



# Your Casa Blanca

November 2008

---

## First Board Meeting of the Season

**O**ur first board meeting of the new season was held at the Downey Savings bank meeting room on October 21. Approximately 20 homeowners attended. All board members were present. Three months have passed since we had a formal board meeting, therefore, a number of items were discussed.

The following will be a brief review of items discussed and or acted upon:

The Owner's forum brought up mostly landscape related concerns dealing primarily with the grading in front of someone's patio gate, a valve cover that was being worked on for a week as well as some wrought iron pool fencing rusting only two years after being painted.

Lindsey Griffith reported on our financial status. She has been pretty successful in keeping our Certificates of Deposit earning more than 4% interest in these economic downturn times. Under our reserves, the irrigation pump account is under funded but our painting account is looking as if sufficient funds should be available to paint our homes possibly in 2009. We currently have three homeowner's accounts that are behind in their assessments and two of them look like they may be headed toward foreclosure.

Dick Stephan, our manager reported that the Health Dept. had inspected our pools early on a Monday morning before our pool cleaning people arrived. The last cleaning had been on Saturday. The new Health Dept. people found three of the pools not up to standards for chemicals and temporarily closed them down. They were brought up to standards a short time after the cleaning people were called. On the horizon, there is new federal requirement for covers on the bottom drains in public pools. Bringing our pools up to code could cost up to \$ 5000 per pool.

The Architectural Committee only had the replacement of a patio cover to report. Work is to start shortly on a home on Aventine Ct.

Landscape Committee reported on grass reseeded, plant replacement and winter flower planting which will start soon. Our landscape contractor will pick up your patio plant waste on two week ends in November. Have any waste piled out in a guest parking space on

Saturday Nov. 8 or 22 and it will be picked up at no charge to you.

Communication Committee reported on the planned Southern California Shake Out earth quake drill to be held on November 13 and reported on the owners landscape issues. The full report is on our website.

Social Committee is planning our first event of the season to be a Champagne brunch at 11:30 AM on November 22. The Committee will provide the drinks and an entree. Attendees can then bring supplemental salads, fruits, sweet rolls and deserts. It will be held at pool #4.

Old Business included revisiting the idea of resurfacing the pool decks at pools #1 and 2. Bids for cool decks came in at about \$20,000 to do both pools. An alternate concept of putting down a non-skid surface on the decks has also been suggested that would cost just \$ 5000 or so. More research has to be done on this concept. Any action was tabled pending the findings. The board also has received a bid to replace the old defunct irrigation pump at a cost of \$2600. The board wants to find out what the cost would be to have the motor rewound. Hopefully, Fred Schwartz can assist us on his return to Casablanca.

The landscape contract with Green View is due for renewal. It is being quoted at the same cost as last year. The board voted to renew the contract.

New Business included designing the rounded plant beds at the two entrance roads to our community. It has been proposed to have concrete curbing installed to control the size and shape of the beds. We have a bid of about \$ 1200. to put curbing on all four beds. We also have a coupon that would reduce it

by \$ 100. The board voted to put in the curbing. The board also voted to have our landscape company redesign the irrigation system to dripper and complete the conversion of all the plants to water efficient plants and ad ground cover at about \$ 2800. for all four beds.

Tree trimming bids were received for trimming most of our trees except for those that the landscape company maintains and the palm trees. It will include the removal of two more Eucalyptus trees in the Calle Bisque area that have out grown their space and are too close to some homes. The bid was for \$ 9200. and was approve by the board. Work will start in December.

November 18 will be our next board meeting date.

## **We can Take Advantage of Assembly Bill 811**

by Syd Sonneborn

In mid July, Assembly Bill 811 passed both houses of the State Legislature and was signed into law by Governor, Schwarzenegger. This piece of legislation allows home owners to “borrow” money from the State to finance energy efficient improvements that are built into the owner’s home such as solar systems, air conditioners, and energy efficient windows. The loan is paid back to the State by adding the loan payment to your property tax payments. Your City, Palm Desert, was a spearhead in proposing the legislation and assisting in getting it passed. It will form the backbone for the City’s Energy Independence Program. Yes, you can add solar power to your home here in Casablanca!

In anticipation to questions about how this affects our CC&Rs, the State of California promotes and encourages the use of solar energy systems. Therefore, associations cannot prohibit solar energy systems, impose restrictions that significantly increase their cost or impose restrictions that significantly decrease their efficiency. The above is part of Civil Code § 714.

However, as provided for in Civil Code § 714.1, associations may impose reasonable provisions that:

- Restrict the installation of solar energy systems installed in common areas.
- Require owners to obtain approval of the association for the installation of a solar energy system in a separate interest owned by another.
- Provide for maintenance, repair or replacement of roofs or other building components.
- Require installers to indemnify or reimburse the association or its members for loss or damage caused by the solar energy system.

## **Landscape Committee HOA Board Report on October 21, 2008**

**T**he new rye grass seed has been planted and is growing nicely.

The annual flowers will be planted soon. The beds are being mulched and worked at this time.

We are trimming back those shrubs which were damaged by the hot summer sun and we will be replacing some which we lost.

Irrigation problems continue. We've recently had a couple of major problems: one back on

the north wall behind Calle Bisque, and one on Hovley.

Again, ask all homeowners to abide by the HOA Rules and Regulations and CC&Rs. Please do NOT make any landscape changes in the common areas around your homes without first getting written approval from the Landscape Committee and Board of Directors.

Your patio is your responsibility. Everything else is common area and is the responsibility of the Homeowners Association.

For those returning for the winter season and needing to clean up your patio, Pick up of green waste from your patio will be picked up from a guest parking slot on your street after Saturday, November 8 and 22.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Butzer, Landscape Committee

## **ShakeOut Surpasses 4 million participants! as of October 17, 2008**

**A**t 10 a.m. on November 13, millions of Southern Californians in eight counties will drop, cover, and hold on as part of the largest earthquake preparedness activity in U.S. history! The ShakeOut is a chance to practice how to protect ourselves in earthquakes, and for everyone to get more prepared. Please register today.

We're All in This Together

As of October 17, over 4.2 million people have been registered to participate in the ShakeOut Drill. This includes private and public school students and staff from over 160 school districts, employees of over 1500 businesses and community organizations, staff at 70

## Your Casablanca November 2008

---

hospitals throughout southern California, and many others. To see which organizations are participating in your area, go to [www.ShakeOut.org](http://www.ShakeOut.org) and click on your county's name in the right column.

### Can You Beat the Quake?

To help Southern Californians prepare for the ShakeOut Drill, a fun and informative game called "Beat the Quake" is now available to be played at [www.ShakeOut.org](http://www.ShakeOut.org). Players must secure objects in a virtual living room before a simulated earthquake shakes and breaks those items not secured. At the end of the game, be sure to encourage your friends or colleagues to try to play. "Beat the Quake" was made possible with generous support from The Home Depot.

### Get Ready to ShakeOut!

Immediately after a major earthquake, we can expect many small fires to ignite. It will be up to individuals to stop small fires before they can combine into large ones that destroy homes, blocks and even whole neighborhoods. It is vital that your home has

at least one working fire extinguisher and that all family members know how to use it - even the kids! Practice using it as part of your family ShakeOut drill.

---

### Casablanca Management

#### Board of Directors

Gail Christiansen, President  
Jim Laraby, Vice President  
Lindsey Griffith, Treasurer  
Dorothy Soulnier, Secretary  
Jerry Winer, Director

#### J&W Management

Dick Stephan, Manager (760) 568-0349

---

**This issue of your Casablanca was produced by:**

Syd Sonneborn, Editor/Publisher  
Gail Christiansen, President  
Howard Butzer, Landscape

## SEASON'S FIRST SOCIAL EVENT

### Champagne Brunch at pool #4

Main Entree and drinks provided by the Association

**NOVEMBER 22, starting at 11:30 AM**

Call Al Castner or Jim Laraby at

**773-3931** to make reservations and indicate food items you will be bringing.

**Come and renew old friendships and meet new homeowners!**