



The Elite Insider

Inside this issue:

Special Elite Awards 1

Upcoming Elite Events 1

You Occasionally have to Deal with Mice 2

Association Website Corner 2

Electrical Safety Tips 3

2012 Calendar of Events 3

(cont.) You Occasionally have to Deal with Mice 4

Elite Management Professionals, Inc.
 •1401 Sunday Drive
 Suite 116
 Raleigh, NC 27607

Find us online at
www.elite-mgmt.com,
 Facebook and Twitter
 Phone (919) 233-7660
 Fax (919) 233-7661

Office Hours
 Mon.-Thurs. 8:30-5:30
 Friday 8:30-1:00

Emergency Maintenance
 Number (919) 634-4545

Announcing Special Elite Awards Opportunity

Has your Community done outstanding things for its homeowners? Do you have a Board member or Committee member that constantly goes above and beyond service for your Community and for their neighbors? Are you thoroughly amazed at how much your Community has been able to accomplish?

Over the years, we have felt that our communities have excelled in many areas. The Elite team believes that you should be awarded for your superiority. Therefore we would like to announce TWO very special awards that will be awarded annually. The Awards will be awarded

to the Community and to the Volunteer that illustrates the best in volunteerism and exceptional Community progress.

Board members are asked to complete our survey of questions nominating their Community or their amazing Volunteer for outstanding performance, selflessness, and achievement. If selected by our panel of Association Management Professionals, the winning Community and Board Member/Volunteer will receive remarkable prizes and named trophy to be displayed in the Elite office through the year. The winners will be announced each year



at the Fall Festival held at the Elite office.

In the coming month, we will have the details and contest rules outlined on our website. We will also send this out to all board members by e-mail.

We are so excited about giving back to those of you that absolutely are ELITE to us!

Upcoming Elite Events— Board Seminar and Spring Fling

Board Education Seminar—Please plan to attend the Board Education Seminar next week on February 7 at 6:30 at the Raleigh office. This course is filled with information about the roles and responsibilities of being a Board member, how to read financials and management processes. We will cover to a greater

extent, the capabilities of your association's website and its features. Please e-mail dawn-hatcher@elite-mgmt.com.

2012 Spring Fling— Mark your calendar for the 2012 Spring Fling. The event this year will be held on Monday, April 30 from 5:30 until 8:00 at our location

in Raleigh on Sunday Drive. Be on the lookout for the invitation by e-mail in the next few weeks. We are so excited about the speakers that have been invited this year. We will also plan to have great food again provided by the Backyard Bistro.

As a Property Owner You Occasionally have to Deal with Mice

By Matt Carlan—Assistant Community Manager



As a property owner you occasionally have to deal with mice, a meddling raccoon or maybe an inconveniently placed bird's nest. Conflicts with nature are not uncommon in communities that have been built in virgin territories where wildlife existed first. As the urban sprawl pushes homes and pavement against shrinking green space across the US these encounters are becoming more and more frequent. The resulting clashes are creating dilemmas for local governments and community associations as people try to balance their quality of life, the bottom line and the ethical treatment of wild animals.

"It's all kind of new. There's a whole generation of people that grew up without experiencing animals as part of their neighborhoods or communities. And now we're learning how to deal with (animals), and they're learning how to deal with us," says John Hadidian, director of urban wildlife programs for the Humane Society of the United States, which encourages communities to use tolerance when possible.

"You can craft a management plan or a conflict-resolution strategy that really is cost effec-

ive," he says. "We fully acknowledge that things aren't going to work for animals unless they work economically for people."

Some communities spend thousands of dollars annually to control deer, feral swine and even bears. Associations even try to relocate the animals to less-crowded habitats, but sometimes this does not always work.

A 4,100-acre Sun City community has had to deal with an overabundance of vultures. Last year, around 1,000 of the federally protected birds, which feed on road kill and dead fish, were dropping large amounts of fecal waste into a creek and spreading out into residential neighborhoods.

Nonlethal methods, such as loud horns, failed to disperse them, so Warren Bluntzer—Sun City's wildlife biologist—secured permission from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to euthanize a capped number of vultures. After waiting several months for local government to approve the permits, Bluntzer, a former state game warden, stopped far short of his allocated number

of vultures because the method was having the desired result.

He says Sun City's methodical approach to dealing with wildlife conflicts—retaining an expert to advise resident leaders—is the exception, rather than the norm, among community associations. He says some are looking for quicker fixes.

"Many people in community associations are very, very successful retired people. Sometimes, there's just nothing that they think they can't take on and solve," Bluntzer says. "They think that a deer problem or a porcupine problem or whatever kind of wildlife issue seems very simple on the surface, and all they have to do is discuss it and implement it. But what they don't know are the ramifications that follow."

Stressing education and tolerance is still the best way to focus on dealing with wildlife issues as long as the people living in these conditions are not in danger. Still, some-

Association Website Corner

Go to www.elite-mgmt.com to updates, newsletters, access to your community website and a calendar of future events.

If you have not visited your Association website go to www.elite-mgmt.com and click on Communities. Select your community and then register to get started taking advantage of the many features your website offers.

Private Secure Administrative Access

We have the capability to give Board Members and

Committee members the ability to access administrative areas of your association websites. We have had several requests to date to allow this and the board members have utilized this access to review reports, update the calendar and to have more administrative creativity with the association websites. If you think you might be interested in this feature, the board should first discuss what

they would like to be able to accomplish. Is it the ability to create different reports than they are currently able to view on the website? Would you like to be able to make changes to the calendar more frequently. Once you outline what you need, discuss with your community manager and we will work with you to make this happen.

Electrical Safety Tips



Do you recognize this from your home or office?

During the winter months, we use more electrical devices in our homes and there are more reported calls about fire damages caused by electrical problems that could have been prevented:

Overloaded circuits –

We plug a lot of appliances/devices into a circuit without thinking how many amps are being used versus the amp rating for that circuit. Let's say the circuit is rated as a 20 amp circuit. Safety experts say the continuous amperage load on a circuit should not exceed 80% of the capacity rating, so we should never use more than 16 combined amps on that circuit. Too many amps can cause the wiring to overheat, possibly causing a fire. Circuit breakers/fuses try to monitor the usage and cut off the circuit, but may not react in time. Therefore, it would be safer to do a quick check on just how many items are operating at the same time on each

circuit.

Overloaded extension cords – Extension cords are also rated on how many amps they can safely handle, so check the total number of amps being plugged into an extension cord.

Electrical surges –

Sometimes there may be a temporary power surge that gets past the breakers/fuses and damages electronic equipment (computers, TVs, music systems, alarm devices, etc.) Use surge protection devices to detect and prevent these surges from reaching these items. Select one designed for your equipment.

Faulty switches – Many fires are started by faulty on/off switches that cause an electrical device to accidentally turn on when not expected. The best practice is to unplug devices when not in use (especially portable heaters, hair dryers, electric blankets, and any other devices with a heating element.)

Damaged power cords –

Check all power cords for damage to the cords (nicks, exposed wires, loose plugs, missing grounding connection, and burn or overheating marks from arcs) and have them repaired to prevent shorts and sparks.

Not using GFI protection when needed –

GFI (Ground Fault Interrupt) devices are used to prevent electrical shock or electrocution. Most newer construction places GFI receptacles around sinks, tubs, or other areas that may have water and many new appliances have GFI devices built into the plug. They immediately turn off the circuit to protect you. (Circuit breakers/fuses protect wiring – not you!) When a GFI activates, find the problem and have it corrected before reactivating the circuit.

2012 Calendar of Events



Tuesday, February 7

Board Member Seminar and Orientation–

Come join us to review the important role of serving on the Board, how to review the financial statements, governing documents and review your community website. Please contact

Dawn Hatcher to register.

Monday, February 20

Elite Raleigh office is Closed for President's Day.

Sunday, March 11

Daylight Savings Time

Saturday, March 31

MS Walk– Come join our team. Go to our web-

site to find out how.

Friday, April 6

Good Friday– All Elite Management Offices closed.

Monday, April 30

Elite Management Spring Fling 2012. Mark your calendar. You will not want to miss the great speakers, food, and raffle prizes!

As a Property Owner You Occasionally have to Deal with Mice— (cont.)

By Matt Carlan— Assistant Community Manager



sometimes it's necessary to call in the experts. Like associations that keep thousands of dollars in their yearly budget to deal with geese, which can cover common areas with bacteria-tainted excrement. In order to deal with the geese professionals locate nests around the water's edge and spoil the eggs by shaking them or coating them with oil so the embryos don't hatch. When a nest fails adult geese will usually move on.

Many animal-control measures, especially lethal ones, run the risk of generating controversy in community associations. Residents who don't live near a conflict site may not appreciate the problem of their neighbors who are in the direct "line of fire".

The Humane Society's Hadidian says some common-sense approaches can prevent the types of dilemmas in which wild animals must be euthanized. Proactive strategies he pushes include planting vegetation that doesn't attract deer and fixing holes or vulnerable points in roofs to discourage raccoons and other animals from settling there.

"If an animal is getting into your garbage, you don't have an animal problem, you have a trash problem, and you need to practice better trash security," he adds.

As a prime example of a relatively low-cost solution, Hadidian tells property owners about the Beaver Deceiver, a trapezoidal section of fence that fans out from a culvert. The barrier keeps beavers—and their innate desire to dam up a source of flowing water—at bay.

Skip Lisle, a Grafton, Vt.-based wildlife biologist, has been building the Beaver Deceiver across the United States and in Canada for land owners and local governments for more than 15 years. Depending on the site, a Beaver Deceiver can cost between \$500 and \$5,000, but that's often cheaper than hiring trappers or hunters. If the persistent species, which is invaluable for creating wetlands, returns and continues its mission after hunting and trapping, costs can skyrocket.

Over all the main point is that home owners associations can benefit greatly by

researching methods of dealing with nuisance animals from local government agencies, experts and other associations. Most importantly though is educating a community in the art of practicing patience, tolerance and understanding. The combination of which can lead to a much more enjoyable living environment for both homeowners and the wildlife around them.

*Quotes and facts have been taken from "Where the Wild things Are" an article written by Mike Ramsey that was featured on CAI's website in January/February of 2012

Don't forget! The Board Education Seminar being held on February 7, 2012. E-mail Dawn Hatcher dawnhatcher@elite-mgmt.com.