

M.C.C.A. NEWS

Holidays of Light

by Eric Schreiber



In addition to Christmas, many cultures celebrate holidays that involve the lighting of lights during the darkest days of the year. Here are a few.

Diwali

Hindus and Sikhs observe Diwali on the darkest night of the lunar cycle called Amavasya. We know that day of the lunar cycle as the new moon. Decorations include strings of light and oil lamps.

Hanukkah

Jews celebrate with the lighting of the menorah (a candelabra) on eight consecutive nights. The holiday is frequently called the *Festival of Lights*. Since Hanukkah begins on the 25th day of the Hebrew month, and since the lunar month is either 29 or 30 days, the new moon usually falls midway through the Hanukkah celebration. So, the Festival of Lights (Hanukkah) is celebrated during the darkest time of the month, and the darkest time of the year.

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is based upon ancient harvest celebrations in Africa. Beginning on December 26, a kinara holds seven candles which are lit on seven consecutive nights. Songs and dances are traditional.

Lunar New Year

Across Asia based on a lunar calendar, varied celebrations consistently begin on the first new moon of the year, and end 15 days later with the full moon. The holidays go by various names in different cultures. The Vietnamese celebrate Tet. The Koreans celebrate Seollal. The Tibetans celebrate Losar. The Mongolians celebrate Tsagaan Sar. The Chinese celebrate Chunjie.



Saint Lucia Day

Sweden is REALLY dark in the winter. On December 13, the eldest daughter of the family dresses like the saint and wears a wreath of candles on her head. She then sings and serves coffee and saffron buns to the family.

Of course, it is no coincidence that a celestial moment in time, the **December Solstice**, marks the shortest day and longest night of the year in the northern hemisphere. Always seeking a cause for celebration and hope, humanity across the globe seems to understand that brighter days are around the corner.

Happy Holidays to All!

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General Manager's Column

by Paul Stroud

2023 will begin a new century in the history of this collection of extraordinary buildings that comprise Moreland Courts. This last century, soon coming to a close, witnessed a rough beginning as the grand plan envisioned by Alfred Harris and Josiah Kirby commenced. After beginning well with construction of the first six buildings in 1922, financial difficulties forced Harris and Kirby out. The Van Sweringen brothers took over the defaulted asset and eventually completed a much-abbreviated plan in 1929, a year fated to usher in the great Depression.

For the next 50 years Moreland Courts established its place as a distinguished address and many prominent Clevelanders made homes here. In 1978 the owners of the complex took advantage of newly updated consumer protections for HOA's in Ohio to convert to condominiums. By 2002 residents began to realize that the maintenance and capital upkeep of these buildings had not been adequately performed and approximately \$17,000,000 worth of emergency and catchup repairs, replacements and improvements were urgently required.

Today, 20 years later we look to the next 100 years and have the opportunity to get off on the right foot. It is true these buildings are expensive to maintain, and from time-to-time certain aspects of age will present problems that must be addressed. Despite owning a unique and timeless sense of place, providing high quality services and conveniences, and being a place widely recognized as an elite address, Moreland Courts must remain competitive in the modern market.

The property value collapse and cost eruption caused by the deferred maintenance habit of the Association's first 20 years have been reversed, and investment is showing itself to be worthwhile as property values have soared over the past 9 years. In terms of costs of operating this property over that period, the maintenance fee has been stable with a net increase since 2015 of only \$339,000 through the 2023 budget, or 2% per year.

Going into the next century for this place we are well positioned to meet the challenges. Our Reserve Fund is on solid footing and is positioned to protect the Association against unexpected assessments. Management has been working with the Facilities Committee to establish a 5-year Annual Capital Plan to address lingering, smaller issues that are not included in the Reserve Fund. We think we are well positioned to stay on top of things and hope these two mechanisms remain in place to keep Moreland Courts' second century on solid ground.

For more on the remarkable history of Moreland Courts a newly authored book by a group of your fellow residents is nearing completion and should be available to bring in the new year.

Notes from the Board

November was an exceptionally active month for the MCCA Board. When Archie Green told us he and Debra were about to put their unit on the market and planned to move to Florida, it made him ineligible to serve on the Board. We consulted the by-laws, and further checked with our legal counsel to be sure we acted properly. The Board selected Gordon Wean to fill out Archie's tenure as a Board member, and Kathleen Hickman to serve as President until the next annual meeting (in the spring).

We are very grateful that Archie agreed to be involved as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board to help wrap up the end of year matters, among which is the association's budget for 2023.

All residents should have received a communication concerning the budget. The Budget and Finance committee put in time and effort and a great deal of thought to arrive at a budget that would keep expenses to residents as low as possible, while meeting our responsibilities to our employees and to maintain and repair the Moreland Courts property. Most of us do not find constructing a budget a particularly enjoyable project, and we are grateful to Chairman Jim Collins and the dozen members of the committee for their diligent attention. Thanks is also due to the generous cooperation of Paul Stroud and Mildred Brooks, who have all the numbers (and there are a lot of them) in their proper places. It is an essential but unglamorous task.

The Board also passed a resolution concerning electric car charging, which you can read about elsewhere in the newsletter. Coming up after the first of the year is consideration of outdoor patio spaces. The Rules committee has been working on this complicated issue. You may provide feedback on patio usage by contacting Jan Devereaux who chairs the Rules Committee (jmdevereaux@aol.com) or Paul Stroud (pstroud@morelandcourts.com). If you have wisdom and guidance to share, they are ready to listen.

Finally, we hope that holiday celebrations bring you joy and that the new year will be kind to all of us as we stoutly face the challenges that 2023 will bring.

MCCA Board Action on Electric Vehicles and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles

by Eric Schreiber

Cars powered by electricity supplied by Moreland Courts should not get a free ride. That is the essence of the resolution passed by the Moreland Courts Board of Directors on Tuesday November 29. That said, the owners of Electric Vehicles (EVs) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) should be offered the convenience of charging their vehicles while parked. Following many hours of hard work, the Rules Committee has formulated a plan to shift the costs of electricity, the necessary circuits, and the administrative costs from the Association to the users of EVs and PHEVs.

Following is the list of recommendations made to the Board by the Rules Committee that was passed unanimously by the Board:

1. Residents desiring electric car or hybrid charging services will sign up and fill out necessary paperwork in the Security Office.
2. Electric car owners will be charged \$25/month, charges to be included on the monthly statement. PHEV owners will be charged \$15/month, charges to be included on the monthly statement.
3. The system will be implemented on January 1, 2023.
4. Vehicle owners will purchase the charging interface appropriate for their model car.
5. MCCA staff will install and charge for the installation of the charging station. All owners, including those with charging stations already in place, will be charged.
6. Owners will be asked to provide odometer readings at the beginning and the end of the year. The new system will be evaluated at the end of the first year.

For the Association to be made whole, the costs of electricity, circuit installation, and administration had to be taken into consideration. The Committee and the Board recognize that these recommendations represent, at best, a first approximation of the actual cost for EV and PHEV services. With time and experience, the details will be modified to more accurately represent the actual costs. Odometer readings will be collected at the beginning and end of 2023. EV and PHEV users who believe that the fee structure does not represent their costs can submit documentation. The new system will be evaluated after the end of the year or sooner if necessary.

The goal of the new system will be to have the costs to owners accurately reflect the expenses to the Association over time. Both the Rules Committee and the Board felt that it was premature to base costs of EVs and PHEVs on actual individual usage. Individual metering was discussed but was felt to be excessively expensive and impractical at this time.

Management is aware of all the EVs and PHEVs in the garages currently. They request that the owners fill out the necessary paperwork on or about January 1, including the odometer reading of the vehicle. Car owners with trickle chargers maintaining a full 12-volt battery charge for their infrequently driven cars need not worry about any of this. The amount of energy consumed by these trickle chargers is negligible.

Currently, the PHEVs and some EVs are being charged from standard 120-volt circuits with extension cords. These vehicles are not exempt from the regulations since the amount of energy consumed is determined by the amount of driving, not by the circuit from which the energy has been supplied. There have been reports that EV and PHEV charging from 120-volt outlets has caused dimming of the lights in the west garage. Soon, the day will come when even the 120-volt outlets for EVs and PHEVs must be dedicated to prevent circuit overload, and these outlets will need to be wired at owner expense.

There are many pieces involved with providing this service, and they are all moving targets. Please be patient and stay tuned.

Holiday Recognition of Moreland Courts Employees

The employee staff has a presence here at Moreland Courts 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Many routine services are readily available. Our staff is prepared to respond to emergencies no matter what the hour. Tipping is neither expected nor condoned.

The opportunity comes once a year in the form of a holiday bonus for residents to show our employees gratitude and wish them the best for the holiday season. Resident donations are the only source for the employee holiday bonus. If you have not yet contributed to the holiday bonus fund and wish to do so, please contact Mildred Brooks. She can be reached at mbrooks@morelandcourts.com or by calling the office at (216)751-1100.

The Moreland Courts Maintenance Department

By Jeanne Somers

Moreland Courts residents depend on the maintenance staff to ensure that our historic buildings continue to meet current needs. Facility Manager Larry McHugh and Maintenance Lead Glenn Henry work with a team comprising Zoli Kertesz Jr. (Lead Painter), and Maintenance Technicians Zoli Kertesz Sr., Jordan Brooks, and Sirin Broadus to discharge essential daily tasks such as trash collection. In addition to picking up residents' trash and recyclables, one of the Maintenance Technicians goes on a daily patrol to clean up litter along Shaker Boulevard and the backline.

Larry McHugh starts his day with a troubleshooting walk around the entire property to identify any issues of immediate concern. He also coordinates all the regular components of maintenance staff workload. Foremost among these is responding to resident work orders. Work orders calling for assistance with small tasks such as changing a lightbulb that is not easily reached, turning a stiff window lock, or tightening a screw on a loose door handle will not be charged. Jobs involving a greater commitment of time and skill (e.g. painting, carpentry; minor electrical, plumbing, and HVAC repairs) will be charged. If you are in doubt about whether to call an outside contractor, you would be well served to consult with Larry first to see if his staff can resolve it at a rate of \$37.50 per hour, per staff member employed. If you do engage an outside contractor, Maintenance can facilitate the work at hand by providing access to main mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as invaluable insider knowledge.

The Maintenance team's regular seasonal jobs include installing and removing air conditioners, deploying and storing patio furniture, snow removal and salting, hauling hoses in and out, and turning outside spigots on and off. Boilers are prepped during the last week of August so they will be ready to start when the 10-day weather forecast shows outside temperatures dropping consistently to 52-54 degrees (which may seem low, but our thick walls retain a lot of heat). Moreland Courts Maintenance either oversees or directly undertakes work such as masonry repair, asphalt seal coating, and pest control on a rolling basis. In emergencies (e.g. a two-inch pipe bursts or a hot water tank springs a leak), Maintenance staff can be paged directly, 24/7, through Reception or Security.

In addition to their ongoing work, our Maintenance staff plays a critical role in the completion of capital improvement projects by providing support for outside contractors employed by Moreland Courts or, in many cases, discharging the work themselves. Recent examples of major projects include the creation of the Exercise Room, updates to the Security Office, painting the back halls of the Courts and Studio Buildings, front door restorations, and laundry room renovations. This coming spring and summer, replacement of the West Garage roof will be a primary focus.

Moreland Courts Maintenance team's stewardship of our landmark complex is essential to the quality of life we enjoy. Maintenance staff works hard to meet our individual needs as well as the demands of our century-old buildings. Larry McHugh personally receives anywhere from 25 to 40 phone calls a day and listens to constant informal verbal commentary on Maintenance issues. So here is a tip: To ensure your request is recorded and addressed, submit an online **WORK ORDER**. Work orders enable maintenance staff to deal with each task more efficiently and prevent the loss of a request. If you have any difficulty completing a work order, Reception is ready to help at (216)751-1100 or personally at the front desk.



THE MORELAND COURTS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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The Newsletter Committee takes responsibility for the content of the newsletter.

Questions and comments can be addressed to editor@morelandcourts.com

SNOW REMOVAL

Winter weather is approaching, unfortunately. Here are just a few reminders:

1. If we have snow or ice, the snow team starts at 5:30am Monday-Friday and 6:30 am on weekends.
2. Please do not attempt to pass the jeep while it is plowing snow.
3. Please watch out for the snow team while they are clearing snow. We do not want injuries.
4. If you discover a slippery spot, please report it to Security so it can be addressed.
5. For sub-zero days, please open cabinets located on outside walls, and let both the hot and cold-water drip to prevent frozen pipes.

SAFETY REMINDER

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS!

Do not allow **STRANGERS** into the building as you are coming in or out.

SAFETY REMINDER

SLOW DOWN!

Please be aware of residents crossing on **The BACKLINE!**

