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## Annual Meeting Scheduled

The annual meeting of the Reflections at Hidden Lake Homeowner's Association will be on:

**Thursday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m.**

Please plan on attending this very important meeting and help elect your 2010 Board of Directors.

If you cannot attend, please mail your proxy ballot to the MC Property Management office prior to the meeting, or have a neighbor bring it to the meeting.

By law, the Association is required to have an Annual Meeting. Each time we cannot establish quorum and need to reschedule, there is an extra cost to the Association because of required additional mailings. Please do your part to ensure the proper management of your Association! ■

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## Board News

We are pleased to welcome two new members to the Board of Directors. Dorothy Roth and Barbara Brisky are the two new members to the Board. They will serve out the remainder of the year. ■

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## 2010 Budget News

The Board has been busy working on the 2010 budget – juggling costs for our standard operating expenses with our planned projects for next year. Due to the ongoing economic downturn, we have decided to not raise assessments in 2010.

We have been very careful to budget for our Association's regular maintenance and upkeep needs so we do not put the Association at a disadvantage in the long term. We do understand that many residents are struggling and we hope this action can provide some relief. ■

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## Building Work and Insurance Concerns

In the past, residents have requested to complete exterior maintenance or repair work by themselves or using a vendor of their choice, instead of waiting for the Association to take care of the work.

While it may seem like a minor issue, the Board cannot grant such requests or allow this to take place. The Association's insurance will increase dramatically if uninsured vendors perform any tasks – the Association even runs the risk of having our worker's compensation insurance cancelled.

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These are risks we cannot afford. We cannot allow any Unit Owner to put the Association at risk. Because of some recent actions by residents, we have had our attorney review our policies, and he has made the following recommendation.

If you need or would like any work done on the exterior of your unit – regardless of whether the work is an Association responsibility or a homeowner responsibility – you must complete an Architectural Modification Form and submit it to the Board for review. This includes requests to work on the balconies, doors, windows, skylights, gutters, sidewalks, driveways, and landscaping.

For work that is the Association's responsibility, your request will be reviewed and taken care of as needed. Please note, just because a request is made does not mean the work will be done immediately. If the item is part of our regular maintenance, you may need to wait until the Association addresses that maintenance item. For work that is a homeowner responsibility, you must receive approval from the Board BEFORE beginning the work. It is at that time that the vendors insurance and licensing is checked.

You can obtain a copy of the required form by contacting the management office. Requests will be reviewed at all regularly scheduled Board meetings, so please submit them to the management office at least a week before a meeting. ■

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## Pond Restoration Update

As you are already aware, we have had to remove several willow trees from around the pond area. This was recommended by Darien's civil engineer to help with the pond water level issues we've been having.

After rodding out the pipe last summer we saw an improvement. However, water levels began to rise again this year. At that point, we had Darien's engineer re-evaluate the area. He determined that the roots from the willow trees had clogged up the pipes again.

While we have added funds to the budget to regularly rod out the drainage pipes, we could not afford to keep up with the pace the roots were growing back. Unfortunately, removal was our last option.

The pipe will be rodded out again in the next week or two and our landscaper has completed a minor restoration of the area. However, before doing any more pond restoration work, the Board is going to wait to ensure that the removal of these trees fixed the problem.

We thank you for your patience as we continue to work through this issue. In the end, the Board is doing what it can to minimize the financial impact of this problem on the Association. ■

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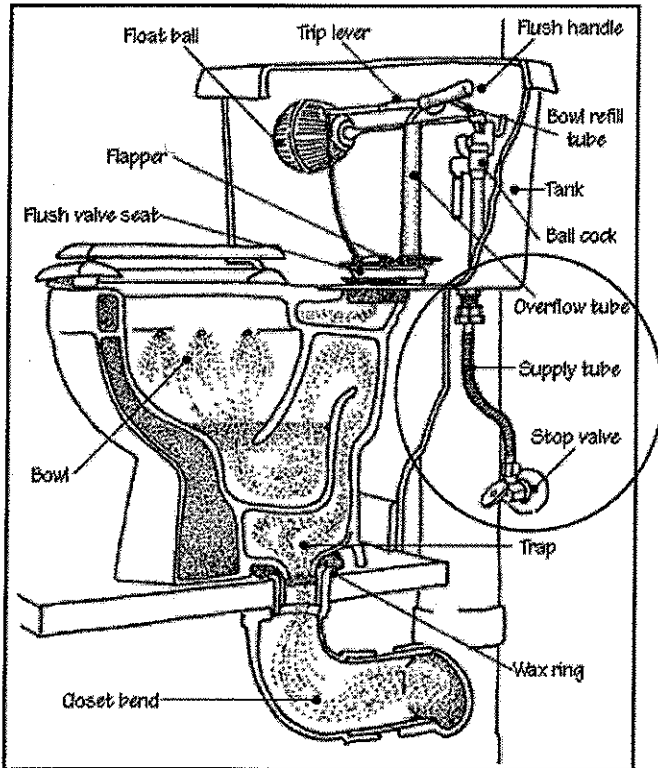
## Gutter Cleaning

All gutters will be cleaned later this fall, once all of the leaves have fallen off the trees. We will work with our contractor on scheduling the dates but cannot provide a more definite timeframe at this time. ■

## Toilet Supply Tube Issues

Please be aware, the parts of the toilet circled in the image below have failed in both bathrooms in one unit. If these parts fail, you may experience a great deal of damage in your unit from flooding.

Please have these parts inspected and, if needed, replaced, in order to avoid any damage to your unit. ■



## Winter Weather Check Up for Empty Units

If your unit will be empty for an extended period of time this winter, please keep your heat warm enough so that the pipes do not freeze. It also might be helpful to have someone check on your unit regularly to make sure the furnace is in good working order. Additionally, you should follow the suggestions in the article below – even if the unit is empty.

If you live next to a unit that you suspect is empty, please contact the management office so we can follow up with owners, banks or realtors to ensure they have winterized the unit.

During the past few winters we have had a number of units damaged by frozen pipes. Taking a few simple steps now can save you and your neighbors the time, money and hassle of a frozen pipe. ■

## Getting Ready for Winter Weather

With cold weather around the corner, there are a few things you should do to help get your unit ready for winter. These will not only protect the building but can also help you heat your house more efficiently and reduce heat loss. Below are a few helpful tips.

- **Remove and store your garden hose.** This allows the outside spigot to drain of any excess water and helps prevent the pipe from freezing. You may also want to cover the spigot with an insulating cover.
- **Have your furnace cleaned.** It is recommended that this be done at least once a year.
- **Buy a programmable thermostat.** Set it to automatically lower the temperature while you're away. Just don't let it drop below 55 degrees, or you'll risk having your pipes freeze.
- **Close the chimney flue.** If you own a unit with a fireplace, you should keep the flue closed whenever you are not using the fireplace.
- **Clean or replace your furnace filter.** It is recommended you do this once a month during heating season.
- **Check windows and doors for leaks.** Inexpensive window insulating kits can be found at most home improvement stores and can significantly reduce heat loss. These kits must be installed on the inside of windows only. ■

## Fireplace Inspection Letters Due Oct. 15

It's that time of year again. All residents who have a wood-burning fireplace are required to provide proof of an annual chimney inspection or cleaning to the Association by Oct. 15.

This is a requirement of our insurance carrier and is required whether you use your fireplace regularly or not.

If proof of this service is not received by Oct. 15, fines will be issued. ■

*Reflections* is a publication of the association board of  
Reflections at Hidden Lake.  
Darien, Illinois

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