

Hiller Highland IV

Fourth Quarter
Bulletin
2009

Board of Directors

President:
Cheryl Brodsky

Vice President:
Dick Saalfeld

Secretary:
Bob Farwell

Treasurer:
Gordon Seligson

Director:
Herb Holman

SOME LIGHTWEIGHT PHILOSOPHY

Cheryl Brodsky

“When we turn to one another for counsel we reduce the number of our enemies” (Khalil Gibran). Interesting people live in HHIV, people of all ages, ethnicities, education and experiences. A main emphasis of your Board this year is to develop more of a sense of community, to help us discover what we have in common and how we can help one another. No matter how spectacular our homes’ views, if we don’t get involved, we are only taking advantage of a fraction of what HHIV could offer.

“Do, or do not. There is no ‘try’” (Yoda, *The Empire Strikes Back*). As you are aware, there was a burglary in October on Schooner Hill. Getting to know your neighbors makes it more likely that you will recognize someone who may have nefarious intent. We must watch out for one another if we are to live in a safe, crime-free environment.

“The only way to have a friend is to be one” (Ralph Waldo Emerson). Our “Know Your Neighbors” column will introduce you to at least one HHIV neighbor each quarter. Our Welcome Committee is also planning neighborhood social events that will help you get to know those who live near you. Participate and volunteer to help. It will be fun. “I guarantee it!” (George Zimmer).

“Experience is the name we all give to our mistakes” (Oscar Wilde). Is your home leaking or do you have other repair issues? If you have had repairs done to your home, let George Innes know. Although the Architectural

Control Committee cannot recommend specific contactors, we can let you know who has had similar work performed. Now that you have the new roster, call your neighbor, introduce yourself and find out what contractor they used and whether they were satisfied with the work.

“The world is full of willing people; some willing to work, the rest willing to let them” (Robert Frost). Are you a renter here or are you an owner? Most people who live in HHIV are owners, and this is directed to you. If you have a problem with HHIV rules and all you do is complain, you are treating the situation as a renter would. Be an owner and get involved in the solution. Volunteer for a Board committee, run for the Board or attend Board meetings and express your views. Board meetings are open to everyone. This is your community and ultimately it is only as good as you make it.

“We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing” (George Bernard Shaw). Get outside and enjoy the fall foliage and the crisp weather before the rains come. Smile, and chat with your neighbor who is walking his very handsome dog, is in her driveway washing her shiny new car or who is sweating and panting while power walking down the street.

OK, enough philosophizing on Utopia. In the words of that most erudite of philosophers, Johnny Carson, “Mail your packages early so the post office can lose them in time for Christmas.” And enjoy the holiday season.

SUN POWERED ELECTRICITY

Michael Brodsky

As many of you may know, there are now four solar systems that have been installed on Schooner Hill. The following is what I've learned during this experience.

Why get solar power?

1. It's good for the environment. You don't have to burn coal, gas, or oil to generate most of your electricity.
2. It saves money. The solar companies estimate the rate of return on your investment from about 9-16%. The exact amount depends on the size of your system. In addition, a number of assumptions are made including a continuing increase in PG&E rates of about 6-7% a year, an increase in home resale value secondary to its solar system, federal tax credits and state solar rebates. To compare systems and return I looked at how much solar power was going to save us in the first year divided by how much cash we will be out of pocket after tax credits and rebates. For our system this is about 8% and is a tax-free rate of return.

Will solar power be advantageous to you?

1. Your electric bill should be more than about \$80/month on the average, to make the cost of a solar installation economically advantageous. Ask PG&E to see your last 2 years of electric usage to make this determination.
2. Ideally your house roof should face south and the slope of your roof should be perpendicular to the sun at noon, but since this changes with the seasons, something between 15-60% is ok. Your state solar rebate also depends on your roof direction and angle.
3. Your roof should be in good shape but it doesn't have to be new. If your roof needs to be replaced subsequently, the solar system must be removed and then reinstalled (\$1000-\$2000 expense).
4. You must have enough unshaded roof space to accommodate the solar panels required for your system.
5. "Why get solar power?" should make sense to you.

How do I find a reputable contractor?

1. Check with anyone who has installed solar. I'm sure they will be happy to talk to you.
2. Check Yelp and research on the internet.
3. Check the Better Business Bureau. Ask your

friends and contractors you may know who have had some experience with solar contractors.

4. Ask contractors you know who have had experience with solar contractors.

How big a system should I get?

1. PG&E's rate structure has 5 tiers that get progressively more expensive as your usage increases. It always pays to generate enough power to offset the higher tiers. The first and second tiers do not make as much economic sense. Overall, cutting your PG&E electric bill by somewhere between 60-90% is economical. For most of us in Hiller this is a 1.5-4 KW system.
2. If you're considering increasing your electric usage in the future (an electric car more time at home) then it pays to consider a larger system to start with as adding panels is proportionally more expensive than the original system.

How long will the system last?

1. The solar panels lose efficiency by about ½% per year so at the end of 20 years they will only produce 90% of the original power and at 40 years 80%.
2. The panels are warranted for 25 years.
3. The inventor that converts the DC power of the panels to AC power in your house is warranted for 10 years and will have to be replaced at least once in the system's life.
4. Since the costs and technology of solar are constantly changing, replacing the system might be considered in a 25-40 year time frame.

What happens to any extra electricity I generate?

1. On any given day any extra power you generate turns your meter backwards and goes into PG&E's system with credit to your account.
2. If over the course of a year you generate more power than you use, any excess goes to PG&E and you do not get any credit. That's why it is important to carefully assess your usage before you install a system and install only what you need. If you install a larger system than you need, you've paid to fund PG&E (and they probably won't even send you a thank you note.).

How much will a solar system cost me?

There are lots of variables, as I've noted. Depending on your own electric needs and the roof of your house, you should anticipate an estimate between \$ 10,000-15,000.

Sun Powered Electricity cont.

Those of us who have installed solar would be happy to answer questions about our experience. You can contact us at:

Mike Brodsky: 50 Schooner Hill:

bsculptor@sbcglobal.net

Katherine Fung: 40 Schooner Hill:

kkfgeo@gmail.com

Sam James: 47 Schooner Hill:

sjames12345@msn.com

Walt Schindler: 1 Schooner Hill:

ws.farniente@gmail.com

Know Your Neighbor

Janet Saalfeld

Have you noticed the tall and elegant walker using a hiking pole, covering the streets of Schooner Hill and Captains Cove? And have you noticed our local Schooner Hill "Gepetto" hard at work in the workshop in their garage? Meet Margaret and Bob Kreider at 11 Schooner Hill, long time residents of Hiller Highlands IV. They know lots about the development of the area.

After the fire and during the re-building process, Margaret and Bob would invite the "re-Builders" to have a cocktail on their deck and when the contractor said it wasn't safe, they moved to the garage area. She said, "Those were difficult but wonderful and heart-warming times for the neighbors and truly showed the heart of Hiller IV." Thanks Margaret and Bob.

This is a segue to the discussion of having a "get to know our neighbor progressive garage party!" It will be a fun way to share the heart of Hiller IV. Watch for the invitation in the mail. This will be a great excuse to tidy your garage! Any volunteers?

Hail and Farewell

Farewell to Connie, David and Ada Mae, (their dog) at 17 CC. They are moving to Windward Hill.

Welcome Michael and Carol Miller: 38 Schooner Hill.

Congratulations to newlyweds York and Jenny Chan at 9 CC.

Contact Janet Saalfeld with any suggestions for the welcoming committee. 843-1088 or saalfeld@sbcglobal.net.

BENTLEY SCHOOL: THE SAGA CONTINUES

Cheryl Brodsky

About 40 years ago the Bentley School was granted a Conditional Use Permit ("CUP") that approved the operation of a private school on lower Hiller Drive with a student enrollment of 200. Homeowners who live near the Bentley School noticed an increase in traffic and congestion and it was learned that the school's enrollment had crept up to 352. The school said, "oops!" and applied to the Oakland Planning Commission for a new CUP that would allow them an enrollment of 360 students and permit the operation of after school day care and evening and weekend programs.

Some Hiller Highlands residents ("NSHH"---Neighbors for Safety in Hiller Highlands) mobilized to oppose this new CUP. NSHH was spearheaded by homeowners who live on lower Hiller Drive, nearest to the school. Those who lived in Hiller Highlands during the Oakland Firestorm were particularly sensitive to safety issues and were concerned that if there was a disaster when school was beginning or ending, that the gridlock on lower Hiller could result in the inability for some residents to safely exit. NSHH didn't advocate the relocation of the school but they demanded that the traffic situation be improved and thought that compliance with the original CUP was the way to achieve this goal. Discussions and mediations with Bentley went on ad nauseum for years without resolution.

A public hearing on the Bentley CUP was held on October 21, 2009, before the ultimate arbiter, the Oakland Planning Commission. The HHIV Board voted to support NSHH's compromise position, which would permit Bentley to have 280 students but mandated action to control traffic. Pauly Langguth and I trooped to City Hall to see the political process at work and to report back to you. The City Hall is an elegant old building. Unfortunately I didn't get to see much of it and will have to plan a return trip to sightsee. We got there early and were directed to a room with about seventy-five movie theater like seats and a large semicircular table at the front, where the commissioners hold court. Pauly and I grabbed seats in the nick of time.

Bentley had mobilized their students, faculty and parents and hundreds of them attended, most wearing large buttons that said "Parents for Bentley", "Students for Bentley", etc. About 25 supporters of the NSHH position also attended

Bentley School (cont.)

(without buttons). Before the hearing began, the fire marshal made the people who were hanging from the chandeliers (figuratively speaking) exit and watch the proceedings on closed circuit TV, in a room across the hall. It was a mild evening and as the evening progressed the heat really built up in the room (literally as well as figuratively).

Bentley selected a diverse group of students, faculty, parents and alum to explain why the school is such an invaluable educational facility. It was an engaging group and I regretted not knowing about the Bentley School when my kids were of school age. None of these eloquent speakers however addressed safety issues. NSHH began by presenting a five-minute video that showed the traffic congestion in front of Bentley School and although they also had speakers who offered suggestions and opinions, the video was clearly worth a thousand words.

Commissioner Douglas Boxer, the son of Senator Barbara Boxer, is vice chairman of the Planning Commission. He was articulate and seemed to "get" the issues. (Is he in line to inherit mom's senate seat? I'd vote for him). The commissioners were polite to everyone and stated that they were going to make some decisions that were unpalatable to each side. One commissioner noted that having a school as a neighbor was better for Hiller Highlands than having a bar as a neighbor. (Maybe we could negotiate for a wine bar?) Another commissioner was told by the school that a CUP for 360 students is "non-negotiable." In my naiveté I thought that it was the planning commission's decision. Silly me!

The "conclusion" was that Bentley will be permitted to have 360 students but will have to take immediate action to cut down on the cars dropping off and picking up students. There will be a specific plan that includes carpooling, shuttle buses and off-site parking. If Bentley fails to reduce the number of cars, then the Planning Commission may reduce the number of students permitted in the CUP (if the Planning Commission grows some cojones). So, the saga goes on. It is unlikely that we have seen the end of this conflict.

HH IV Solar Rules

George Innes

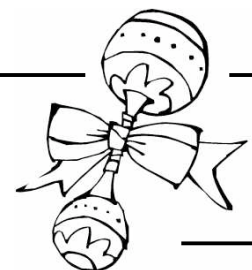
As a follow-up to Mike Brodsky's article on Solar Power, here are the main elements of the Association's rules/procedures governing solar installations. In 2008 the Association developed the rules, which, after being sent to our homeowners for a 30-day comment period, were formally adopted by the Board. The rules are compliant with California regulations governing solar installations.

The essential features of the rules are as follows:

- * Owners of neighboring homes must be advised ahead of time of the proposed solar installation and given the opportunity to raise questions/concerns
- * The solar panels should be installed parallel to the plane of the roof (flush mount)
- * In some situations it may be necessary to have the panels set back from the adjacent property line(s) to allow access to the adjacent property for maintenance such as painting.
- * Any metal trim pieces used in mounting the panels must be of a dark non-reflective finish to minimize visibility/reflection issues.
- * Components other than the panels (inverter, etc) should normally be mounted in the garage and not be visible on the exterior.
- * Conduit mounted on the exterior of the home must be installed to minimize visibility and painted to match the surface to which it is mounted. Conduit running on the roof should be painted grey to minimize visibility.
- * The homeowner enters into an agreement with HH IV holding the Association harmless from liability associated with the installation and provides an insurance certificate from the contractor reflecting coverage amounts and naming the Association as an additional insured as it relates to the installation.

Any proposal to install solar must be submitted in writing to the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) well ahead of time to allow for review and approval. ACC approval must be granted before the installation can be done. Please contact George Innes, ACC Chair, if you have questions regarding this process.

**Congratulation Aaron and AJ on the arrival of Finley Kathryn Brown.
Born June 14 at a healthy 7 lbs. 13 oz. and 21 inches!**



Security

Herb Holman

There was a recent burglary here in Hiller Highlands IV. Our home was also broken into in August of 2007. The person or persons entered through a small side window in the middle level of the house. The rooms on that level were basically ransacked; drawers were emptied, closets were gone through and mattresses were turned over. File cabinets were emptied and documents thrown about. Also, a return vents for the HVAC was torn off the wall. According to the police investigator, someone looking for money, drugs or guns did the crime. Not much was stolen. Nothing was touched on the upper living room level, probably because there were no lightweight flat screen TV's or small electronic devices such as laptops, cell phones or Blackberries around. The burglars exited through the window they entered, never using the front door.

The one basic error that we made was that we did not set our alarm system prior to leaving town. We had not been in the habit of doing so, but routinely do set it now, even if out for a few hours. We also have had some of the window screens wired to the alarm system, so that a window can be left open if the weather is warm but still provide protection if the screen is torn or removed, assuming the alarm is set. Our alarm company, Sentry Alert, was very helpful in providing a source to have this wiring done. One problem that we did not foresee was that our SF Chronicle continued to be delivered. We suggest that when temporarily suspending newspaper delivery that it be done not only with the automated system, but also by contacting a live operator to confirm the order. We have not only let our neighbors know when we will be away, but have asked them to put out our trash cans on Monday and to put them away at the end of the day, so that we will further give the appearance of being around. As a courtesy, when walking the neighborhood, it would be very considerate (and hopefully become a habit for all of us) to put the Montclarion, the Monthly or any other newspapers, packages or flyers in the utility door of the home. We usually close our garage door, but have had neighbors remind us, even at very late hours, when it is open. We have also done this for our neighbors as well. Finally, for both anti-theft as well as fire safety, it is a good idea to make copies of important documents and to put them either off your premises or locked in a fire-safe box. Again, getting to know your neighbors can pay off for both social as well as safety reasons. We live in a beautiful and generally safe area but should not take basic safety precautions for granted.

HHIV Contact Information

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Committee Contacts

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CORE
Pauly Langguth 549•9081 3 Captains Cove
pl2gs@sbcglobal.net

Welcome
Janet Saalfeld 843•1088 5 Captains Cove
saalfeld@sbcglobal.net

Webmaster
Bob Kuzma 981•1445 7 Captains Cove
rjsystems@pacbell.net

Address all written correspondence to:

Committee Chair or President
30 Schooner Hill,
Oakland, CA 94618-2335

Hiller Highland Four Association Balance Sheet November 9, 2009

Treasurer's Report

Gordon Seligson

On the right is a current balance sheet, as of 11/9/09. Although not reflected by the report, we are well within budget for this year; the 2010 first quarter bulletin will include the 2009 full year income & expense statement.

The 2010 quarterly assessment remains unchanged at \$385. Payment coupons, and envelopes for those not having a First Bank direct debit, were distributed or mailed to owners in early December.

The 2010 budget adopted at the 11/18/09 board meeting anticipates operating income of \$123,320; with the following major expenses: member events (annual meeting and fall social) \$1,100, insurance \$12,850, professional services (CPA, legal & reserve study) \$5,600, landscape (maintenance, improvements, mulch, irrigation repairs, water) \$85,650 and taxes \$4,550. The remainder covers various line items that each represents less than 1% of income and an estimated \$6,876 "contingency". Detail by account was included in the annual packet distributed or mailed to owners in early December.

Please contact me if you want additional information/detail on any of the above.

Gordon Seligson 845•1216 6 Clipper Hill
sixchx@att.net

Assets

Current Assets

Checking/Savings	
1000 – First Bank Operating (6830)	46,920.48
1010 – RIF Interest Bearing (4701)	37,774.76
1040 – CD – CDARS	<u>269,844.84</u>
Total Checking/Savings	354,540.08

Accounts Receivable

1200 – Accounts Receivable	4,531.74
Total Accounts Receivable	4,531.74

Other Current Assets

1360 – Prepaid Insurance	1,899.00
1090 – Accrued Interest	<u>9,942.28</u>
Total Other Current Assets	11,841.28

Total Current Assets 370,913.10

Other Assets

1300 – Due from Operating Reserves	<u>10,615.00</u>
Total Other Assets	<u>10,615.00</u>

TOTAL ASSETS 381,528.10

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable

2100 – Accounts Payable	<u>-2,189.00</u>
Total Accounts Payable	-2,189.00

Other Current Liabilities

2400 – Due to Reserves from Operating	10,615.00
2680 – Taxes Payable	<u>738.00</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	11,353.00

Total Current Liabilities 9,164.00

Total Liabilities 9,164.00

Equity

3400 – Replacement Reserve Fund	308,936.59
3100 – Operating Fund	15,836.37
3200 – Retained Earnings	12,399.87
3300 – P&L Summary	-9,715.60
Net Income	<u>44,906.87</u>

Total Equity 372,364.10

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 381,528.10

HHIV CORE

Pauly & Tom Langguth

CORE stands for Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies. The City provides training to individuals and groups to be self-reliant for 72 hours, or more, following a major disaster. Hiller's CORE, organized in 1993, provides tools and easy to follow instructions at specially marked CORE boxes in each of Hiller Highlands six phases and at Hiller Highlands Homes Association below the tennis courts. The emergency boxes for Hiller IV are located behind 23 Schooner Hill (on Captains Cove) and in the guest parking lot between 49 and 51 Schooner Hill. These emergency boxes have recently been cleaned and inventoried. Some replacement items have been purchased, a few more items need to be purchased, the medical supplies have been updated (thank you, Barbara Schindler) and repairs are scheduled for the outside framework of the boxes. As soon as the boxes are ready for visitors we will host an open house (open box?) on a Saturday and invite you to admire the handywork. We will also have a brief show-and-tell about the contents of the boxes and how to use these items. Important! We need you to spend a few minutes, or more, to complete the attached Disaster Preparedness Information Form. This information is to be used only in case of a disaster. At that time the information will be invaluable to those attempting to contact our residents or to those doing search and rescue operations. Please don't put this in a pile where it will get buried with Holiday Cards and Catalogs. DO IT NOW. The form may be returned to the 30 Schooner Hill mailbox or to our mailbox at 3 Captains Cove. Have Happy and Safe Holidays...watch the candles, the electrical cords, and check your smoke alarms.

ACC Report

George Innes

Architectural Rules – Correction

In October we distributed the restated/updated version of the HH IV Architectural Rules for member comment prior to final Board adoption. A critical omission inadvertently occurred in Item III C "Noise Abatement". The correct language is as follows:

*"Exterior speakers, horns, whistles, bells, wind chimes, or other sound producing devices, except for security devices used exclusively for security purposes, shall **NOT** be located, used or placed on unit."*

Architectural Rules – Board Adoption

Following the 30-day membership comment period the Board of Directors, at its meeting of November 18, 2009, formally adopted the restated/updated Architectural Rules (including the correction noted above!). These Rules will be posted on the HH IV Web Site (hhiv.org).

2009 "Walk-around" Inspection of Homes

During the August/September time frame, the Architectural Control Committee ("ACC") conducted its annual inspection of the exterior of all 80 homes in HH IV Association. We're happy to report that generally our homes appear to be in good shape, with a number of homes being repainted in the last two years. A report was delivered to all home owners in October as to the outcome of the inspection. If there were any corrective items noted on your report, the ACC and the Board appreciate your prompt attention to address them.

UPDATED ROSTER

Accompanying your Bulletin you will find an updated version of our HHIV Roster. Please check your information for accuracy and let me know if corrections or changes are needed. If your information is not included in our roster, and you would like it to be, please contact me with the information that we have your consent to publish. In keeping with the original purpose of distributing this roster, being able to get in touch with your neighbors when it is necessary, I would like to suggest that you take a moment to highlight the names and phone numbers of your nearest neighbors. **Important Reminder: The information in this Roster is to be used for and by Hiller IV residents only. It is not to be shared, by any resident, for any commercial purpose.**

Pauly Langguth (549-9081 or pl2gs@sbcglobal.net)

HILLER HIGHLANDS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION FORM
Please print. Return completed forms to 30 Schooner Hill mailbox.

Date: November 2009 Revised _____ Revised _____ Revised _____

Hiller address: _____ 94618 Name of occupant: _____

Phone (510) _____ Cell _____ Fax _____ Work _____

Email _____

• Special medical needs (specify) _____

• CPR training Y N Medical experience: (MD, RN, counseling, etc) _____

• Professional construction experience (engineer, contractor, etc.) _____

• Building trades experience, (including do-it-yourself) specify: _____

Name of other adult occupant _____

Cell _____ Work _____ Email _____

• Special medical needs (specify) _____

• CPR training Y N Medical experience: (MD, RN, counseling, etc) _____

• Professional construction experience (engineer, contractor, etc.) _____

• Building trades experience, (including do-it-yourself) specify: _____

Name of minor occupant: _____ Age _____

Name of minor occupant: _____ Age _____

Name of minor occupant: _____ Age _____

Pets: (type, weight, breed, color) _____

Indoor _____ Outdoor _____ Notes _____

Emergency Contacts (out of state friend/relative)

Primary: _____ home _____ cell _____ email _____

Other: _____ home _____ cell _____ email _____

Tools & Equipment: (circle where applicable)

- vehicles: four/'all wheel drive • van • pick-up • station wagon
- camping gear: tent • camp stove • lantern(s)• sleeping bags • other _____
- ladders over 12' • crow bar(s) • shovel(s) • rake(s) • pickaxe(s) • gas chain saw • electric chain saw • portable power tools • carpentry tools • plumbing tools • electrical tools generator
- other _____
- Ham radio experience • ham radio equipment • FRS radio

Please use the back of this form if there is additional information you wish to include.