



Communicator

GREENBELT HOMES, INC. | A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

RECLAIM: ONE OF THE THREE R'S OF SMALL SPACE LIVING

By *Melissa Ehrenreich*

For many GHI members, the New Year is a great time to take a fresh look at living large by thinking small. With most GHI units averaging 1,000 square feet, living large might seem like an oxymoron, but it is possible. Just like in recycling, there are three R's in small space living: reclaim, reinvent, and right-size your space. In this issue we'll talk about the first R: reclaiming your small space footprint to surround yourself with joy.

The best way to get more space is to reclaim it by clearing clutter and giving away things you no longer need or enjoy. It doesn't cost a cent and you need absolutely no skill to achieve it. In our GHI unit, we don't have an attic or basement and with three growing boys reclaiming space is the single BEST way we have been able to live successfully in our small space footprint. We don't want a spring fling; we manage our clutter on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis because clutter can pile up fast in

small spaces. Here are a few of my tricks for how to reclaim space.

One in, one out. We have a rule in our house that when something comes in (especially toys) something goes out. When we clean rooms we identify items we haven't been using to give away. It's a good way to keep the clutter in check and a great way to help kids develop organizational skills.

Love it or lose it. Does it bring you joy? Keep it. If not re-gift it. This is a tough love rule but remember that the ultimate goal is to surround



Melissa recycles junk mail straight out of her mailbox so it never enters her home. Photo credit: Lauren Cummings.

yourself in your home with people and items that you love. There are many places to donate items in our area.

For all you young parents out there--keep one piece of child art from the year that you love, frame it and hang it on the wall. Otherwise, snap a photo of it and upload it for posterity. Pro tip: If you are having a tough time tackling sentimental items, ask a friend to help or hire a professional organizer.

Wear it or share it. I only have two items I've haven't worn in the past year that I keep in my closet: my wedding dress and a vintage little black dress from my husband's grandmother that I want to keep for someone I know who would love it (Size 4--hit me up). I regularly screen our closet before shopping to screen out clothes that we don't wear. It keeps our closets manageable with items that we cherish and can wear immediately.

No entry allowed. This rule is the best for junk mail and school announcements. I sort my mail on my serviceside doorstep and immediately toss all circulars, junk mail, and advertisements into the recycling bin. Don't even bring them in the house.

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HOMES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TIPS FOR MEMBERS WITH COMPANION ANIMALS

By Kris White, Chair, Companion Animal Committee

The GHI Homes Improvements Program begins in this year for one fifth of our homes. Let's start thinking about its impact on our companion animals.

Veterinarian Karen Halligan writes in her book, *Doc Halligan's What Every Pet Owner Should Know*,

"Renovation is stressful for the humans who fully understand what the turmoil is all about. Imagine what it's like for a pet that has no idea why its world is being turned upside down." Many pets have keener ears and smaller lungs than humans, so they're especially sensitive to loud noises and noxious fumes, notes Halligan.

The GHI Companion Animal Committee (CAC) recently surveyed Pilot Program members with companion animals. The members who responded thought that, overall, things went well. They said the workers tried to relate well to their companion animals (cats and dogs). The Pilot members tried to be home during the work, but they didn't always know when to expect the workers. Members said that while workers tried to avoid letting animals out, two Pilot members' cats got outside. Other members crated their dogs. Sometimes, members could put their animals in rooms that workers didn't need to access. One member said the work didn't bother his animals. Two members said that the work upset their pets, but one of them said that relocating her cat would have upset him more.

When asked what members would do differently in regards to their companion animals, one member said that she would try to confine her cats when work was happening indoors. "It isn't realistic to think that contractors will always have windows and doors closed or watch out for your pets. If you have any concerns about your pets getting outdoors or getting in the way, you need to take precautions," she said.

These online articles provide good suggestions for people with companion animals during the Homes Improvement Program or if you are considering home improvements.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrea-servadio/tips-for-keeping-pets-hap_b_7607704.html

<http://www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/article/0,,20294963,00.html>

<http://www.pamperthepets.com/pet-talk/how-to-keep-pets-safe/>



Photo credit: Jon Skovron

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

February

4	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
6	11:00 am	Pre-Purchase Orientation
9	7:30 pm	Historic Preservation Task Force
10	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
11	6:30 pm	Investment Committee
11	7:30 pm	Finance Committee
12	--	OFFICE CLOSED
15	--	OFFICE CLOSED: Presidents' Day
16	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
17	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
18	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
22	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
22	7:00 pm	Pre-Purchase Orientation
24	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
26	--	OFFICE CLOSED

Call 301-474-6011 for emergency maintenance outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed.

Member Announcements

By the Numbers: 2015 GHI Sales

80 memberships sold from January to December 2015. Welcome to all our new co-op members!

Insurance Requirements from Lenders

Each January, many lenders will require you to provide them with a Certificate of Insurance to prove your home (which is their collateral) is insured properly. If your lender asks for this, contact Bruce Mangum in the Finance Department and he can have GHI's insurer send a certificate to your lender: 301-474-4161, ext. 146 or email bmangum@ghi.coop.

Winter Weather Procedures

Be sure you are prepared *before* any snow or ice arrives this year by being familiar with GHI's Winter Storm Event procedures. Check it out online: <http://www.ghi.coop/content/winter-storm-event-procedures> or stop by the GHI offices and ask for a copy.

Seeking Nominations for GHI Board and Committees

See the insert to learn more about how you can serve your co-op or nominate another member to serve.

Save the Date!

2016 Town Hall Membership Meeting
Sunday, March 13, 2016



IF YOUR PUP POOPS,
REMEMBER to SCOOP

