



tower talk

american plaza newsletter

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Portland, Oregon

March 1989

Grant Without Elevators for Four Hours

Grant Tower lost its electrical power and all elevator service at 4:20 p.m., Monday, February 20th. The outage was caused when the common area electrical transformer, owned and serviced by Portland General Electric blew up.

It caused the power that services the garage lights, domestic water pumps and elevators to "single phase" or "brown out" at one third power. That caused damage to elevator contactors and burned up the transfer switch to the emergency generator, which prevented it from coming on. Numerous switches and fuses also blew, Larry Milner, Plaza Onsite Superintendent reported.

Board Chairman Harry Beik, and his wife Dorothy, on arriving home to discover no elevators, opted to "wait it out" at Sivers Center, where staff kept him informed with regular progress reports. Beik remarked, "The Multi-Services staff responded quickly and efficiently to this emergency, assisting residents, working on repairs and reporting to me! The total staff was involved. I was impressed!"

PGE and Northwest Elevator also responded quickly according to Milner.

The emergency generator was functioning by 8:30 p.m., the transformer was replaced by PGE by 9:30 p.m. and all repairs were completed by 12:30 a.m.

The cause of the transformer blow-out is not known, but PGE will reimburse the American Plaza Condominium Association for all expenses incurred and has scheduled the cleaning of all transformers at the Plaza.

Two Bikes Stolen Bike Locks Recommended

Two bicycles have been stolen from the APCA bicycle room in two separate February incidents Building Superintendent Larry Milner reports.

The bike room is located in the resident garage just north of the Madison garage gate, Milner said, and is locked with a key especially for that room. Only residents who use the room to store bicycles have that key.

It is possible that the door has occasionally not been carefully shut by users of the bike storage room but the likelihood of a bike thief being inside the garage to take advantage of the accidental opportunity seems highly unlikely, Milner commented. "Unfortunately, if that is not the case, it appears that an APCA resident with a key may be responsible for the thefts. We would appreciate residents' help in keeping an eye on that area and encourage the report of anything which arouses suspicion (222-7243).

Residents using the bike room might be wise to invest in and use a quality bicycle lock, and chain their bikes to the stand, Milner said.

February Freeze

"American Plaza made it through the abnormally cold weather without any major problems. There were a few frozen sprinkler pipes and hose bibs in areas where they can't be properly drained, but compared to the rest of Portland, Plaza problems were very minor" reported Plaza Manager Dave Stephens. "In comparison, from other accounts, MSI had 69 freeze damage calls the weekend of February 4th and 5th. Our repair staff worked a total of 269 hours of overtime that week solving weather caused problems."



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Editor: Marge Allen

Reporting: Dave Stephens

Production: Diana Beck
Debbie Castillo

Security Request Acted On

The Board of Directors approved lowering a ventilation box on the outside of a Grant garden unit to ground level at the request of the owner. The cost will not exceed \$500, according to Ron Balash, APCA Account Superintendent. A burglary in an adjacent unit in November prompted the owner request that the three foot high concrete box be lowered because the owner felt it allowed a potential burglar easy access over the garden unit wall. The unit owner had also requested that the ivy growing on the exterior of the garden unit wall be removed as he felt it would also provide support for easier access and acted as an access point for rodents.

An ad hoc committee comprised of Directors David Pugh, Jim Fell and Cliff Pengra researched the issue and reported that the box needed to be lowered but that the ivy should stay. The committee felt the ivy wasn't strong enough to support body weight and that the rodent issue should be dealt with through trapping. The committee stated that aesthetically the ivy is pleasing as it softens the appearance of the concrete walls. The committee recommended that all garden unit owners who have large trees with branches hanging over their walls either prune them back or replace the trees with smaller shrubs as branches can act as a support to gain entry over the wall.

Irv Trachtenberg's popular column "Garden Chatter" is missing this month, and will be back when the weather permits!

Exercise Equipment Approved



The Board of Directors at their January meeting approved the purchase of one Hoist 4000 exercise machine (\$5,200) and two Monark Stationary bicycles (\$1,050) as recommended by the Health and Fitness Committee. "The equipment will be placed at Sivers Center and the existing exercise bike at Sivers will be put in the Lincoln exercise facility," according to Board and committee member Cliff Pengra. Other Sivers Fitness Room improvements will include adding a ceiling fan and installing the metal elevator handrails removed from the Lincoln and Madison Elevators as stretching ballet bars. The exercise area will get new carpet this year when the rest of Sivers Center is done. Use of all exercise equipment is at the user's own risk, Pengra stressed. It is very important to read all the instructions posted prior to using a piece of equipment to avoid injury due to misuse.

Employee Christmas Fund Sets Record

Gifts to the Employees' Christmas Fund for 1988 totalled \$2,818 reports Charlie Jones, Association Secretary. Pleased with the Plaza residents generosity, he said, "It's an indication that the owners continue to appreciate the fine job the employees do in maintaining our property. The fund has grown each year. In 1986 it totaled \$1,322.50 and in 1987 it totaled \$1,930.

"This kind of positive attitude from Plaza residents is very gratifying to me and shows the employees how much they are appreciated. It pays dividends for the Plaza and MSI all year long." stated Manager Stephens. The staff elected to divide the money based on length of service this past year, providing each of them with a nice Christmas bonus.

Roof Cut Request Denied

The Board of Directors denied a resident request to cut through the roof of Lincoln Tower citing concern about potential leaks in the roof at the point of penetration and the adverse affect such a cut would have on the warranty for the derbigum roof surface.

The request was to make two small cuts through the roof to run an electrical cable up through the roof, then back down to the center of a room to light a centered chandelier, thus avoiding the use of surface molding or the larger expense of saw cutting the concrete ceiling to channel to the fixture.

Property Tax Committee Gets Chairman

Norman Rupp, a Grant unit owner has volunteered to act as Chairman of the APCA Property Tax Committee according to Board Chairman Harry Beik. Other committee members will be unit owners Ida Berg, Albert Bullier, Ruth Press and Byron Shields. "The committee's function will be to meet with the Division of Assessments and Taxation for Multnomah County and determine what property values will be used to set APCA tax assessments. Once this information is in hand the committee will decide whether the values placed are fair market values and report their findings to the Board and the Association. "This is being done in an attempt to give unit owners more time to prepare an appeal if necessary" stated Chairman Beik. In

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the past, unit owners have received notice of increased assessed values towards the end of April or the first of May which only gives unit owners approximately 30 days to prepare an appeal. The assessor's office did physical inspections of units at APCA on February 22nd and 23rd this year and the committee hopes they will have information on the values assessed for their review by mid-April. Committee findings will be published in the May Tower Talk.

Small Refrigerator Donated

Large One Still Needed

A small bar sized refrigerator has been donated to the Association for use in the APCA package room to store perishables by a friend of Board of Director member Cliff Pengra. It will be very useful but a large standard sized model is still needed as the Plaza receives several Fruit of the Month packages that won't fit in the small one" stated Account Supervisor Ron Balash. If you have one to donate please call Diana in the management office at 222-7243.

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Trash Trash Trash

"Some residents are still placing boxes and unwrapped trash down the trash chutes" reported Assistant Superintendent Doug Hart. The boxes plug the chutes and can take literally hours at times to unplug. The unwrapped trash causes stains and odors which no one enjoys. It is against the Association's rules and regulations to place boxes in the trash chute. The same rules and regulations require all trash to be in plastic trash bags. When residents disregard the rules, it costs all owners money as it takes extra hours to clear the chutes and/or clean them.

Bits & Pieces

● Finding the owners of cars parked in the wrong space in the garage, chasing skateboarders off the property and checking out strangers on the premises is all a part of Security's job. It has



its serious and sometimes even dangerous side, its touching moments, and sometimes it gets downright funny! When Security Officer Don Robinson received a call about a stranger in the garage, conducted a fast and furious search of the garage for the stranger, then called the reporting resident for a complete description, he can be forgiven a few snickers. The "stranger" described was his partner, Security Officer John anHaack!

● Returning from a package delivery to Madison Tower February 20th at 8:15 p.m. Security Officer Mark Lindseth smelled smoke. Investigating, he found the trash can outside the Madison 2B north door billowing smoke, the contents of the trash can and its plastic liner smoldering from a cigarette that was tossed in without first being extinguished. Lindseth managed to put out the smoldering fire by shaking the contents of the can until all burning parts were smothered.

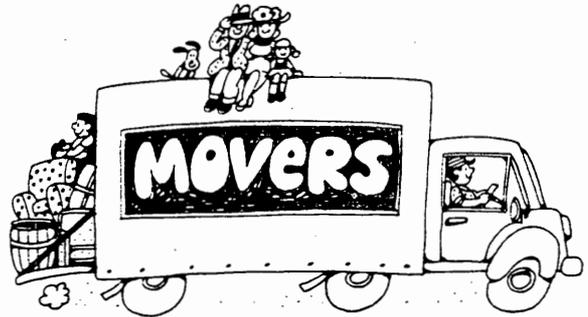
● The Madison garbage chute was clogged by



two large cardboard boxes February 19th at 7:30 p.m. It took Security Officers Robinson and anHaack about ten minutes to locate the stuck boxes and remove them. The boxes had the name of a new Plaza resident on them who probably is not aware of the maintenance problems caused by putting large boxes down the chute. Boxes larger than two shoeboxes really should be carried by the resident to the Tower trash room.

● Security Officers Steele Barnett, Wallace

Hunt, Plaza Superintendent Larry Milner and Assistant Superintendent Doug Hart found a "disoriented" resident in one of the building lobbies February 17th at about 11 a.m. They contacted the resident's family and Officer Hunt remained with the resident until a relative arrived. This was the second such incident with the resident and the concern expressed in the incident report



was nice to read. Nicely handled, guys!

● An unscheduled furniture delivery at Grant had Security Officer Mark Lindseth on the run dealing with that and a scheduled move-in at Madison on February 16th. Officer Steele Barnett was busy changing garage door openers at the time and could not help. Security Officer Lindseth managed to keep an eye on both gates, but really, folks, it would be thoughtful to let the office know in advance when a large delivery is to be made so security could be prepared!

● Someone used quite a bit of force on a locker in the women's dressing room at Sivers Center according to Plaza Security Officer Mark Lindseth, who discovered the damage at 5:40 a.m. February 15th. The locker door had been pulled off the hinge and was hanging down at an odd angle. Lindseth surmised that it happened sometime earlier in the morning.

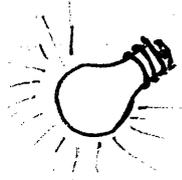
● The chain that raises and lowers the Madison gate was found to be broken on February 2nd at 11:45 p.m. when a resident called to report that the gate would not open. The chain apparently broke from normal wear and tear.

● The Lincoln gate had troubles on January 26th at 9 p.m. when it refused to close. The gearbox clutch refused to engage. Maintenance staff made repairs the next day.

● Lights unexplainedly went out for a few seconds at Lincoln and Grant Towers at 11:30 p.m. February 9th. Security Officers Stoops, Blacknall and anHaack checked all the circuit breakers and could find no damage. It may have been a power surge, maybe a precursor of the one

that hit Grant February 20th!

●By the way, a large resident using a bullying manner with a Plaza Security Guard to avoid getting a ticket on a vehicle illegally parked in the guest parking lot needs to know that the American Plaza staff cannot "bend" Plaza rules. "Bending" a rule can cause the loss of a job, so it is a pretty unfair request!



●A resident who likes to read while in the sauna at Sivers Center decided to replace the low wattage bulb with a 100 watt one. Doug Hart, Assistant Superintendent, noticing the bright light, thought a mistake had been made and replaced it with another low wattage bulb. The resident happened to see Doug one Saturday and asked about the bulb. The final result of the discussion that followed on what bulb the unmarked fixture would take was a manufacturer's check. It's 75 watt. So Hey, it's better than it was. Probably it's best to contact the office when a small change is desired. But then, sometimes the direct approach does get results! (Though it's a good thing the fixture didn't overheat and start a fire!)

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●Mystery of the month is: Who burned a shoelace in two in the Sivers Center men's locker room and why? Was it new shoelaces in hightop tennies with an unbudgeable knot? Security Officers Melvin Meaney and Don Robinson smelled smoke at 9:30 p.m. February 5th, but a thorough search of the building only turned up that burned lace!

●A Grant resident called in about a broken drain pipe elbow on the unit's kitchen sink. Security Officer Don Robinson and Plaza Onsite Superintendent responded to that call, but were not too surprised when one hour later the resident in the unit below called in because she had water dripping from her kitchen lights! Must have been a sight! The leak was stopped and the dripping lights were monitored until everything was back to normal.

●Another water leak, this time at Madison Tower, caused when a washing machine overflowed, damaged the unit below on February 11th. Security Officer Smokey Miller answered the call, and with the assistance of Security Officer Mark Lindseth and Plaza Assistant Superintendent Doug Hart the water was vacuumed up and all units below were checked for damage.

●On the 17th floor breezeway of Grant Tower next to the south stairwell Security Officer Mark Lindseth found a pidgeon that someone had been feeding. He reported that the bird wasn't hurt and flew away as soon as he came near it, leaving the scraps of bread, a plastic bowl of water and a few trademark carpet stains. Lindseth cleaned up the mess as best he could, but said it was pretty fowl!



Feeding birds in the buildings, breezeways and balconies of American Plaza is against Plaza Rules and Regulations.



Plaza Mail

Q. Who decides what mail gets left in the "overflow" mailboxes in the mailroom?

A. The postman.

Q. Does my personal "first class" mail get put in the "overflow" mailbox?

A. No. When your box is too full to accept more mail, the postman sorts out the first class mail, which goes back in your mailbox. The second class mail, magazines, circulars, catalogues, etc., are bundled and placed in the mailroom.

Q. Does the postman sort my mail into my "excess" mailbox?

A. No. Between 10 am and noon APCA Security sorts the bundles of mail left by the postman into the appropriate excess mail slots. Excess mail that exceeds the space in the excess mail slot or is too large for the excess mail slots goes in the overflow bins labeled "A" through "D". A note is left by Security in your excess mail slot telling which overflow bin has more of your mail, and Security posts your name on the "excess mail" list in the glassed bulletin

board beside the post office boxes.

Q. I receive medication from my druggist in the mail. It doesn't seem a good idea to leave it in excess mail. How can I avoid that?

A. All overflow mail marked "Confidential", "Federal Express" or "Medical" is taken to the locked, high security package room in Lincoln Tower. Your name is then listed on the package list so you can call 222-7243 to arrange delivery.

If the package is marked "medication" a notice will also be placed on your door. Both medication and Federal Express mail can be scheduled for delivery any time you wish. Regular package deliveries are scheduled between 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Q. If my name is on the package list will my package be delivered during the next package delivery time?

A. No. You must call 222-7243 to schedule delivery.

Q. I saw my name on the package list yesterday and called at 4:30 p.m. to catch the delivery, but they wouldn't bring my package until the 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. delivery. Why?

A. Security loads a cart with all packages to be delivered, and does not return to the package room until all deliveries are completed. If you called at 4:30 p.m., delivery for that time was already in progress and you were too late to "catch" it.

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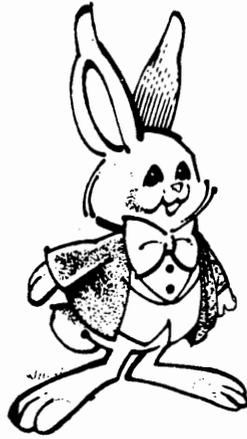
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March's Calendar



March 7 & 14

BRIDGE GROUP
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Lincoln Lounge

March 16

BOARD MEETING
7 P.M.
Sivers Center

March 21 & 28

BRIDGE GROUP
7-10 P.M.
Lincoln Lounge

Board Helps In National Win



Owner, ex-Board member and Tower Talk editor Marge Allen took Fifth Place in the USA Synchronized Swimming Masters National Championships along with her team members. The competition was held in Winterhaven, Florida and their Fifth Place was for a trio routine. "Since our scores for our individual performances of synchro required figures were factored in to our team's score, I'm sure we couldn't have won it without the practice time the Board of Directors allowed us at the APCA pool. I want to thank the Board and Association from the "Mermacs" and especially from me!" stated Marge Allen in a letter sent to the Board. The Fifth Place finish qualifies the trio to compete in the Masters World Games to be held in Arthus, Denmark on July 31st through August 4, 1989.



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