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ARIZONA

## FirstService Residential Selected as the #1 HOA Management Company in AZ for 8th Year in a Row!

FirstService Residential, the leading community management company in Arizona, has been named the #1 Homeowners Association Management Company by Ranking Arizona. This is the company's eighth consecutive year winning this honor from Ranking Arizona. Additionally, FirstService Residential also was named the #2 Best Workplace Culture in the Residential Real Estate category by Ranking Arizona.

## The Art of Board Succession

By Any Ferrell | Senior Vice President  
Portfolio Division

In the world of business, succession planning is a process for identifying and developing internal people with the potential to fill key business leadership positions in a company. Many corporations have a dedicated process to identify team members that can be groomed and then promoted to leadership positions within the organization. Companies that are well known for their succession planning and executive talent development practices include: GE, Honeywell, IBM, Marriott, Microsoft, Pepsi and Procter & Gamble.

In most organizations, succession planning is part of the governing documents for such an organization. Such protocols include identifying a particular individual who within a 3 to 4 year timeframe is already slated to run the

organization. Within a homeowners association, you would not be able to specifically identify an individual who will be automatically slated for a board position as most governing documents provide for all homeowners who are interested to run and serve on the board of directors.

How do you implement board succession in an association? The goal with board succession planning in a homeowners association is focused on engaging homeowners early who have a desire to serve the community overall and who can then get familiar with the operations before running for a board position.

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# The Art of Board Succession

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Below are a few steps to consider in establishing board succession within a community:

- **Seek Homeowner Participation:** At every meeting, event, or communication engage and seek homeowner participation. Many times homeowners want to be involved but don't know how to do so. By seeking homeowner participation, associations identify pools of talent that could potentially fill and perform highly in key roles. There is a wealth of talent residing in your community.
- **Delegate Projects:** In business organizations, employees are groomed to be ready for advancement into key roles - primarily through the right set of experiences. Once you have engaged your volunteers, provide responsibilities and clear guidelines. A great way to do this is to establish committee charters that provide the responsibilities, decision making authority (if any) and reporting protocol. Often, a committee may be able to come up with ideas and suggestions that may not have been considered before.
- **Appreciate your Volunteers:** Once you have established your volunteers, make sure to take the time to appreciate their help and contributions. You can do this in a variety of

ways, from appreciation at meetings to an annual volunteer recognition event.

- **Provide Tools and Information for their Success:** Once in place, provide training. A committee member should have a copy of the charter and clear guidelines as to their role in the community. When a new board member is elected, this is a perfect opportunity to conduct board training and education to guide them in their new role as a board member. Training should include understanding the governing documents, their role as a fiduciary and getting up to speed on current projects and challenges faced by the board.

Board succession is just as important as the running of a successful association. Board succession includes the opportunity to identify future board members that will ensure the transfer of information and current projects. Committee members who are elected to the board provide ideas and leadership that will keep the community vibrant.

If you are a new board member, please ask your community manager to coordinate board training. We would be glad to coordinate training for one board member or the entire board in order to provide tools and resources for a successful board term.

## COLD WEATHER DAMAGE: TREE RECOVERY

BY SHERRI YOUNGBLOOD | VICE PRESIDENT

### PATIENCE IS KEY

Trees with cold weather damage will require time and patience to nurse back to health. If you want your trees to recover, the key factor is to give them time and provide them with the appropriate amount of water consistent with normal growing needs. Though a tree may appear unsightly and heavily damaged above ground, its root system is durable and likely remain healthy and ready for new growth. First, focus on the restoration and recovery of your tree. Once your tree has made its recovery, you can then focus on aesthetic pruning. It could take several seasons — but with the appropriate level of care — your tree can make a full recovery.

### PROPER PRUNING

Limbs up to ½ inch in diameter can be pruned with hand



pruners. Long-handled pruning loppers can handle limbs up to 1 inch in diameter, but a special pruning saw is needed for larger limbs. Hedging shears or power hedge trimmers should not be used to prune trees as they will not be able to make proper cuts and will damage the tree.

It is a good idea to wear a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and closed shoes when pruning; additionally, wear safety glasses, a hat and gloves to help prevent an injury. Unless you are a trained arborist, avoid using a ladder or climbing a tree to trim it. Most importantly, never attempt to prune a tree that is near a utility line!

# PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM

BY KIRK KOWIESKI | VICE PRESIDENT

A common Board question:

“How do we promote participation from our homeowners with board and committee work?”

Many associations experience a large degree of apathy from the membership when it comes to leadership roles or volunteerism. On the one hand, some folks want to reduce their amount of personal responsibility (carefree living). On the other hand, there are many willing and talented homeowners that could and would participate if given the right set of circumstances. Here are a couple of suggestions:

1. Develop regular communication systems to the membership.

A frequent complaint of owners is not being kept informed. To draw out volunteers, it's critical that they know there is an ongoing need. Also, some owners develop a suspicious nature about board motives when kept in the dark and resist being involved. Let them know what you're up to early and often! Repeated pleas for help will have an effect. A newsletter and flyer distribution box [the kind used by real estate agents] is an inexpensive and convenient way to get the word out.

2. Give credit where credit is due.

People love recognition. Make sure that directors, committee members and homeowners are given formal recognition for their efforts in meetings, minutes and newsletters... any opportunity where there is an audience. Point out particular owners that show superior landscaping abilities. They are obvious candidates for the Landscape Committee. Consider awarding certificates of achievement at the annual homeowners meeting. Remember also that some tasks are ongoing and many faithful volunteers often get overlooked. It is a wise board president that makes a point of recognizing effort for its own merits.

3. Provide opportunities for the membership to get acquainted with each other.



People tend to help those that they know personally. However, many are shy and don't easily make friends. The association can promote socials to facilitate the process. Consider a spring clean-up party, pool party or just plain potluck. It will help create a real “community”.

4. Assign real jobs to do.

It's been said, “A committee takes minutes and wastes hours.” There is nothing more futile and frustrating than a job with no job description or substance. There is real work to do at each association. Volunteers and committee members should have clear “marching orders” detailing exactly what the objectives are and the time frame and the money available to help get the task done.

5. Be an encourager.

The board president should take the lead in promoting volunteers. The successful leader motivates by persuasion and not authority. Remember, “A servant does not lower himself but elevates others”.

Getting the ball rolling to increase participation is one of the most rewarding efforts a board can achieve. In a motivated group of homeowners, synergy develops with a result that far exceeds the sum of the parts... a worthy goal indeed.

*“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.” ~Author Unknown*

# Customer Care Center Update

By Melani Caron | Vice President



## Welcome Desert Sun Condominiums!

FirstService Residential is proud to announce that we have been selected as the community management firm by Desert Sun Condominiums. This community is uniquely suited to retirees and is one of the best adult living locations in the East Valley. Desert Sun offers residents several amenities including a 4,000 square foot clubhouse, swimming pool, hot tub, fitness center, miniature golf, on-site library, shuffle board, billiards and more.



### June Bug

Makes: 4 servings  
Start to Finish: 5 mins

#### Ingredients:

- 3 cups ginger ale
- 4 tablespoons grenadine
- 4 tablespoons orange juice
- 3 scoops orange sherbet

#### Directions:

Blend together ginger ale, grenadine, orange juice, and sherbet. Pour into ice-filled cocktail glasses. (To make a version with alcohol, add white rum.)

It goes without saying that in today's busy society, most people would like to have the opportunity to conduct business any time, day or night. FirstService Residential is happy to announce around-the-clock information by phone through our Customer Care Center. Residents have the opportunity to obtain instant answers and information about payments, their association or any other issue related to their community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Our 24/7 Customer Care Center is staffed by FirstService Residential highly trained customer service specialists. They not only provide you with round-the-clock phone support, but also provide our residents with efficient and friendly staff who can engage them in an interpersonal conversation at any time of the day. Providing residents with a live call representative increases resident satisfaction as we are able to answer 94% of the caller's questions within the first call. Whether it is to check their account balance, report an irrigation or roof leak, or any other maintenance issue on the property, our staff is ready to provide personalized service.

In addition to our 24/7 Customer Care Center, we also provide residents the option to use IVR (Interactive Voice Response) which is an interactive phone technology system. If a resident doesn't wish to speak to a live person or would like a quick update, IVR enables callers to obtain automated information by selecting various buttons on their keypads. If you've ever called your bank or credit card company, you're already familiar with the process.

These exciting new services complement the already existing community website which is also available day or night via FSRConnect. FSRConnect is our proprietary community management software. It offers residents the ability to log on to their community website to check on account balance/payments, view violation notices, place a work order and much more.

If you have any questions about our new 24/7 Customer Care Center or the IVR System, please contact your community manager or call us at 480-551-4300. We look forward to providing you with round-the-clock service that makes a difference, every day, for you and your community.



# SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

By David Aspiras | Director Account Services

With summer just around the corner, there are a number of precautionary steps we can take to prepare for the sweltering days we will all be encountering shortly. The number one weather-related killer in the United States is heat, which can be more severe on children due to the fact that their bodies warm much faster. A child's central nervous system is not yet fully developed and are more susceptible to heat illnesses compared to adults. When a car is parked outside during the summertime, the temperature inside the vehicle increases at a drastic rate. Glass acts as an insulator as the sun enters through the window so the heat is absorbed in the interior. Depending on the type of vehicle, the temperature outside, and the length of time outdoors, the temperature can measure up to 200 degrees. We all know that we should never leave children or pets inside vehicles, especially during these hot months as it doesn't take much for heat stroke to set in, or worse. One may think that cracking the windows will help, but it doesn't prevent the temperature inside the vehicle to decrease.

For those of you that are new to the Valley of the Sun, or maybe a refresher for those that have lived here for years, here's a list that you may to include to have in your vehicle if you don't already:

- *First aid and Emergency kits: Include band aids, ice packs, sunscreen, batteries, tweezers, flashlight, jumper cables, gloves, paper towels, flares, and basic tools*
- *Water: Both for drinking and for the car*
- *Sunshades: Not only will it make the interior of your vehicle a little cooler but you won't have to worry about burning your hands on the steering wheel*
- *Snack: Typically dry such as granola bars, trail mix, or crackers*
- *Insulated shopping bags or cooler: Items from the grocery store have a less of a chance melting or spoiling prior to arriving at your final destination*

Ensuring hydration will help reduce the risk in any heat-related illness. Make sure that you have plenty of water or drinks (preferably with electrolytes) during the summer season. During the hottest part of the day, make sure you try avoid being outside for lengthy periods of time.

Heat illnesses may include fatigue, cramps (legs or stomach), feeling thirsty and/or may lead to dizziness, headaches, rapid heartbeat, trouble breathing, flush skin, and nausea if left untreated. If there is any question, seek medical attention. Last but not least, use sunscreen, regardless of the season. Even though it may be cloudy out, the sun rays still penetrate. Make sure that you use at least SPF 30 and apply it 30 minutes prior to going outside, the 30-30 rule. According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, one blistering sunburn as a child doubles your chances of developing melanoma.

Most of us head indoors for air conditioning during the summer months, but if you take any of these precautionary steps along with any others of your own, it will make for a more enjoyable summertime for you and your family during the hottest time of the year.

# Community Spotlight



## Del Norte Gardens - A Community Transformed

By Jonathan Tutelo | Community Manager

Del Norte Gardens Homeowner's Association is located in the prestigious area of McCormick Ranch in Scottsdale, Arizona. Built in 1977, the community was noticeably beginning to show its age. Therefore, during the past year the Board of Directors and Landscape Committee worked diligently to revitalize the look and feel of their community.

The first step in achieving this goal was to work with the landscape company to come up with suggestions to visually enhance the look and feel of the community. By removing old plants and replacing them with new and vibrant desert landscape, the overall visual appeal of the neighborhood was greatly improved. The monument signs that were previously bland in color and style were refurbished with new Madison Gold granite, fresh flowers and shrubs. The outer pool area was also completely updated with new granite, fresh landscaping, and curbing.

Energy efficient lighting was installed to both the pool area and the monument signs; this not only provided more appeal, but allowed for a cost savings to the community as well. The second portion of the updated landscape look was the removal and thinning of all the mature trees and shrubs. Many of the mature ficus, junipers, and oleanders had been affected by frost damage through the years and were in need of replacement. The towering pine trees were thinned and new granite was added.

The final phase of the project was the complete restoration of the original 30 year-old plaster pool. This project included converting the pool from plaster to pebble tech, repairing cracks and refinishing the pool deck, replacing the skimmers, adding the depth markers per Maricopa County regulations, and adding new steps and rail guards. As an added bonus, all of the previous pool furniture was replaced with brand new resort style tables, chairs, and lounges.

The homeowners have been very appreciative of the enhancements that have been done at the Del Norte Gardens community and have seen how the changes have directly impacted the value of their homes. Since the project's completion last December, homes are now typically closing or selling no more than a week after the For Sale sign has been placed in the front yard.

Testimonials:

*"The community has never looked this good in the 30 years that I have lived here." - Harriet, owner*

*"I think the Board of Directors and Community Manager are doing a great job bringing our community back to life." - Marleen, owner*

*"The community has never looked so great. My grandkids cannot wait to jump into the new pool!" - Duane, owner*



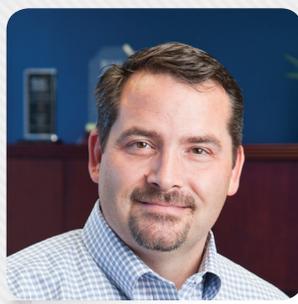
# HOME MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

BY SHERRI YOUNGBLOOD | VICE PRESIDENT

It is the time of year that some owners leave to another state, country, etc. for the summer. It is always good to ensure that a few “housekeeping tips” are followed. It reduces losses and potential insurance claims.

- Change/Clean HVAC filters and check condensation lines
- Check that the fire extinguisher is fully charged
- Flush garbage disposal with hot water and baking soda
- Check toilets for leaks inside and outside, and faucets and hoses bibs for leakage
- Clean sink/tub stoppers and check for leaks and drainage
- Check dishwasher connections and plumbing
- Test GFCI outlets and AFCI breakers with test buttons
- Check and clean range hood grease filter
- Check pool, spa pump motors and blowers; check for leaks around piping
- Clean and service evaporative cooler
- Caulk perimeter and tighten trim of exterior doors /thresholds /window sills
- Inspect water heater connections and drain/flush
- Clean and inspect chimney, check damper
- Have your home exterminated prior to locking up for the summer season

\*\* This is applicable to single-family homes and condominiums \*\*



## The Importance of Board Member Education

So now you're on the Board. Congratulations! And Thank You! Serving as a member of a HOA Board is a wonderful opportunity to give back to your community. We know that serving on the board as a volunteer is important work and we want to be the first to let you know we appreciate your willingness.

Being on the Board of Directors for your community is a very distinct job that many find different from other projects or organizations they have experienced. One of the most distinctive roles as a Board member is the realization that not only are you a single owner in the community, but you now have the responsibility to consider the welfare of the entire association as a whole. The wellbeing of a potentially multi-million dollar non-profit organization now lies in your hands. By having a full understanding of the fiduciary obligations you have to your community, you will be more confident in making informed decisions. This task is not an easy one, but extremely important.

So how do we make sure that we are serving our communities in the most effective, ethical, and beneficial way possible? Your answer... EDUCATION! Each Board member brings their own dreams and aspirations to the assignment, but often find resistance from the community or even other board members as they work to achieve those goals. Through continual education, each Board member becomes more well-equipped and confident to make informed decisions regarding their community.

Board member training also allows the chance to meet with various vendors in person and ask questions. FirstService Residential partners together with leading professionals in the HOA industry that includes attorneys, insurance agents, accountants, landscapers and reserve study specialists to speak at our quarterly seminars throughout the year. These evening classes are completely FREE to Board members and are offered at numerous convenient locations around the Valley. We believe that increasing the knowledge, skills, and professionalism of our community managers, support teams, and Board members is integral to helping to accomplish their goals and fulfill their responsibilities.

Visit our website at [www.fsresidential.com](http://www.fsresidential.com) to see upcoming events and training sessions!

Thank You!

Jason Proudfit  
President



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RESIDENTIAL

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