



# tower talk

## american plaza newsletter

Volume V, No. 11

Portland, Oregon

December 1988

## LID Assessment

The Board of Directors at their November Board meeting asked Manager Stephens to meet with a qualified land use attorney to determine what the Association's cost would be to appeal the LID Assessment. "Even though this assessment may not amount to much on a per unit basis I am very concerned about the precedent it will set for future LIDS as a funding source for the City," said Director Ron Still.

Director David Pugh informed the Board "I am the Architect of Record for the master planning of the Portland South Auditorium Redevelopment Plan which was sponsored by the Portland Development Commission. There is no doubt in the south auditorium redevelopment plan and the land use plan the property under consideration upon which APCA is situated was definitely dedicated as residential property and was so designated under the auspice of the City of Portland through the PDC." Director Pugh has since provided management with a copy of Title 33 Planning and Zoning Code, which in part states, "The Central Multi-family Zone (RX) assures that new and existing development in areas designated as central residential in the comprehensive plan are predominately residential in character and use..." A map of the Central City Zoning shows APCA in a RXD Zone (Central Multi-family Residential Zone with a design overlay) with an underlying CXD zone (Central Commercial Zone with a design overlay).

Manager Stephens reported to the Board that the key issue is whether APCA property is commercially zoned. The LID ordinance authorizes assessments against "...commercially zoned properties... value of permanent residential property is excluded..." This means they will apply the assessment to APCA land value only

not any improvements. Manager Stephens indicated, as Director Pugh had pointed out, there is a strong argument against the assessment.

Several owners have written the LID Steering Committee Chairman Melvin Marks protesting the assessment including a well documented letter by Director Pugh. If the LID continues in trying to assess the unit owners, the Board will hold a special meeting to determine what action will be taken.

If you should have any questions regarding the LID or just wish to call to register your opposition, call the Oregon Convention Center Office at 220-1179.

## Lights Out Until the New Year

"Delivery time for the approved guest parking bollard lights is estimated at eight to ten weeks. This will mean that installation of the lights won't take place until shortly after the first of the year," reported Account Supervisor Ron Balash. Since it was a special order, to match the color of the buildings, delivery times are lengthened and we do not want to tear up the Plaza area during the holiday season. Therefore, we have scheduled the work to begin after the first of the year. Once the work is started it will take approximately 14 days to complete. One consolation according to Balash, "The Christmas lights in the Plaza areas will provide additional lighting until the bollards are installed."

There will not be a Board Meeting in December due to the holidays. The next meeting is scheduled for January 19, 1989 at 7:00 P.M. in the Sivers Center.



**tower talk**  
american plaza newsletter  
Telephone: 222-7243

publication of  
**American Plaza Condominium Association**

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Debbie Castillo  
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Irv Trachtenberg

## Safety and Security Committee Reports

"The Committee has gathered the necessary information and costs associated with the crime prevention survey and we will be meeting in early December to review them and make our recommendations to the Board," stated Committee Chairman James Fell at the November Board Meeting. He went on to indicate that there were items he felt were important to implement as soon as possible. Included were:

**1) Additional Bars:** Surrounding the main garage door is metal grating far enough apart for a burglar to squeeze through. It was recommended to weld or bolt additional bars so that the spaces are not more than 5 inches apart. Cost \$1,950.

**2) Pool Area:** It was highly recommended that lighting be installed on the driveway next to the pool, as this would be a logical staging area for criminals. It would then be very open to surveillance because of the housing units above it.

Also recommended was the installation of a simple latched gate at the entrance to the pool/courtyard area, and posting a "No Trespassing" sign on the gate to prevent people from wandering "by mistake" inside. Cost \$800.

**3) Madison Freight Elevator Gate:** While it's a good idea to fence off the elevator, it is not really effective unless the metal bars are extended towards the ceiling to prevent people from climbing over (as was done in Grant Tower). Cost \$250.

The Board of Directors authorized the committee to implement these items at a cost not to exceed \$3,000.

## Employees' Christmas Fund

Plaza residents who wish to show appreciation and bring a little Christmas cheer to the American Plaza staff for the care they show in protecting and maintaining our home may do so again this year by making a donation to the "The American Plaza Employees' Christmas Fund" set up by the Board of Directors. This fund insures that gifts are entirely anonymous and made out of goodwill and appreciation only, with no special services expected in return.

Those residents wishing to participate should make out their check to "APCA Employees' Christmas Fund", place it in a sealed envelope addressed to Charles Jones, APCA Treasurer. The envelope needs no stamp and should be dropped in the APCA mail slot in the mailroom door of your tower.

MSI employee policy forbids Plaza employees to accept gifts directly from residents on pain of dismissal. The Board, supporting Manager Dave Stephens efforts to protect his employees from feeling a special obligation for extra services to "gift" giving residents, but wishing to provide a vehicle for residents to show genuine appreciation for good work, set up the Christmas fund in 1984. In that first year, Plaza employees used the donation to furnish the Grant 2B lounge. Since then they have chosen to divide the fund prorated by length of employment that year, according to Ron Balash, Plaza Account Supervisor. "The fund really sparks a lot of interest and good feeling among the staff" he said. "They voted on how to use it each year."

"One other very nice thing Plaza residents could do for an employee they think deserves special commendation would be to write a note to MSI naming that employee, either by name or by date, time, and place. Those commendations go in the employee's personnel file, and will be useful when promotions and salary increases are considered, Balash said.



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# Bits & Pieces

● On 11/20 Security Officer Steele Barnett answered a knock at the shop door only to find an angry resident demanding to know what we had done to her car! It seems the car in question had received numerous warning tickets while parked in the guest lot and in accordance with the Association rules was towed away. The angry resident threatened to slash the tires of all security guards' cars and yelled on her way out the door that they would all personally pay for what had been done!

● Security Officer Don Robinson escorted a young man from the resident garage on 10/24 at 9:26 p.m. It seems the intoxicated stranger was spotted and turned in by a watchful resident.

● While doing his routine rounds Security Officer Mark Lindseth found the guest parking lot driveway entrance blocked by several vehicles. Upon investigation he learned that the police were making a drug bust. The entire matter was taken care of in short order.

● On 11/20 someone in need of a jump for their car employed the services of a parked car in the garage without the consent of the owner. When Security Officer Lindseth arrived he found the car hood up and cable draped over the car and plugged into a nearby outlet and no one in sight.

● Garage activity picked up when Security Officer Melvin Meaney, doing his garage routine on 11/11 spotted a young man walking from car to car looking into front and back seats. The young man stopped and sat on one of the cars tapping his finger brace on the car as if waiting for someone. Seconds later a resident entered the garage and they both got in her car and drove away. Upon investigation, Security Officer Meaney determined the young man was the son of a resident at the Plaza.

● A confused guest called to inquire why we had towed her car away! (11/13) Upon investigation, Officer Barnett determined the car was not towed away by the Association. The guest was surprised that someone could even get it started as she had planned to have a tow truck pick it up the next morning for starter repair. The car has been reported to the police as stolen.

● A storage locker breakin was reported on 11/17. The thief had broken the lock. It appears that nothing was taken and no damage was caused to the door.

● A Lincoln resident heard someone tampering with the lock mechanism on his door on 11/13 at 6:35 p.m. The resident opened the door, but found no one there. Security immediately made a thorough search of the building, but did not find the suspect.

● A resident in Grant received a call from a man who said he was a security guard. He called because there was an oriental woman in the lobby who he said was looking for her and could not write or speak English very well. Could the resident let her in? The resident asked for the guard's name, but the guard refused to give it. The resident refused to let anyone in and promptly contacted Security. The caller turned out not to be one of the Plaza officers. The resident did the right thing by not letting in anyone she couldn't personally identify.

● Suddenly at 3 a.m. on 11/13 the lights went out in the courtyard and guest parking lot! Officer Robinson, upon investigation, found PGE people working on a motor at the Red Lion. They said the lights would go on in 1 1/2 hours.

● A Grant resident had fallen (11/13, 4:35 a.m.). She summoned the Fire Dept. and shortly after that the ambulance crew arrived. Security Officer Lindseth was doing rounds in the guest parking lot when he spotted the emergency vehicles. The paramedics knocked on the door repeatedly. When there was no answer, the Fire Dept. began tearing the door down with a fire ax and a pick. They had the resident out and in the ambulance in short order and she is now back at home and doing fine.

● On another occasion (11/7, 5 a.m.) Security Officer Lindseth was again dispatched to open the gates at Madison Tower for an ambulance crew responding to a call for help. The Madison resident had fallen and dislocated his right hip.

● Security Officer Barnett investigated a drilling sound called in by a Lincoln Tower resident on 10/30 at 1 p.m. Unfortunately, the source of the drilling couldn't be found.

● Security Officer Lindseth spent 45 minutes trying to locate the source of loud music reported by a Madison resident on 10/30 at 1 a.m. The resident was reluctant to let Officer Lindseth in to try and locate the source of the music. The music seemed to come from the unit below, but when Lindseth knocked on their door he got no response. The source could not be verified.

● Elevator malfunctions were down this month. While doing breezeway checks (11/2, 11:40 p.m.) Security Officer Lindseth found the Madison north passenger elevator open on the 15th floor with various floor lights lit. In the Grant Tower (11/2 at 9:50 p.m.) the north passenger elevator was stuck on the 3B level. Security Officer Miller discovered the photo cell reflector was bent away from the beam preventing contact. He bent the reflector back into position and the elevator resumed normal operation, but malfunctioned later that evening. The elevator company arrived the first thing the next day to repair it.



# We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Dave Stephens, Plaza Manager (MSI President)  
 Ron Balash, Plaza Acct. Supervisor (MSI V. Pres.)  
 Diana Beck, Admin. Dept. Mgr.  
 Debbie Castillo, Administrative Asst.  
 Jamie Marcy, Accounting Dept. Mgr.  
 Lisa Czaplewski, Accounting Asst.  
 Larry Milner, Plaza Onsite Superintendent  
 Doug Hart, Plaza Asst. Onsite Superintendent  
 Darlene Mertes, Housekeeping Supervisor  
 Alberta Corneliusen, Housekeeping (Lincoln)  
 Peggy Wheeler, Housekeeping (Grant)  
 Byron Bailey, Housekeeping (Madison)  
 Robin Cross, Housekeeping  
 Wally Hunt, Security  
 Vern Gray, Security  
 Steele Barnett, Security  
 John anHaack, Security  
 Mark Lindseth, Security  
 Don Robinson, Security  
 Matt Svetich, Painter  
 Ralph Wood, Repair Dept. Superintendent  
 Don Lee, Repair Depart.  
 Adolph Romike, HVAC Supervisor  
 Matt Bruton, HVAC Repair  
 Mike Snyder, Landscape Supervisor  
 Dave Dahlin, Landscaper  
 Ed Beseau, Landscaper  
 Charles Dulahoussaye, Landscaper  
 Bob Lorange, Landscaper

The management office will be closed for the holidays, December 24th through 26th and December 31st through January 2nd so they can enjoy the holidays with their families. The onsite staff at the Plaza will follow their regular schedule.



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### Security Doors Screens

## Fit for Life

The Health and Fitness committee would like to match up people with similar interests, i.e. Ping Pong, walking, running, etc.

All you have to do is drop a note in the APCA mail box with your name and phone number and the lists you want to be included on. Please do this by December 31st. The lists will then be typed up and sent to each person on the list and you can contact each other now that you know who else is interested in your particular sport/exercise. COUCH POTATO is not an exercise!

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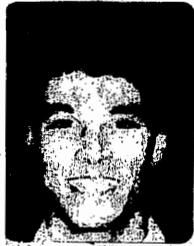
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## Security

### Alert!

Does anyone recognize this person? If so, contact the Management office at 222-7243.



## Emergencies

It has been brought to management's attention that sometimes security does not respond quickly, particularly evenings or over the weekend when the answering service is on duty. When residents call security, even if it is only to report suspicious people lurking about the grounds, they are urged to specify that it is an emergency. This will speed up the response. Some people are reluctant to report an emergency unless they have a knife at their throats, but management urges that they not be hesitant. If there is any question of danger or risk to Plaza security, please state that it's an emergency. It is better to err on the safe side.

## 1989 Payment Books

"The 1989 approved budget and coupon payment books were mailed to all owners of record on December 1, 1988" according to Jamie Marcy, MSI Accounting Manager. If you have not received your copy by the time you receive this newsletter, please contact Jamie at 222-7243. Jamie pointed out that your new 1989 payment slips will have a new color (gray). There are so many different accounts to keep track of, that color coding will help assure that payments are deposited to their proper accounts. Any questions regarding the budget should be directed to Manager Stephens.

All residents upon entering or leaving the garage are urged to keep an eye on the gate until it closes to ensure no unauthorized persons enter the garage area.

It is also important that you never buzz anyone into the towers that you do not know. If you are not sure, contact Security and they will meet the party in the lobby.

## Cable TV Bulk Rate

If you did not cancel your bulk rate cable T.V. subscription by December 1, 1988 it will be automatically renewed for an additional year in 1989. Residents who wish to subscribe to cable and want the lowest bulk rate price for 1989 must do so by December 15, 1988. Call Diana at 222-7243.

## A Board Meeting Worth Attending

"Several new faces were seen by the Board at the November 17th meeting and even though there was a short agenda the meeting was lively," according to Chairman Beik. Several owners expressed their concerns regarding security especially in light of the recent burglaries and asked pertinent questions regarding procedures, the efficiency of the management's answering service, etc.

One of the biggest concerns expressed by the residents attending the meeting was the lack of care and concern by some residents in allowing strangers into the towers either directly or by following them in. "If you want to see how bad the problem is just sit in the lobby for an hour and watch how many people are let in by residents who don't know them or follow a resident in," stated Manager Stephens. A simple "Can I help you?" or "You will have to go to the main lobby and phone the party you are here to see." and/or call security with a description of the stranger(s) will help combat the problem. The Association can do all that it can to make the residents safe and secure but it all goes for not if residents are not willing to do their share.

The residents and the Board of Directors also debated the need for additional exercise equipment at the Plaza, precipitated by the opportunity to purchase a slightly used five station universal gym for the Lincoln exercise room. The opportunity was provided by the Mittleman Jewish Community Center and Board of Director Pengra was authorized by the Board to make an offer not to exceed \$1,000. Manager Stephens indicated he had just purchased virtually the exact piece of equipment for another account at a cost of \$4,000.

"It was nice to see so many residents attend the Board Meeting. Everyone came prepared to share their varied opinions, which provides much food for thought," stated Chairman Beik.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for January 19, 1988 at 7:00 p.m. Plan to attend.

# Property Taxes Evaluated!

A tax evaluation committee will form shortly after the first of the year to meet with the County Tax Assessor. Their purpose will be to determine fair tax evaluation of the units at the Plaza. The committee and the Assessor will meet early enough to give owners ample time to prepare a proper appeal if the committee feels this is necessary. Please contact the management office, if you are interested in serving on this committee.

# Last Chance to Donate Food

Steve McShatko, Grant, who has been a one man committee for the annual APCA Food For the Homeless reports donations have not been as good as past years. Please, please, please, open your hearts and your cupboards. Donations are being accepted until Friday, December 23. All you have to do is put your canned goods in the barrel located in each tower mailroom.

# Maintenance Tips



If you are having trouble opening and closing the sliding doors to your balcony, carefully clean out the track and the rollers. Once the track is as clean as possible, rub the track with paraffin. This will lubricate the rollers and won't collect dirt. If this doesn't improve door action it may mean that the frame has settled over the years and some adjustment needs to be made by a door service person.

Several complaints have been made about smelling sewer gas in units. This unpleasant situation can occur when a particular sink is not used for a long period of time, especially during the heat of the summer.

Each sink has a water trap to prevent odors from backing up into a unit. If no water is run in the sink for an extended period that water trap can evaporate allowing gases to get through.

The best treatment is to run water in each sink at least once a week.

Drains can be plugged or covered to reduce the chance of evaporation of the water trap, but this solution does carry the risk that if a gasket should blow or a pipe burst the drain would be blocked and flooding could result.

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# Plaza Phone Directory

Enclosed with this month's newsletter is a phone directory listing all residents alphabetically with name and phone number only. If a resident is not listed it's at their request. The phone list will be updated once a year with advanced warning so that residents can be added or deleted as desired. This list is only being provided to the residents of American Plaza and will not be given to any other organization or agency.

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## Holiday Tips

Additional temporary staff will be added during the holidays to assure that Christmas packages are delivered as quickly as possible.

If you plan a holiday party, please let the Management office know during regular office hours (222-7243, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday) so that Security can help any "lost" guests find their way. Management may also be able to assist you with securing additional parking for a large party.

Everyone's cooperation is requested when bringing in and disposing of Christmas trees and greens. So that the common areas can be kept in optimum condition Management would appreciate it if you would dispose of your trees and greenery 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. only. Extra trash containers will be available in the trash rooms and the staff will be alerted to cope with the needle trails.

Trash chutes are not appropriate for the disposal of trees or large boxes, and it is best that even small boxes be taken to the trash rooms to avoid plugged trash chutes and the resultant unpleasant odors.

Burglaries and thefts are always at their highest during the holiday season. Be sure to keep your unit and automobile locked at all times. Never store packages where they are visible.

## Water/Sewer Cost Savings

In next month's newsletter be sure to look for information on how each resident can do their part to reduce overall water consumption thereby reducing water and sewer fees. Rates and/or usage is estimated to increase in 1989 by 12 percent at an annual cost of \$42,085. All the more reason to consider conservation methods.

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## Recycling Pays!

Management wants to thank all residents who are taking the time to recycle their newspapers, glass and cans. Your extra recycling efforts will keep trash removal costs down and help to offset the 40 percent increase in trash removal rates which took effect November 1, 1988. Onsite superintendent Larry Milner stated, "Residents' awareness must have increased as it requires a twice a week pick up of recyclables where once a week used to be sufficient." Keep up the good work!

## Motorcycle Parking Available

Need a place to park your motorcycle or scooter? The association has made available resident garage spaces for \$15 a month. If interested, contact Diana in the management office.

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Fee Schedule Provided Upon Request

**222-7243**

# Tower Tattler



Nothing to report this month. Ever since this column started to appear, residents have started to disappear.

## Questionnaire Results

The Tower Talk questionnaire response left us feeling a little bit lonely. We were warmed by the generally enthusiastic comments from the wonderful 40 who took the time to respond, but did wonder if it's really worth the considerable time and effort that goes into producing it if the readership is actually that small!

Everyone who responded liked the appearance of Tower Talk. The responses were split on the question of establishing an editorial board, but only one person volunteered to serve.

The readership voted overwhelmingly to continue with Letters to the Editor; Bits & Pieces; Calendar; Plaza party coverage; Garden Chatter; Budget and Board News; and Board Watch.

Tower Talk readers wanted to see more articles about Plaza staff members and a return of "Profiles" of Plaza residents. However, you were divided on whether you wanted us to provide more humor. More poetry, artwork and recipes were voted down.

The Tower Talk staff would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to our questionnaire. Your responses will be a valuable tool for future issues.

# Garden Chatter



By Irv Trachtenberg

## Houseplants #7

### Poinsettias (Euphorbia Pulcherrima)

I believe many of you will either purchase or receive this beautiful holiday plant so I hope this article will be most apropos at this time.

Poinsettias, whose bright red petallike bracts appear in late fall, have long been esteemed as Christmas plants. The true flowers are tiny greenish-yellow nubs in the center of the bracts, which may be white or pink as well as red. The bracts may stay colorful for three months or more. A lesser-known relative is the scarlet plume, so named because its two foot arching stems with narrow willowlike leaves are studded with waxy, orange-scarlet flowers, 1/2 inch in diameter in the winter.

You will probably receive the potted plant wrapped in foil. Pierce the foil at the bottom to allow for drainage. The plant should be placed in a bright spot, but not in direct sun. The plant does best in at least four hours of sunlight a day in a draft free location. Night temperatures of 50 to 65 degrees and day temperatures of 68 degrees or higher are ideal. The soil should be allowed to dry slightly between thorough waterings.

The following is for those who wish to keep the plants for next year. When the bracts (flowering part) age and become muddy green, cut the plant back to approximately 8" so the plant will grow as a foliage plant. The plant can then be placed outdoors when the temperatures become warm.

Starting in late September or early October, the plant should be kept in total darkness from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. each day. The plant should be covered with dark fabric supported by a wire frame or in a dark basement or closet during these hours. Remember that even the slightest amount of light can delay coloration of the plant. When the bracts begin to color, usually around Thanksgiving, return the poinsettias to bright light and water thoroughly. Your efforts will be rewarded with a beautiful colorful plant for the holidays.

Happy Holidays!



PAT STILL  
SALES ASSOCIATE  
RES (503) 223-5200

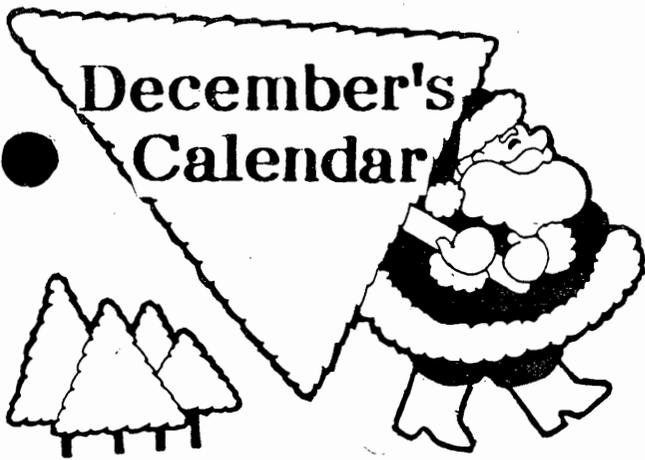
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## Postal Notes by Jeff Smith

December is my busy month. Everyone seems to get that way during the holidays. I will try to keep on schedule this month, but the high volume of mail can change my delivery times. Feel free to stack your bundled greeting cards on the counter near your outgoing mail slot.

Even though I've got more mail this season I enjoy bringing you something other than bills and junk mail. It's a little nicer working in the building when we are all in the holiday spirit. I hope each of you and your families enjoy all of the special occasions of this season.

Jeff Smith

- Dec. 6            BRIDGE GROUP  
7-10 pm  
Lincoln Lounge
  
- Dec. 8            PRIVATE PARTY  
Sivers Center
  
- Dec. 10          PLAZA CHRISTMAS  
PARTY  
5:30 pm to 9:00 pm  
Sivers Center
  
- Dec. 13          BRIDGE GROUP  
7-10 pm  
Lincoln Lounge
  
- Dec. 18          PRIVATE PARTY  
Sivers Center
  
- Dec. 20          BRIDGE GROUP  
7-10 pm  
Lincoln Lounge
  
- Dec. 25          MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND HAPPY NEW  
YEAR!!!
  
- Dec. 25          PRIVATE PARTY  
Sivers Center
  
- Dec. 27          BRIDGE GROUP  
7-10 pm  
Lincoln Lounge
  
- Dec. 31          PRIVATE PARTY  
Lincoln Lounge

## Letters to the Editor

Harry Beik, APCA Chairman, received the letter printed below on November 15th. Ed.

Dear Mr. Beik:

Recently one owner wrote in Tower Talk that spending more money on exercise equipment was unfair to the many old people living here. I hope that that party may have watched a discussion of exercising and aging on Channel 6 this morning. It is just too bad that many people still have not learned that aerobic exercise can extend the average person's life span by many years.

I believe that APCA owes it to the owners to expand the exercise facilities. If winters were not so stormy and there was not the crime problem we could all use more walking and outdoor sports for the above mentioned benefits. This puts extra emphasis on the importance of the exercise facilities and the pool.

Since the medical profession is finally beginning to stress the exercise factor it would be foolish, in my opinion, for APCA not to be providing at least adequate facilities.

They say that you are as young as you feel. Maybe we would have fewer "old people" living here if more of us aged 65 and over would stay physically active? What we need are better exercise facilities and some new ways to encourage our people to take advantage of them.

Sincerely yours,  
A Grant Tower Resident



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