



The Quail Runner

<http://www.quailruncondo.org/Newsletters/>

Quail Run
Condominium Trust

Volume 7, No. 4
December, 2009

The Quail Runner, our condominium's newsletter, is published four times a year in March, June, September, and December to bring you information Unit Owners need to know. The Trustees would appreciate your comments and suggestions about how to improve The Quail Runner. Please send in your ideas and material for publication. See contact information on [Page 12](#).

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FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



I want to express my regrets at not being able to attend the annual meeting. I happen to have a consulting practice where I do not control my scheduling and this was one of the few times that last minute court calendar changes took precedence.

It would have been fun to attend an annual event when a significant 2009 surplus is anticipated along with no increase next year. This surplus will make up for a tight cash condition caused by prior deficits and put us on solid footing for 2010.

Please understand, however, that annual increases approximating the inflation rate are consistent with good condominium management in order to preserve our facilities. The Trustees simply made an extra effort in 2009 to achieve savings in a number of areas, some of a non-recurring nature, so that Quail Run residents would not have to face a 2010 increase in these uncertain times. These savings would also not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the APT Team and our new Property Manager, Nancy Cahill.

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FROM THE DESK OF YOUR PROPERTY MANAGER



What a pleasure it was to see the turn out at the November 19th Annual Meeting. We were concerned that the attendance would dip with the new location of the meeting but it appears there was a slight increase from the previous years. There were 51 units or 56.557 % of the beneficial interest in attendance. The meeting began with the election of new Trustees. Since there were two positions and two people running the vote was taken by acclamation. Congratulations to Joe Fitzsimmons and Dan Serieka who were each elected to a three-year term.

For those of you that were not able to attend the Annual Meeting, we would like to share that Rich DeFilippo has saved the Association money by completing work "in-house" instead of having an outside vendor complete the job. The most recent examples are the replacement trash sheds at Saw Mill Brook Way and John-son's Grant.

As of this writing there has not been any significant snow fall. In anticipation that we will have the usual New England weather, a contract has been signed with Vanaria Landscaping for snow removal at Quail Run. Residents are

(Continued on page 11)



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Rich DeFilippo, recognizing that cost cutting was important this year, volunteered to take on a number of projects that otherwise would have gone to third party contractors at considerable expense. These undertakings include the rebuilding of the mail box area infrastructure, two trash area structures and the initiation of an in-house power washing program.

I hope that our residents are utilizing the expansive current information now available on our web site thanks to new Trustee, Walt Howe. There are few, if any, condominium associations which enjoy the timely transparency of important information that exists at Quail Run. Walt's wife, Hope Tillman, continues to provide us with the best quarterly condominium newsletter that I have ever seen.

A question was raised at the Annual Meeting regarding the required approvals for our pool heater. This project was discussed at our 2008 annual meeting and duly approved by the Trustees in accordance with the Second Amendment to The Declaration of Trust, Section 16 that states that the Trustees may approve common area improvements up to 10% of our annual budget. This approval as well as subsequent modifications was reported in the minutes posted on our web site. The final actual heater cost was approximately \$7,000 with another \$3,000 in repairs to existing pool infrastructure.

Our pool is a major component of our common area but was only usable for a few weeks every summer due to tree growth and resulting shade. We now have comfortable water temperatures (at least in the opinion of real New Englanders) for almost four months. Monthly gas charges, as expected, run less than \$500 per season (or \$5.00 per unit)!

Most importantly, I want to thank Trustees Joel Alpert and Arthur Downing for their many years of contributions to our fine community. While each had personal reasons for not continuing in a formal capacity, there is no doubt that they will continue to support Quail Run in any way they possibly can.

So now, let us discuss the future.

Until the economy improves, your Board will not undertake expensive new projects but will maintain our infrastructure. Repaving of all streets and walkways except for the Vine Brook complex is scheduled for 2012 with the required reserve funds comfortably accumulating in our reserve accounts.

The only other anticipated maintenance item of note over the next few years is the resurfacing of our tennis court. Again thanks to Rich, we have stabilized the surface using a very effective crack sealing compound so that the cost of resurfacing has been substantially reduced.

Thanks to a reinvigorated and hands on Landscaping Commit-

tee, we will undertake a major perennial planting and tree replacement program including a tree farm for new seedlings. We are seeking perennial donations from residents and others so that the cost of this effort will be nominal.

Other plans include annual expansion, in small increments, of our existing sprinkler system to include presently unwatered grass areas exposed to strong sunlight. If our budgeting permits, the Trustees will also consider replacing asphalt curbing on street corners where we suffer continuous snow plow damage. While clusters like Johnson's Grant and Saw Mill Brook Way already have granite, other entry points would benefit from this improvement.

In closing, my wife Nancy and I are thankful every day for the good fortune which directed us to Quail Run and trust you all have similar feelings.

Submitted by Richard Clarke, Chair





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

November 19, 2009

held at Building 800, West Cummings Park



Joel Alpert led the meeting, as Chairman Richard Clarke had been called out of town for a work assignment. Joe Fitzsimmons was also unable to attend because of illness.

Current Trustees are:

Joel Alpert
Richard Clarke
Jack Deasy
Joe Fitzsimmons
Walt Howe

Trustee election held:

Joe Fitzsimmons, Vine Brook Way, was re-elected.
Dan Serieka, Saw Mill Brook Way, was elected



2009 Achievements

- The Board implemented a "To Do" list concept
- Developed monthly financial spread sheets
- Reviewed financial controls
- Upgraded property management, legal and accounting resources
- Expect significant 2009 surplus against budget
- Added Trustee minutes and Financials to members-only section of web site.
- Handbook is now kept current on web site. APT print version mirrors the web version.
- Installed new garage doors at KM and SMB and replaced doors at DG
- Completed VBW deck sealing and repainting
- Finalized specifications for KM, MG, DG weather resistant decking
- Implemented decking rebate program
- Completed in-house SMB trash and JG drainage projects
- Repaired pool infrastructure and added a pool water heater
- Power washed JG complex, purchased own equipment. More units to be done in 2010.
- Removal of DG planter box agreed (implementation deferred to Spring 2010)

2010 Goals

- Increase resident e-mail participation
- Deck railing repainting at DG, SMB, KM, MG
- Replace DG, SMB, KM and MG top railings with weather resistant materials
- Encourage use of weather resistant decking
- Install additional carport garage doors
- Additional revisions to condominium documents
- Ensure water heater notifications are current
- Continued support of Mary Cummings Park initiatives



(Continued from page 3)



Landscaping Committee Achievements

- Added new volunteers
- Stabilized Vanaria vendor relationship
- Negotiated favorable tree/gutter cleaning contracts
- Additional late summer, fall tree work
- Initiated tree farm concept
- Planted 100 daffodil bulbs at front entrance along with 20 fall mums
- Sylvanus Wood trash removed, kiosk installed

Landscaping Goals 2010

- Fully implement tree farm concept
- Reinstitute red hemlock mulching
- Upgrade front entrance plantings
- Replant barren flower beds and banks
- Improve crab grass control
- Comprehensive pest/disease spraying
- Expand irrigation systems
- Prune overhanging oak limbs at DG and VBW
- Remove excess overgrowth along grass borders

Deck Issues

- 3 VBW decks replaced with TREX in 2009
- AZEK approved for installation elsewhere
- Rebate program reaffirmed

Finance Committee - Budget Highlights

Expect to be significantly under 2009 budget overall
VBW Deck Sealing exceeded budget by \$5,000

Offset by 2009 contingency reserve of \$10,000
Achieved savings by moving projects in-house
Other savings in insurance, numerous other areas

For 2010: No increase in fees planned

Reserve contribution increase is not necessary
Contingency Reserve is maintained at \$10,000
Increase for landscaping of \$7,850 is primarily due to mulching

We expect a significant savings due to:

- The in-house power washing initiative
- Gutter cleaning savings
- Lower postage cost because of use of e-mail

Please help us keep costs down by signing up for email if you have not already done so.

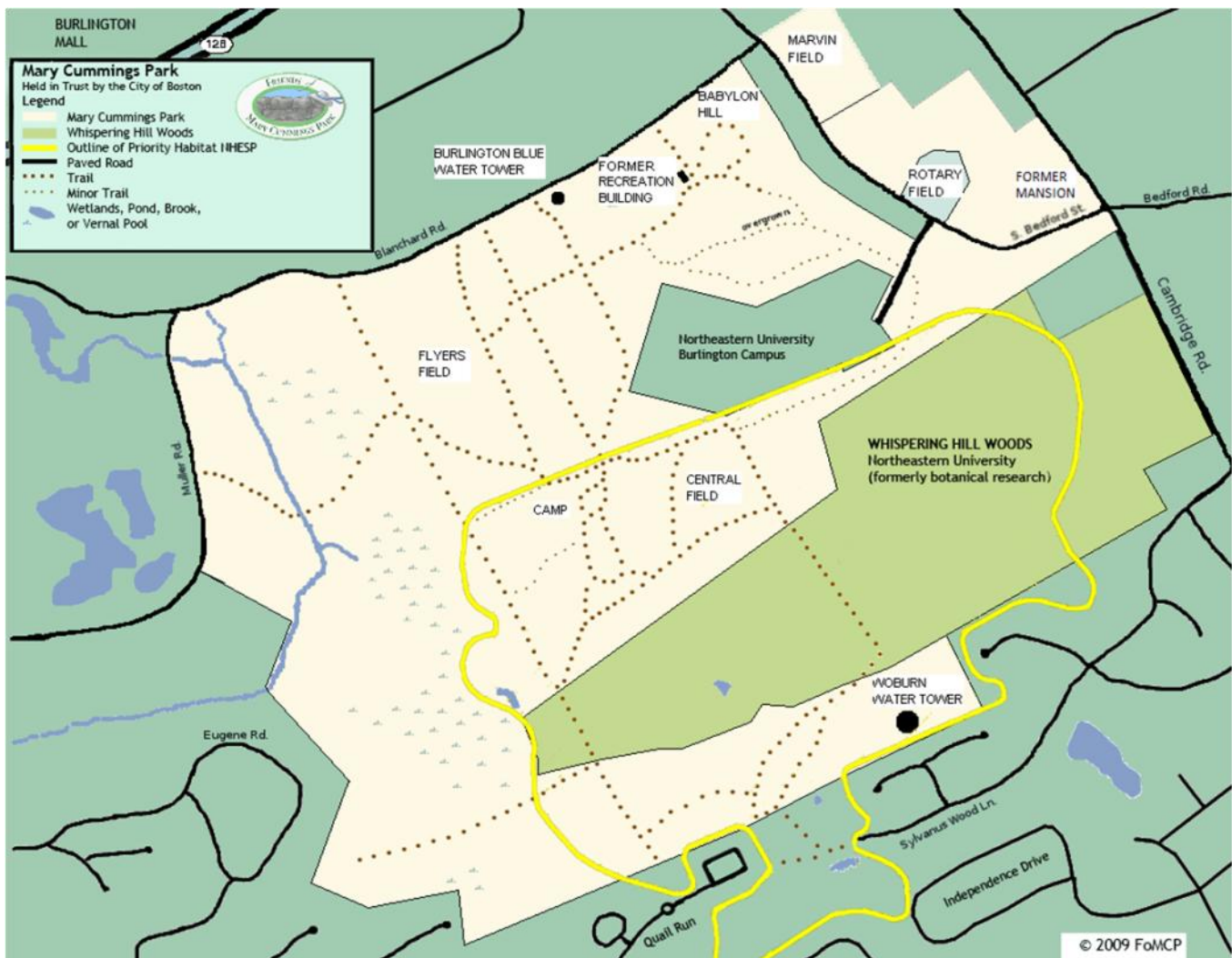




NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF MARY CUMMINGS PARK

Whispering Hill Woods, the woodland formerly under agreement to Archstone, has been again been put

on the market. Northeastern University already has seven bid proposals from developers to purchase the woodland. Although the City of Woburn City Council has voted in favor of investigating the purchase of the woodland, they have not made clear progress toward that purchase. The Friends of Mary Cummings Park have been locating granting and other funding sources in order to conserve the woodland. Conservation of this woodland has a direct impact on the quality of life of the citizens of Burlington and Woburn. A large development, like those being proposed in the current bids, would have a pronounced impact on residents of Quail Run, with buildings potentially within view of Quail Run and with free access to Mary Cummings Park being substantially limited. The Friends of Mary Cummings Park need financial





and personal assistance in conserving Whispering Hill Woods. They need help with activities, calling people to notify them of important events, and spreading the word through the surrounding communities so that everyone who might like to help is encouraged to do so. Conservation of Whispering Hill Woods will not happen without the active participation of Quail Run residents. Please visit their website, www.cummingspark.org to join or donate. Donations can also be sent to #343, 101 Middlesex Tpke Ste. 6, Burlington MA 01803.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Visit the park and explore it.
- Get on the Friends mailing list at <http://www.cummingspark.org>
- Donate time or money to support the effort.
- Get involved in planned activities such as trail work, campground maintenance, park clean-ups, birding, guided nature walks, geocaching, civic action, and educational programs.
- Take leadership in programs you would like to see developed. Lend the park your expertise!
- Write to info@cummingspark.org with your ideas on how you can help.
- Attend monthly meetings: The Friends monthly meetings are the third Monday of each month, (December 21st, January 18th, February 15th, etc.) from 7:00-8:45pm in the MacIntyre Room at the Burlington Public Library, 22 Sears Street, Burlington, MA.

Photo and Art Contest 2009 Award Winners

The Award Ceremony for the 2nd Annual Mary Cummings Park Photograph, Drawing, and Painting Contest was held on November 23, 2009 at the Burlington Public Library. All entries featured some aspect of the life of the park. The awards were handed out by State Representative Charley Murphy and State Senator Ken Donnelly. The winners are:

1st place: Orange Autumn Leaves (Gerry Kehoe of Woburn)

2nd place: Monarch on Daisy (Gail Manning of North Reading) AND Leaf in Bog (Jonathan Sachs of Burlington)

3rd place: Bramble Path (Bob Campbell of Woburn)

Honorable mention: Mushroom and Pod (Greta Cauty of South Boston)

Honorable mention: Chipmunk Preparing for Winter (Elizabeth Attardi of Billerica)



All 37 entries to the contest will be on view at the Burlington Public Library during the month of December. Some of the pieces are available for sale. Make a point of stopping by the library to check out these excellent works.



GOOD BOOKS TO READ LOCAL AUTHORS, LOCAL PLACES

The following authors are right in our backyard. Read and enjoy their varied styles and stories of places familiar to us. Excerpts are taken from Internet sources.

Hank Phillipi Ryan, best known as an investigative reporter on Channel 7, takes on a new role as mystery writer. In *Prime Time*, Page Traynor of the *Romantic Times* describes the story best. Ryan writes about 46 year old, TV reporter Charlie McNally who is getting old for the screen. When a man working for a large pharmaceutical company is killed in an auto accident and she's sent to interview his wife, Charlie sees it as one more sign that her career is going downhill. Then she learns the man had e-mailed her about some papers—and that the company has a secret whistleblower. As Charlie tries to get to the bottom of this juicy story, she meets Prof. Joshua Gelston, the first man who's interested her in ages, but is he one of the good guys? Told in the first person, this book has humor, snappy language, danger and a wonderful mystery that will keep you guessing. It has the perfect combination of mystery and romance.

Anita Diamant is a local author living in Newton. She is most well known for *The Red Tent*, a novel. In *The Last Days of Dogtown* she approaches a geographic area that is near and dear to her. The village of Dogtown was a real place on Cape Anne, in Massachusetts. By the mid 1800s the town had faded away, and its inhabitants existed only in rumors and hearsay, much of which spoke of witches and other such colorful characters. Diamant came upon a pamphlet containing a walking map of the area around Dogtown and tales of some of the hamlet's inhabitants.

This novel is made up of Diamant's imaginings about the lives of the handful of people still living in Dogtown after its glory days, the last to reside in that place. Judy Rhines, is a gentle soul struggling with loneliness. Easter Carter, the buoyant little innkeeper who hears everyone's stories eagerly and holds them in strictest confidence. Black Ruth, the woman who dresses like a man and keeps to herself the tale of how she became a stonemason. Sammy Stanley, is raised in his aunt's backwater brothel. Oliver Younger is a scrawny young man growing up under the miserable

roof of his abusive aunt. And Tammy Younger terrorizes the inhabitants with her vicious tongue and wicked heart. Meet also Cornelius Finson, a freed slave unsure of what to do with his freedom, and the town drunk Mr. Stanwood.

Diamant tells the tale not only of individuals, but of a tiny community rejected by the rest of the world. While this novel's plot rests only lightly upon any historical fact, its setting, the lifestyles and behaviors and culture that create the novel's world are solidly based in history. Diamant has beautifully recreated a world of the past.

Sue Miller, another local author now teaching at Smith College in Northampton, is best known for her earlier novel, *The Good Mother*. In *While I Was Gone*, Sue writes the story of Jo Becker, who in the summer of 1968 ran out on the marriage and the life her parents wanted for her, escaping for one beautiful, idyllic year into a bohemian and romantic life, living under an assumed name in a rambling group house in Cambridge. This time of limitless possibility, ended when Jo returned home one night to find her best friend lying dead in a pool of blood on the living room floor.

Now Jo has everything she's ever wanted: a veterinary practice she loves, a devoted husband, three grown daughters, a beautiful Massachusetts farmhouse. And if occasionally she wonders what happened to the freedom she once felt, or how she came to be the wife, mother, and doctor her neighbors know and trust - she need only look at her daughters or her husband, Daniel, to recall the satisfactions of family and community and marriage.

But when an old housemate settles in her small town, the fabric of Jo's life begins to unravel: seduced again by the enticing possibility of another self and another life, she begins a dangerous flirtation that returns her to the darkest moment of her past and imperils all she loves.

While I Was Gone is an exquisitely suspenseful novel about how quickly and casually a marriage can be destroyed, how a good wife can find herself placing all she holds dear at risk. In expert strokes, Sue Miller captures the precariousness of even the strongest ties, the ease with which we abandon each other, and our need to be forgiven. **Submitted by Nancy Lefkowitz, Michael's Green**



WHY A MANAGEMENT COMPANY AT QUAIL RUN?

This question has frequently been asked by neighbors, friends, and others interested in condo living. My response has been that there are sound reasons for condominium associations to consider the use of a professional management company to run their day-to-day operations.

It is extremely difficult to recruit residents to serve in a voluntary capacity who would have an inherent interest to deal effectively with the day to day operation of such a property as Quail Run. Trustees are unwilling to confront fellow residents who are three or more months in arrears of their condo fees or have resisted paying other assessed charges and fees. Day-to-day operations, as complex as Quail Run's, require a team of bookkeeping, accounting, and legal professionals to provide needed operational support.

Typically, a management company provides a menu of services. They may offer accounting services collection of late payments and much more. A good management company will help budget for capital improvements and even conduct the annual meeting. A good management company will be able to recommend qualified contractors, help with bid specs, and assist in the collection and review of bids and contractor selection. They will arrange for all the necessary maintenance of the premises, take care of bookkeeping (including collection and tax issues), offer advice and insights based on experience, help deal with many other issues.

Quail Run has the status among local realtors as one of the best town house style condominium properties in the area. Much credit must go to the working partnership between APT, our management company, and the member Quail Run trustees.

**Submitted by Jack Deasy, Trustee,
Johnsons Grant**



HOT WATER HEATERS

APT keeps on file records of hot water tank expiration dates and is updating its records. A communication was sent to unit owners where information on file indicates that the warranty of the hot water tank in their unit has expired. If you received this message, please complete the web form or respond by mail or fax with the following information:

Name:

Unit Address:

Hot Water Tank Installed (year):

Warranty (number of years):

Manufacturer of Hot Water Tank:

Gas or Electric (circle one)

Size (number of gallons):

Do you have a pan under the hot water tank?

Do you have an alarm for the hot water tank?

Location of Hot Water Tank in unit:

Experience tells us that when hot water heaters fail the only warning you receive is a flooded basement or first floor. The Trustees are responsible for obtaining insurance for the buildings at Quail Run and insurance premiums will be affected by claims. Insurance companies have in the past have substantially increased premiums by as much as 200% or in cases where there have been a number of claims, have declined to renew insurance for a Condominium Property. While this has not happened at Quail Run, the Trustees would like to avoid huge increases in premiums or being forced to find another insurance company.

Hot water heater failures can be very costly, not only to you as a home owner, but to your neighbors as well. In the past, a resident at Quail Run had a water pipe failure that not only caused damage to their unit, but to two other units as well.

If you have no basement, the water heater is on the first floor and the damage could be more extensive and expensive. Insurance will pay for floors coverings, walls and carpets, but water damage can ruin heirlooms such as pictures, antique furniture and other items that have sentimental value. Monetary replacement is a poor substitute for memories.

It is highly recommended that you replace the hot water heater if your hot water heater is older than the warranty period. For more info refer to [Joe Fitzsimon's excellent article on page 11 in the March Quail Runner](#).



FROM THE DESK OF YOUR NEWSLETTER EDITOR

My thanks to the trustees and all who stepped up to share stories and content for this issue.

I found the annual meeting a friendly, warm get-together this year and felt the bright, new location contributed. There was both good and sobering news, and there was an opportunity for differing opinions to be heard. Thanks to Joel Alpert, Jack Deasy, Nancy Cahill and Walt Howe for their roles. We missed Richard Clarke and Joe Fitzsimmons but they were there in spirit.

Steve Keleti's presentation about the Mary Cummings Park reminded me of what a special place we live in and that we need to be good stewards to help protect the space near us.

Best wishes for a happy holiday!

Hope N. Tillman, Editor, *Quail Runner*

WEBSITE UPDATE

<http://www.quailruncondo.org>

Passwords and Forms

What do you do if you forget your password to access the Board Minutes or the Member Directory? We usually cannot tell you what your forgotten password is, because we do not keep a record of them for very long. So if you forget, just use the online form to ask us to set up a new one. It is easy to find the password form. Either the Online Forms menu or the Board Minutes menu will link you to the form you need.

When you visit the Forms menu, you will see that we have nine different forms that you can use. They range from submitting work orders to contributing items for this newsletter to asking us a question you need the answer to. We have a former reference librarian on staff, and we promise a professional answer every time

**Walt Howe, Trustee and Communications
Committee Chair**

POWER WASHING UPDATE

The Trustees had voted previously to power wash one complex per year using an outside contractor with a water truck due to the fact that outside water connections were not generally available here at Quail Run. Units at Johnson's Grant were washed this past summer under this program with the Maintenance Supervisor noting that most of the dirt and mold accumulated around front entrance ways and the north wall of end units.

As a result of Rich's recommendations, the Trustees approved the purchase of a new power washer and modification of our sprinkler system to provide water spigots so that we can do our own power washing at a considerable savings. The new power washer is gas operated so no unit owners' electricity will be used during this process.

The new plan is to concentrate primarily on the entrances and other unsightly surfaces and to try to power wash all units once per year.

As this work can only be done when our sprinkler system is operative, the plan was to clean Saw Mill Brook Way units this fall with the rest of the clusters to be done next spring and early summer. Unfortunately the weather turned colder much earlier than expected and the work cannot be completed until spring 2010.

ACCUMULATED JUNK

Did you know what happened when unit owners have left computer monitors, dehumidifiers, microwaves, etc at the dumpster areas?

They ended up in Rich's office, so that they are not an eyesore. So many had accumulated that Rich could not use his workbench. It took three cars to transport the accumulated stuff to the Woburn Recycling at the Times-Chronicle Building on Nov. 21st. In the future ALL owners at an affected cluster will be notified when anything inappropriate is left at the dumpsters. PLEASE help make sure this does not happen again in the future, Call Waste Management (781-933-2113) or take advantage of recycling events to dispose of your unwanted items.



RECOMMEND A VENDOR

128 Plumbing & Heating
78 Foundry Street
Wakefield MA 01940
781-245-9200

We have been using 128 Plumbing for more than ten years. Recently 128 Plumbing did an excellent, reasonably priced job replacing our hot water heater.

Recommended by
Walt Howe & Hope Tillman
Saw Mill Brook Way

Glen Sampson Cleaning,
25 Pine Street, Wakefield, MA
781-245-1614

When we lived in Winchester we used a man that took great pride in his work of cleaning carpets. Several years back he died but his son-in-law was evidently well trained and started his own cleaning business later. We had him do our carpets in late August. The job he did was excellent, took only a few hours one evening, and cost was reasonable.

We would highly recommend him to anyone.

Recommended by
The Rosses,

**A WARM WELCOME TO
 OUR NEW NEIGHBORS**



Katherine & Joseph Vittoria
7 Vine Brook Way

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR PROPERTY MANAGER

(continued)

reminded that you are responsible for moving your vehicle from the driveway while the snow plow is on the property, which will allow the contractor to clear your driveway and then you can move your vehicle back. Shoveling is typically done after the snow has stopped so if it is necessary for you to go out please be careful. The priorities for snow removal are:

- Main Roads
- Driveways
- Walkways and entry porches
- Further dress up
- Snow removal/storage

As always, we wish you Happy Holidays and a Healthy New Year.

Submitted by Nancy Cahill

RECENT TREE WORK AT DOUGLASS GREEN



Thanks to Bob Dever for submitting this great picture of the recent tree trimming at Quail Run.



The Quail Runner wants to hear from you.

We urge Unit Owners to contribute material for publication. We will accept almost anything – requests for participation in activities, items wanted to buy or to sell, essays, editorials, poetry, letters, wildlife sightings, tips for Unit Owners, restaurant reviews, photographs, etc.

Please send any of these to the editor by February **15** for inclusion in the next (March 2010) issue of *The Quail Runner*. Limit your articles to 500 words.

The Trustees reserve the right to accept, reject, or modify any submission. We will not publish anonymous submissions. Contact the editor by phone, by e-mail to editor@quailruncondo.org, by [form on the website](#), or by mail via US Postal Service.

The Quail Runner is an online publication. If you have signed up already, you will be sent an announcement via e-mail when it is published. 67 members of the Quail Run community have signed up for e-mail access to our communications, including the *Quail Runner*. Please contact [Kathy Asmar](#) to sign up if you have not done so already. Any residents lacking e-mail can either get copies from a neighbor or request hard copy (annually) in writing from APT.

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Visit the
Quail Run Community Calendar
<http://www.quailruncondo.org/notices.html>

to see local events and activities.
Use the form to submit an event
to be added. to the calendar.