from residents, neighbors, realtors and visitors. Office administrator Pauli Daniels probably hears more comments than most of us do. While residents have told her how much they like the clean new colors in the halls and the convenience of the new fobs and coded entry for their units, many visitors have also praised our building. A realtor told Pauli how much she likes the new front entrance walkway. One person in the neighborhood told her, "The building looks so modern and is a great improvement for Munjoy Hill and the East End." Another commented that the color of the building works so well with the new East End School.

As unit doors are painted, Jim Zafirson, Len Ney and John Rastl have been helping Rick Lank install door closers and new door knockers. New door numbers have finally arrived and will go on next. Work has begun on the garage roofs starting with the lower front garage closest to the East End School. If you want to see what the roofs will look like, go to the 3rd or 5th floor and look down from the hall windows in Building 1. After the roof is complete over the front entrance, floating glass sides will be installed. And finally, this spring we'll be able to admire our sparkling pool and our beautifully landscaped grounds without last year's yard art, the construction lifts and scaffolds.

Travel Notes

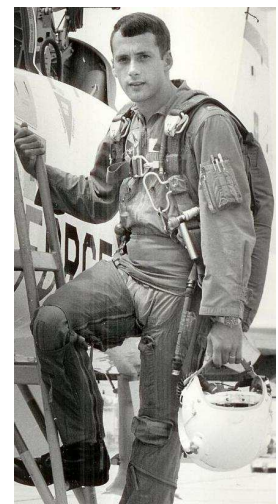
Janet and Rich Smith, like many of our residents, enjoyed a short get-away to Florida this winter. "It sure was a pleasant relief from the tough winter in Portland," said Janet. She and Rich relaxed at Siesta Key Beach, while Elle Harrington, Steve Crouchley, Chris Brooks and Denis and Tracey Sparagis all chose Fort Lauderdale. Denis and Tracey also spent time in St. Augustine and Boca Raton. Bernie Mancini and Barry Glew vacationed in Orlando with family members, Bruce and Marion Hopkins escaped to Sanibel Island, and John and Judith Rastl celebrated their anniversary at Cocoa Beach. Audrey Libby headed west to Palm Springs, California for warmer weather and a visit with old friends, while Gunnel Hansen and Einar Juhlin stayed with the snow in Maine and enjoyed a ski trip in Bethel.

Help Wanted

We have openings on our Grounds Committee for volunteers who enjoy gardening and on the Social Committee for residents to help plan association parties. If you have questions about either of these committees or would just like to have your name on a call list for volunteers to bring refreshments to parties, please call Judith at 775-1190.

Know Your Neighbors Contest

When Gunnel Hansen saw the photo in last edition's contest, she said, "I have no idea who that is." That was before she went to the monthly Board meeting and saw Bruce Hopkins sitting up front with the other directors. Gunnel was one of only five who guessed that Bruce was the young man in the picture. Others who guessed right were Margie Thomsen, Len Ney, Tom Erskine and Pauli Daniels. Gunnel's name was drawn from this pool of winners for the prize, a bottle of Maine Maple syrup. Guess who your neighbor is in this photo from the past and email or call Judith (jrastl@earthlink.net or 775-1190).



Quarterly Profile



Tom Erskine and Edna Quinn - #225

When Tom Erskine married Edna Quinn, he knew their marriage would last. He said, “Edna is a packrat. She’s never thrown anything out in her life, so I thought there was a good chance that she’d keep me.” In 2006 they celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary with all their children, grandchildren and Tom’s mother on an Alaska cruise.

Tom and Edna have three children: Peter, who owns Mexicali Blues here in Portland; Jeff, who is in the oil business in Maryland; and Jennifer, a doctor in Philadelphia. Tom says, “I want to spend time with my friends and my family, and some of them usually go with us when we travel.” Some of the trips they’ve taken since retiring were to Russia, Australia, New Zealand and Thailand, as well as a cruise around the tip of South America.

Both Tom and Edna were Fulbright Professors. Though they met while teaching at Salisbury University in Maryland, they have lived in Thailand, Romania, Jordan and Sri Lanka, where one or both of them taught and where they formed close bonds with their students. Tom said, “We’ve had some really good times together. Living and teaching abroad was fun.” Some of their former students have visited them in the United States and have become like family. “One student from Romania is now living in the U.S. and is like a daughter to us,” said Edna.

Besides teaching, Edna has worked as a nurse/midwife in Harlem and in Washington, D.C. In Brazil, she worked at setting up a clinic in the Amazon. Tom still gives talks at film conferences. “When I was teaching,” he said, “I was reading,

going to films and correcting papers. Now I can do the same but not have to correct papers. I saw 67 films last year.” Both Tom and Edna are writers. He has written eleven books and is working on one now about sports and film, while she writes mostly about health issues for women.

About three years ago Edna joined My Sister’s Keeper, a group that mentors women coming out of incarceration. Edna was one of the volunteer mentors featured in a recent article in the Portland Press Herald. Both she and Tom have always been active in their church and community, and Tom has served on the Board of Directors at Promenade Towers.

Tom, who is from Winslow, Maine, said that when he and Edna retired he wanted to come home to Maine. They chose Portland because they like living in a city where they can enjoy the theatre and the opera and be able to walk to movies and restaurants. Tom says, “The best thing about retirement is now we can do what we want to do.” Tom and Edna are still having those “really good times together.”

When the Fire Alarm Goes Off

What would you do? If you answered “evacuate the building using the stairs” you would **not** be correct. Portland Fire Department Officers have recommended that the **best thing to do in our building is stay in your unit** (unless it’s the one on fire, of course). Our building was built considering fire safety and is constructed of mostly nonflammable materials such as steel, concrete, brick, etc. A fire within a unit should be contained within that unit as was the case in the one fire here a few years ago. The firemen will notify you if they want you to evacuate the building, and this is best accomplished if coordinated by them. If you do have to evacuate, use the stairs; the elevators are disabled by a fire alarm. Unless you have an emergency to report, do not call the office just to find out what is going on. The alarm system uses the office phone to notify the alarm company/ Fire Department and then is needed to coordinate emergency actions.

Hello to New Neighbors

Welcome to new residents: Jon & Emily Bender (115); Aaron & Erika Mennella (143); and Eric Nkusi & Liane Mumporeze (242).