



**Hot Off
the Press!**

FirstService Residential Announces 24/7 Customer Care Center in Arizona!

FirstService Residential, the leading community management company in Arizona, announces the launch of the company's new **24/7 Customer Care Center**. As part of the company's mission to add value and deliver responsive, genuinely helpful service, we now offer round-the-clock information by phone through the Customer Care Center.

How to Build Community

By Any Ferrell | Senior Vice President
Portfolio Division

How do you build community in your association? Do you have homeowner engagement? Do your neighbors feel at home in your community? Homeowner engagement and building community are strong components of a successful community. Many builders, when developing a community, are not just looking at putting up sticks and stones and calling it a community, instead, they are looking for the long term vision and direction a community can offer their future buyers.

Homeowner engagement and building community was the key topic covered during the FirstService Board Education Series. During the first week of December, Kirk Kowieski, Vice President, and Mandy Rogers, Assistant Community Manager, presented what it means to create community, how to get there and provided samples on how to plan events from small to large to reach these goals.

Kirk noted "Your community is comprised of much more than the physical structures within it. The true strength of your

community comes from the lifestyle it represents, enhancing both life and property values." No matter the size, every community provides a lifestyle and design that appeals to those residents who chose to make it their home. With this in mind, it is important to understand that building community starts with each board member. Harmonious boards create harmonious communities. As the board goes, so goes the community.

Communities that have been successful in engaging residents have done so by establishing the vision for the community and striving hard to abide by this overarching direction in each decision made by the board. For example, a community in the Southeast Valley has a vision statement that includes a focus on preserving the beautiful mountain views that many residents looked for when moving into the community. With this in mind, the board consistently makes decisions that support the desire to maintain these views by implementing annual tree trimming and maintenance.

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How to Build Community

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The program focused on creating events and an atmosphere where neighbors know each other. Mandy has planned and organized many events and activities throughout her career with FirstService. Her goal is not to put on events, but rather provide opportunities for homeowners to connect and build a long-term bond. It is through these connections that she defines success in her role in building community.

Mandy and Kirk provided ideas on what communities can do to begin building these bonds that lead to creating community. Ideas included:

- Ideas can be from large events to small acts of recognition. One example would be to send a letter or anniversary card to homeowners who have lived in the community for 5, 10, 15 years or more.
- Instead of using the words 'homeowner' or 'resident', consider using 'neighbor'. This creates a more personal connection.
- Create an atmosphere where neighbors know each other through events where they get an opportunity to get out and visit with one another, ideas can include ice cream socials, movie nights, etc.

- Send out a survey to homeowners and ask them for input, ideas or direction for what the association should consider for its vision, providing an opportunity for residents to become involved and be heard.
- When creating invitations, consider them similar to invitations that you would use for your private parties. By making these inviting and attractive, residents feel more of a connection to attend.

It is through community engagement and connection that you have the opportunity to positively impact your community. Neighbors will be more inclined to talk to one another rather than submitting complaints. Residents can be proud of their community and will be more inclined to be involved, either through committees, board participation or overall. Ultimately, creating community can benefit all residents and provide the ideal neighborhood that you and others want to live in.



St. Mary's Food Bank

By Mike Kuzmin | Vice President

Recently I had the pleasure of volunteering at St. Mary's Food Bank with fifteen fellow Community Association Institute members. Before that time I did not know that one in four children go to bed hungry every night and in Arizona, sadly, we are at the top of the list for child hunger. As part of the day's training, we learned a bit of history about the St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance. Founded in 1967 by John Van Hengel, St. Mary's is the world's first food bank. It is a non-sectarian, nonprofit organization that alleviates hunger by efficiently gathering and distributing food to the hungry. The idea came to founder John van Hengel when he was volunteering at St. Vincent DePaul, serving dinner to those in need. Van Hengel approached his local parish; St. Mary's Basilica, with his vision and was granted an abandoned building and \$3,000. Van Hengel's idea became reality, and in gratitude, he named his organization after the parish. St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance distributed more than 63.7 million pounds of food in fiscal year 2011-2012 to families and individuals. Due to the Food Bank's very low overhead cost, 95% of all donations go directly to program support (financial support and the value of donated food). The food bank's primary service area covers two-thirds of Maricopa County and all of Northern

Arizona, including Yavapai, Gila, Coconino, Apache, Navajo, and Mohave Counties.

We packed 15,000 meals in our four hours! We had fun working together and giving back to our community was good for the soul! If you have never volunteered at a food bank or would like to volunteer but do not know where, I highly recommend donating your time to St. Mary's Food Bank. Because hunger is a year-round problem, please do not wait until the holidays to donate time or food.

Top 10 Most Wanted Food Items

- Cereal (boxes & cereal bars - whole grain, low sugar)
- Canned Fruit & Vegetables
- Rice
- Beans (canned or dried)
- Pasta
- Tuna
- Canned Soups, Stews, Chili
- Diapers
- Juice (canned, plastic or boxed)
- Peanut Butter



Spring Cleaning for Associations

By Sherri Youngblood | Vice President

With Spring right around the corner, you may be looking at home improvements and gearing up for summer getaways. For many communities, this is also a great time to do Spring Cleaning for the association. This may mean literally cleaning and updating of the facilities, but it can also include the financial and administrative functions.

Following are ideas and considerations that associations could consider as part of their Association Spring Cleaning:

- **Consider holding a Garage Sale.** This is a great way to encourage homeowners to clear items out of their garage and make way for parking of vehicles. It also provides a way to encourage community events and activities. Most communities can then partner with a non-profit group that can pick up unsold items.
- **Prepare your Facilities for the Summer Season.** Review the overall components to ensure that they are all in working order.
- **Establish Priorities and Goals for 2014.** Many Board Members have the best intentions and can come up with several goals and projects to be completed in one fiscal year. Unfortunately, time and financial resources can hamper these goals and ultimately result in accomplishing only a small percentage of each goal. Consider instead the possible establishment of SMART goals for the association. SMART goals are defined as follows:
 - **Specific:** Specific goals should try to answer who, what, when, where, how types of queries. One example could be to improve the facilities. A more specific example would be to improve the pool area by renovating the restroom facilities.
 - **Measurable:** In order to reach a goal, you need to have a target that can be measured. One example could be to reduce overall expenses. A more measurable goal would be to reduce operating expenses by 5% from the prior fiscal year.
 - **Attainable:** This is where you need to determine if the goal is something that the association has control over. For example, an association may wish to establish a goal to improve an area outside of the association that it does not own or control. A better alternative would be to partner with the owner of that property and work with them in order to improve that area.
 - **Realistic:** When establishing goals, the board needs to understand where funding will be available to achieve a goal. Going back to the idea of renovating pool facilities, if the association does not have the funds available to do so, a complete overhaul may not be realistic. Instead, a community can consider doing a volunteer clean-up day or make small improvements along the way.
 - **Time-bound:** Goals that are time-bound provide accountability for all parties involved to get them accomplished. This is where it is important to understand the time and resource limitations. Planning and execution that is not rushed or pushed through ultimately will generate a better end product.
- **Collect Out of Town Contact Information.** With many of our residents heading out of town for the summer, this is a good time to collect out of town contact information. Consider sending out a homeowner registration/contact form so that we can maintain contact information in case there are any concerns that may come up while residents are out of town.

Now that you have done your Spring Cleaning, it is time to sit back and enjoy the fruits of your labor!





Welcome Fireside at Norterra Triplex Condo!

FirstService Residential is proud to announce that we have been selected as the community management firm by Fireside at Norterra Triplex Condominium. This premier gated community in North Phoenix is part of the esteemed Desert Ridge Community Association, and we look forward to a rewarding partnership.

Board Appreciation Event

Our 11th Annual Board Appreciation Dinner was held on October 2nd at the Musical Instrument Museum (MIM) located in North Scottsdale. Approximately 250 Board Members attended accompanied by more than 50 FirstService Residential employees. The museum was open during the event so guests could wander through multiple exhibits while a three piece musical ensemble and vocalist provided the ambiance background. After a plated dinner outside on the patio, success stories were shared about some of the different communities followed by a drawing for multiple door prizes.

"The party last night was fabulous. What a perfect spot. Thank you and Firstresidential" - Board Member

"Please accept my sincere thanks for including me in yesterday's Board Appreciation dinner. It was a terrific venue and to enjoy interaction with you and our other members outside the boardroom only enhanced the beautiful fall evening." - Board Member



WOMEN WHO ROCK VISION PASSION POWER

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MIM.org | 480.478.6000 | Open Daily
4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix, AZ 85050
(Corner of Tatum & Mayo Blvds., just south of Loop 101)

Conflict Resolution: Staying Cool When Tempers Get Heated

By Steven Hale | Director of Operations

My wife is the oldest grandchild of close to 30 grandchildren. Having so many cousins at such a young age has been fun for us, as we have been able to watch them grow and develop. Something interesting that we have both noticed is that there comes a point where her cousins realize that their parents or authority figures are unable to make them do anything that they do not wish to do. They will push the limits and challenge their normal punishments as they seek to understand the freedom they possess. Watching the wise parents of these children taught me a very important lesson in resolving conflict: We can only manage the actions that we can control.

We are unable to control how people react to a new rule, a violation letter, or a special assessment, but we can control how we react to them. While working in California, I was often confronted by upset or frustrated individuals. Being young and stubborn, I decided to fight back and often told people what they needed to do. I can honestly say with 100% certainty that my advice was never heeded. My attempts to settle disagreements by telling individuals what I thought they needed to do only escalated the disputes. When presented with a conflicting situation we are often very quick to offer advice or explain the correct way to resolve the situation. However, I have found that resolutions are best realized when the individual with the conflict finds their own solution. It is our job and responsibility to guide them to that answer. In general, there are four questions we can ask to help people resolve conflicts:

1. What do you want?
2. What are you doing to get it?
3. Is it working?
4. Do you want to figure out another way?

Think about the power these questions have when asked in this order. The first one focuses people's attention on their real needs and helps them see other people's points of view more clearly. The subsequent questions put responsibility on other people to examine where they are, and help them find pathways to where they want to be.

Questions two and three are vital. They are questions that empower people, give them the time and encouragement to figure out answers, and understand their own path. Too often we skip questions two and three and jump immediately to a variation of question four, and tell someone what we think they should do.

There are times when we may let our emotions get the best of us. If anger, frustration, or some other emotion is clouding our ability to see an issue as objectively as possible, it is probably wise to step back for a minute, an hour, or even a day or more to allow us time to collect ourselves before going forward. It is also important to work on issues in the present and the future, not in



the past. And rather than looking for blame and recrimination, we should steer conversations toward seeking solutions.

There will be times, however, when certain behavior cannot be tolerated (i.e., where safety is concerned). When making decisions under these circumstances, it is still possible to act in a manner that is both effective for you and understandable to those you are helping. However, in such cases conflict resolution should be built upon four statements, rather than four questions:

1. This is what I want.
2. This is what I understand you are doing.
3. This is why that is not working for me.
4. Here is what I need you to do.

While the end result of this is an immediate change in behavior, this approach to conflict also gives leaders the tools to explain themselves and provide a basis for their decisions.

Always remember that the way people act is completely out of our control. Ultimately, we can only empower ourselves. Then, within boundaries, we can encourage others to act in certain ways. Listening to people and paying attention to them is an essential step in establishing a relationship in which cooperation can occur.

In conclusion, I believe that Dorothy Thompson, once recognized by Time magazine as one of the two most influential people in America, summed up conflict resolution brilliantly when she said, "Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict."

Community Spotlight

Residences at 2211 Camelback

By Joanne Thomas | General Manager

The Residences at 2211 Camelback has the distinct and well-deserved title of “Arizona’s Premier High Rise.” Located in the Camelback Corridor, lifestyle and luxury merge together in this unique 90-unit condominium building, which features a 24-hour plaza desk and daily valet service. Residents enjoy the use of such luxurious amenities as a clubroom with a full-service catering kitchen, a fitness center complete with locker rooms, steam rooms and a massage therapy room, a dog walk, a rooftop terrace and a rooftop pool and spa with BBQ grills and a fire pit. The 12-story building provides owners breathtaking Valley views from the mountain vistas to the panoramic skyline of downtown Phoenix.

The high rise lifestyle at 2211 offers the comfort of a traditional home, but with many added benefits, without many of the stresses that come along with the maintenance and repair of a single family home. Here, the utilities such as water, gas and sanitation, are all included as part of the monthly HOA assessment. The dues also

include the upkeep of the landscaping, pool, spa and fountain, as well as daily common area housekeeping service, two onsite building engineers and an onsite general manager. The urban development is just an elevator ride and walking distance away from boutique shopping and fine dining at Biltmore Fashion Park, world-class resorts and championship golf courses.

A sense of community is also important to the Association, as neighbors are encountered daily when traveling to and from their homes. Social events are held in neighboring restaurants as well as in the building, and their annual catered holiday party is always a big hit, with guitarists and pianists having performed in past years.

It’s not hard to see why The Residences at 2211 Camelback has been ranked in the Top 10 of Ranking Arizona’s Best of Condominiums: High Rise Living for the third consecutive year.



Augusta Ranch Charity Event

By Kamin Havens | Community Manager

Each year the Augusta Ranch Master Community partners with the Augusta Ranch Golf Course to put on a charity event that benefits a local charity. This year the Shriners Children Hospital was the chosen local charity.

The Board of Directors and the Golf Course owner/staff start planning this event 6 months in advance with a collaborative effort on both entities. At the event a Christmas movie is played on a 50 foot screen, golf cart rides to showcase the Christmas lights from homes that are on the front and back 9 on the course, horse and carriage rides to view the front yard Christmas lights throughout the community while singing carols with our Shriner’s volunteers. And to top it all off, we have a buffet dinner from the golf course restaurant, hot chocolate for the cold night and popcorn to go with our movie. We also have a raffle for the end of the night from prizes that were donated from our local businesses and our vendors.

This year we were able to donate \$1,900 to the Shriners Children Hospital. This is just one of our great events that we partner with our golf course. It is a great way to bring community members together and show community pride.



Behind the Scenes!

By David Young | Director of Operations

What is going on behind the scenes at FirstService Residential Arizona, in the areas you don't see? It is a very busy time in Operations as we have many new initiatives underway. As many know we have recently moved into a new facility at a great location to better serve our clients. We constantly try to stay on pace with technology and implement solutions to assist in our service to you. Some past initiatives are our Docuware document management system, which manages and converts all of our documents to digital form. Future implementations include moving our internal servers to a Cloud Solution, providing added safety and security of the network and data. We also look forward to joining some of our sister companies throughout the nation on a new payroll and Human Resources Information System (HRIS) platform for our employees. This new platform will allow us greater ease in recruiting, hiring and the internal processing of employee information, while digitizing the whole process. As a part of FirstService, our national procurement teams are constantly looking to utilize our size and reputation in the industry to secure lower prices, advance technology and increase communications with our partners.

We know much of our success is due to the great employees and are always looking for ways to improve their working experience. We conduct yearly eNPS surveys along with regular "town hall" meetings to touch base and see how we are doing as a company and what areas can be improved; some great initiatives have come from these meetings. We have an internal Events Planning Committee that regularly plans events for our employees such as potlucks, company picnics, movie outings and holiday parties.

As we wrap up a great 2013, we look forward to 2014 and all the opportunities that come with it.



Maintaining a Safe Community

It's a good feeling to return at the end of the day to a home in a community where we feel safe. There are things we can do as homeowners and board members to help maintain and build a safe community. Having proper insurance coverage and the implementing the practice of risk management are two important actions in that success.

Making sure your community is properly covered with the appropriate amount and types of insurance is a key component in protecting you, as a board member, and the residents of the community. Director and Officer insurance, also known as D&O, is recommended so board members can direct the affairs of the community without fear of personal financial loss. D&O insurance policies offer liability coverage for the community's directors and officers to protect them from claims which may arise from the decisions and actions taken within the scope of their regular duties. The core purpose of a D&O policy is to provide financial protection for directors and officers against the consequences of actual or alleged "wrongful acts" when acting in the scope of their managerial duties. This policy does not cover fraudulent, criminal or intentional non-compliant acts. Nevertheless, innocent directors remain fully covered if they are co-defendants, even if the acts of their colleagues were intentional or fraudulent. The feeling of being protected can help you serve as a more effective board member and will also add to the security of the association's finances.

Each of us can also help our communities remain safe by staying on top of common area maintenance from any potential hazards or threats. This practice also goes by the name risk management. Well maintained common areas are an asset to everyone and can also help to minimize potential claims to residents or guests. Risk management focuses on ensuring that the common areas are maintained free from trip and fall hazards, ensuring that the pool gates have self-latching closures, the pool chemicals are properly stored, and stairwells are well maintained and properly illuminated. By actively taking measures to ensure that the common areas are maintained, the community can avoid potential liability and harm to residents and guests. As a board member, you can reach out to your community manager when you notice something that requires attention. In turn, the community manager can assess the situation and take action.

We all want a safe place to call home. Your role as a director can have many facets and maintaining a safe community is just one aspect of your role as a leader in your community. Having the proper insurance coverage and the regularly implementing the practice of risk management can add to the value to your community and it helps ensure everyone's sense of well-being.

Thank You!

Jason Proudfit
President



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