
SCENIC RIDGE HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

One Amber Drive, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520, (914) 271-4459 mailto: info@scenicridgehomeowners.com
<http://www.scenicridgehomeowners.com>



The View

Q&A With...

Board President Howard Millman



"Because we are very efficient at we do, the Board is able to keep costs down."
- Howard Millman, Board President

Longtime resident Howard Millman has been Scenic Ridge Board President for the past seven years (last elected in 2006). In a recent interview, Millman shared his thoughts on Board responsibilities and the quality of life here at Scenic Ridge.

What do homeowners expect from their Board of Directors?

Homeowners expect their Board to keep costs down. Because we are self managed, we are able to save homeowners approximately \$55,000 per year—money we would normally pay a management company to handle our day-to-day operations. In turn, we pass that savings to the homeowners.

What recent accomplishments have been made by the Board?

Last year, the pool patio was painted, new pines were planted along Scenic Drive and all dumpster areas, including fences, were power washed and stained as needed. As always, the entire Board continues in its commitment to improve the appearance and environment of Scenic Ridge, including additional landscaping, especially along Scenic Ridge Drive, and rebuilding a crumbling stone wall.

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The Scenic Ridge Homeowners' Association Newsletter

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Board of Directors

Howard Millman	President
Cari Daddio	Vice-President
Melanie Friedlander	Vice-President Finance
Earl Faber	Treasurer
Debra Maiorano	Secretary
Brian Hickey	Staff

Contact the Board at:

(914) 271 -4459 or info@scenicridgehomeowners.com

THE SCENIC RIDGE EMAIL LIST

To subscribe to our email list, please email your request to: sceniclist-request@scenicridgehomeowners.com with the subject "subscribe"

If you wish to be deleted from our email list, please send an email to: sceniclist-request@scenicridgehomeowners.com with the subject "unsubscribe"

A Place to Party

Not only has the pool house given up those old, rusty steel doors for new, wooden ones, but restrooms have been updated and an under-utilized storage area has been resurrected into a 600-square-foot meeting room—perfect for “as many Board meetings as possible,” says Howard Millman, Board President. The new meeting room will also be available to residents for private parties (nominal fee to be finalized by Board). To date, it contains moveable seating for up to 20 people, as well as other furnishings, and a simple kitchen equipped with sink, small refrigerator and microwave. Outside catering is permissible.

Happy memories are sure to follow

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GOOD NUMBERS TO KNOW EMERGENCY 911

Croton Police, Fire and Ambulance Dispatch	(914) 271-5177
Croton Dept. of Public Works	(914) 271-3775
Croton EMS	(914) 271-5177
Poison Control	(800) 336-6997
Hudson Valley Hospital Center	(914) 737-9000

2008 Meeting Schedule:

JAN. (NO MEETING); FEB. 11; MAR.10; APR. 14; MAY 12;
JUNE 9; JULY 14; AUG. 11; SEPT. 8; OCT. 13; NOV. 10; DEC. 8

Board meetings are generally scheduled the 2nd Monday of the month. Cold-weather or “winter” meetings are held at Village Hall, 7:30pm.

Beginning in May, spring and summer meetings will be held at the pool house, in our new meeting room. After Labor Day, meetings will resume at Village Hall unless the weather is warm enough to meet at the pool house. Confirm date, time and place on our website.

All Association members are both welcomed and encouraged to attend all Board meetings.

Ruffly Speaking: High Cost of Poop

Not everyone is picking up after Rover on their daily walks and it will “ruffly” cost violators:

- \$100 first warning
- \$250 second warning
- \$500 third warning

Kidding aside, the Board is not interested in raising money this way. So, return some rightful dignity to your best friend and just pickup the poop. Also, according to Village Code, all dogs must be leashed, licensed and vaccinated. (Licenses are issued through Village Hall, 1 Van Wyck St.) Residents should notify the Board of violators at: info@scenicridgehomeowners.com

MEET MELANIE

The Board of Directors recently welcomed Scenic Ridge resident **Melanie Friedlander, CPA** as its new Board member and VP/Finance. While the self-employed accountant moved here from Buchanan with her two daughters only two years’ ago, she immediately fell in love with the SR community. “It’s great for families and has wonderful amenities, including the swimming pool and playground.”

Born in Cape Town, South Africa, Melanie briefly lived in England before coming to the U.S. where she was raised in Pelham. The Iona-graduate looks forward to working with her fellow Board members on issues that concern us all: parking, maintenance of common areas, appearance of property and neighborly relations.

Melanie replaces Assistant Vice President **Janet Gover** who recently resigned after four years of “active duty.” Like most of us, Janet cited that demands of her “day job” necessitated some time out. The Cortlandt native also adds she has enjoyed her years on the Board and continues to enjoy life at Scenic Ridge. Meanwhile, all of Janet’s fellow Board members extend a heart-felt thank you for her many years of service--always with the interests of Scenic Ridge at heart.

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ON THE HORIZON: DEVELOPMENT-WIDE REFINISHING PROJECT

No Board member is thrilled about refinishing the 97 townhouses of Scenic Ridge. Still, it's one of those necessary projects that has to be done in order to maintain the value and structural integrity of our homes; and who doesn't want that.

Accordingly, Board Secretary Debra Maiorano wants to prepare SR homeowners early in the process so that, although such a project is a year away, she says, "it is on the horizon and homeowners should be prepared."

Quite simply, the beautification program involves the restaining or painting of the exterior siding of every unit; the cost of which will be passed on to homeowners by way of an assessment. "Although we're only in the talking stages, it will have to be decided how we want to refinish the units: clear, semi-transparent or solid color?" Each finish has its own rewards and the aesthetics will be put to the homeowners for a vote. So, here's a rundown on the finishes based on information provided by Brian Hickey:

1) Clear Finish: A transparent wood finish allows most of the wood grain to show through and is ideal for anyone who wants the rich, warm appearance of natural wood. Some clear finishes contain natural color toners, like cedar or redwood, which add a little pigment while still enhancing the wood grain. Major point: Some buildings require replacement boards, which will not take the stain the same way as pre-existing boards and will be noticeable.

2) Semi-Transparent Stain: This is what we currently have at Scenic Ridge. A semi-transparent stain allows both the wood grain and color to show through the finish. This can create a more natural look to your siding (and deck), while still permitting some creative flair. Major point: A semi-transparent stain lasts for several years but we may be restaining more frequently than we would with a solid stain.

3) Solid Color Stain: This is the most opaque and permanent of the three stains. It permits wood texture to be prominent but covers the wood grain and natural color. One advantage is that it is the most durable. It does, however, sacrifice the natural color of the wood. Major point: Once a solid color is applied, we can never go back to a clear or semi-transparent stain again.

Whatever the choice, there is no right or wrong answer, Brian adds. They all offer beautiful results.

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Talking Real Estate: Time to Exhale?

When home prices skyrocketed throughout the county several years ago, we were all holding our breath wondering when and where it would all end. Well, no matter what side of the fence you're on, buying or selling, it's time to exhale as the market has, as recently as 2006, adjusted itself (latest national figure of a single-family home is 5% lower than last year). But, even with that, the breathing is still good at Scenic Ridge where our rustic, cedar-shingled townhouses continue to command respect with local agents and potential buyers.

Built between 1980 and '84, the 97 privately-owned units remain an attractive value and a great alternative to those big-box "Mc Mansions" that have become part of the Westchester landscape. According to ownmax.com, recently listed SR townhouses include:

--2-Bedroom End Unit: 1,600 sq. ft., 2.5 baths, finished loft and plenty of views. Asking price: \$419,000

--3-Bedroom Cul-de-Sac Unit: 2,110 sq. ft., 2.5 baths and plenty of special features. Asking price: \$480,000

Depending on when you purchased your SR townhouse, these figures aren't shabby and, no wonder, the complex is situated in a village that's all about the 3L's of real estate--location, location, location. For instance:

- We overlook the legendary Hudson River
- We're close to the train station
- We're an easy commute to "the city"
- We have a charming and thriving downtown

In addition, Scenic Ridge units are well constructed and grounds are beautifully maintained; and, a proactive, self-managed corporate governance keeps maintenance costs low, making Scenic Ridge even more appealing in the marketplace.

THE INS & OUTS (OR DOS AND DON'TS) OF PARKING

Board Treasurer Earl Faber wants to remind everyone that the Board has the right to tow all illegally parked cars on the "bird lanes" (that's Wren, Lark, Robin and Oriole). Also, parking or speeding violations can empty your pockets anywhere from \$50-\$300 in fines. Isn't it cheaper and easier to just follow the rules? For your review:

THE DON'Ts

- Don't park your car halfway on your driveway and halfway in the street.
- Don't park in undesignated areas.
- Don't contact Board members or neighbors late at night.
- Don't wash or repair cars on property.
- Don't park any commercial or recreational vehicle anywhere within the Scenic Ridge community.
- Don't speed, especially on the "Bird" lanes.

THE DOs

- Do inform visitors where to park before they arrive.
- Do use assigned spots only.
- Do "wheel and deal" with neighbors regarding space swaps.
- Do make sure all cars have ample room to access and egress a parking space.
- Do obey village ordinances regarding village-owned Amber Drive.
- Do consult your Scenic Ridge Handbook regularly; or visit www.scenicridgehomeowners.com, click on Documents, click on August 2006 Newsletter, scroll to page 4 and read all about it!

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DINING OUT A Hot Dozen

Rather make reservations than dinner?
Croton has an eclectic mix of
restaurants--and reservations are not
always required.

Here's a sampling:

44 Tapas (Spanish & More)
44 Maple St./271-2690

Black Jack's (Pub Fare)
426 Old Albany Post Rd./271-1234

Capriccio II (Italian)
46 Maple St./827-9123

Forno II (Italian)
163 Grand St./271-3663

Fortuna Ristorante (Italian)
1 Baltic Place/271-2600

Justin Thyme (American Fare)
171 Grand St./271-0022

Memphis Mae's BBQ Bistro
(Southern)
173 S. Riverside Ave./271-0125

Ocean House (Seafood)
49 N. Riverside Ave./271-0702

Samurai (Japanese)
352 S. Riverside Ave./271-8988

Tenampa (Mexican)
2011 Albany Post Rd./271-2920

The Tavern at Croton Landing
(Popular Fare)
41 N. Riverside Ave./271-8020

Umami (International)
325 S. Riverside Ave./271-5555

Q&A With... Board President Howard Millman

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Is there one particular highlight of the past year?

The big one is that we have converted the under-utilized storage area in the pool house into an attractive and useful meeting room. We've also modernized the restrooms in the pool house and replaced its old steel doors with new, wooden doors. (See box on page 1.)

What's next on the list?

We continue with periodic maintenance, including the repairing and restaining of all common facilities and areas, as required. Anticipated projects over the next six months include the removal and replacement of all the junipers along the stone wall of Scenic Ridge Drive--plus other ongoing landscaping projects.

What is the most pressing issue confronting the quality of life in the Scenic Ridge Community?

Parking. All units have two parking spaces—either a garage and driveway, or on the street. Of course, some of the children of longtime residents have grown up and now require their own vehicles and additional parking spaces. This has resulted in cascading problems. Consequently, extra vehicles land up parked in premium space on Lark Lane or village-owned Amber Drive--or in the visitors' parking area. Visitors then have no place to park and, in turn, park in a nearby resident's designated spot.

What's the solution?

We urge homeowners to be cooperative, obey the rules and park their extra cars in low-density areas. We ask for voluntary compliance so that we can avoid any mandatory guidelines in this matter.

Are violators subject to any fines when parking in unassigned areas?

Violation of certain parking activities are subject to fines beginning at \$100. It is not the Board's intention to issue fines but it is their intention to change unacceptable behavior. In addition, in the winter, snow removal is complicated by excessive cars parked in unauthorized areas. Remember, it is more cost-effective to remove snow with fewer parked cars in the area.

Final Comments?

Yes. I'm happy to report that our "umbrella" liability insurance policy for 2008 dropped from \$2,487 to \$1,742. Again, this was accomplished through our high quality, low maintenance process which basically eliminates conditions that could lead to accidents and litigation.

On a lighter note, however, I'd like to end by saying we hope to have a 2008 Memorial Day Pool Party to commemorate the start of summer, the renovated pool house and the new meeting room. I hope to see everyone there.

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10 Q&A'S

The Board does not like fining residents for non-compliance with rules and regulations. So, take time to get answers to your questions first, especially since some violations come with stiff fines and no warnings.

For your convenience, we present 10 often-asked questions. Fines are included for your review which, we hope, will make a difference to the quality of life at Scenic Ridge.

1. When must holiday lights be taken down from front of property?
Within a reasonable amount of time; approximately 3 weeks from when they were first mounted. **Fine: \$50**

2. Can I erect a flagpole on my property?
Yes. The rule is one flagpole and one flag per property. Compliant flag size is 3'x5'. **Fine: \$25**

3. Can I place lawn statues or outdoor sculpture on my property?
No. **Fine: \$50**

4. What if I want to display my support for a favorite candidate with a lawn sign?
You can place one sign on your property no more than 2 weeks before an election. Compliant size is 2'x4'. **Fine: \$25**

5. Can I leave my child's Big Wheel or other toys on the lawn?
No. All children's outdoor toys should be stored on your patio (along with lawn furniture) or somewhere out of sight. **Fine: \$25**

6. Is it okay to feed the birds?
Yes, if the bird feeder is mounted at least 50 feet away from all residential structures. **Fine: \$100**

7. Is it okay to leave garbage outside overnight?
Absolutely not. All garbage must be disposed of in designated dumpsters. And, before you dispose of an old air conditioner, it's mandatory to get a sticker from the village's Department of Public Works first. **Fine: \$100**

8. Where and how may I place outdoor speakers?
You must mount speakers so that they face inward on your property and not outward toward your neighbor's property. They cannot be used before 10am and only at a reasonable volume. **Fine: \$25**

9. Do I have to notify the Board if I want to install a satellite dish?
Yes, restrictions apply. All "significant issues" such as this one must be presented to the Board first. This includes deck expansion, installation of shed, replacement of garage door, etc. **Fine: \$100**

10. What if I want to change my existing door?
All architectural changes to your unit--doors, windows and gutters--must match existing materials in every detail including color, size and shape. **Fine: \$100 plus cost to restore to compliance.**

Helpful Websites

Westchestergov.com

Crotononhudson-ny.gov

Crotonarts.org

Crotonharmonschools.org

Crotonfreelibrary.org

Crotonsailing.com

GET SMART— ENERGY THAT IS!

With the high cost of fuel expecting to hit \$100 per barrel (at least), conservation is the best bet for saving money. Visit getsmartenergy.com for a barrel full of ideas. Here are just 5 of them:

1. Make sure floor and wall vents are not blocked by draperies, furniture or rugs. Vents should also be cleaned regularly with a vacuum or broom.
2. Keep blinds and draperies of sun-exposed windows open in the daytime and closed at night.
3. If you have a window air conditioning unit, remove it for the winter months to prevent heat from escaping through and around the unit. If it can't be removed, buy a cover to prevent drafts.
4. Keep warm air in and cold air out by installing insulation, caulking and weather stripping around doors, windows, outlets, attic access areas and any other drafty place in your home.
5. Ceiling fans can keep you comfortable in the winter too! Reversing the direction of the blades pushes warm air down in to the room.

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Quality of Life Issues

Robert Frost once penned, "Good fences make good neighbors." While it was more of a poetical query into the nature of things, fences (taken here as a metaphor for rules and regulations) do make good neighbors if simply because they create a little law and order when needed. Unfortunately, the general consensus is that "rules and regs" are something Scenic Ridge residents could brush up on from time to time. So here's some sage advice from Board members on how to quickly improve the quality of life at Scenic Ridge:

1. Keep Handbook Handy! The Board is emphatic about this as the Scenic Ridge Homeowner's Association Handbook is the first place to look for answers to questions regarding rules of the land. What are homeowner responsibilities, what are Board responsibilities, or how do I dispose of old appliances are all common queries. "Maintaining your property so that it is clean and attractive is another pressing concern," says one Board member. "Homeowners are put on notice about this when they move in and are given a copy of the handbook." If you can't find the answer to any of your questions in this helpful booklet, then (and only then) take it to the top, via email, of course (info@scenicridgehomeowners.com). No calls please!

2. Park It...Where? All homeowners are reminded that they must use their garage and driveway or their two designated parking spaces (whichever applies) as their first and second parking spaces. Also, in the event of snow, Village Code and SR development rules state that whenever there is an accumulation of two inches or more of snow, all cars must be removed from streets. Failure to do so may result in the vehicle being towed and/or fined without a warning.

3. Howdy Neighbor! Stereo too loud? Incessant barking? Messy property? Such issues should be addressed friendly-like, neighbor-to-neighbor, before asking the Board to intervene. Do not contact a Board member without taking the appropriate one-on-one approach first.

Letter from Cari Daddio

Pool House Project Went Swimmingly Well!

Dear Homeowners,

After years of requests, the pool house renovation is nearly complete. While having the pool house closed during the summer was a little inconvenient, wait and see, the end result will be worth it! Here's an update:

1. The motor to the pool pump burnt out and was replaced.
2. Old doors replaced.
3. "Refreshed" restrooms.
4. A new meeting/community room has been created from unused storage space.
5. The pool liner is lifting off the concrete base of the pool and is in need of repair.

Also, a special thank you to **Brian Hickey**. He saved the development a bundle of cash by handling the purchase and installation of the new pump himself, rather than having our pool maintenance company do it. And, of course, thanks to all the homeowners for being so patient during our pool house renovation.

Come this summer, we are always in need of lifeguards. Our preference is to hire residents of Scenic Ridge, but we do hire outside help if need be. Basic requirements for the position are that the applicant must be at least 15 years of age and have successfully completed lifeguard/CPR certification. Anyone interested in applying should contact me via email. Meanwhile, stay warm and...

Until next summer,

Cari

Separate Trash Or Get Hefty Fine

Residents who don't normally sort their trash (that's paper, plastic, glass, etc.) are going to find things a little stinky around the old homestead. That's because, beginning Feb. 1, 2008, Westchester County will "step up enforcement of its mandatory recycling law and will not pick up recyclables that are not properly separated." In addition, they say, private haulers and some municipalities may require your separated recyclables be bagged in clear, plastic bags. Violators will face "hefty" fines.

For more info: Log onto westchestergov.com/recycling or call the hotline at 914-813-5420.

Running for Office!

The Scenic Ridge Board of Directors contains five Board members. Each elected official serves a three-year term with no term limits. Elections are on a three-year cycle as follows:

- One year, two seats are up
- Next year, three seats are up
- Third year is considered an "off" year

Accordingly, in 2008, two seats will be available; 2009, three seats will be available and 2010 will be the "off" year of the three-year cycle. In 2011, the cycle repeats itself. Anyone interested in running for office should contact the Board, via email, at info@scenicridgehomeowners.com.