

## Property Coordinator Update

April 23, 2016

### **Clean Up Day**

Thanks to everyone who was able to help with the spring clean up day last Sunday! I didn't think we had enough to do to keep everyone busy. Everyone who showed up helped me think of things I would never have thought of – and we got them all done! I am deeply grateful for the incredible support and cheerfulness. Thank you thank you. Jobs completed include: storm windows off the Meeting House; gutters in the Community House cleaned; both refrigerators cleaned; cabinet above the main frig culled of old baskets; shelf of serving platters culled; shelves in Chair Room straightened and much eliminated that was ours awaiting a decision; wifi router safely mounted on a shelf on the wall in the Chair Room; cardboard boxes broken down for the book fair; one wifi booster tested; daffodils planted in Children's Garden.... Wow.

### **Use of the Buildings**

We have at least one private party or event scheduled for every weekend in April. We had an unfortunate bridal shower rental last weekend, with the rental party unable to gain access into the building – and no record of either the key box code or my cell phone number, both of which I usually give before the end of the first phone contact I have with renters. (I have a memory of giving them these, but I can't be sure). They were, understandably, very, very upset, and eventually moved the party to another location. I felt horrible about it. Improvements I have instituted: the phone recording on Meeting's phone now lists my cell number, and I have a check box to indicate that the week of a rental I have emailed/texted/called the renter to remind them of the key box code and my personal cell phone. Property Committee and Meeting's Clerk were both apprised of the problem within 6 hours

NEYM Young Friends will be on retreat here from May 13 – 15. It is their service retreat, and they have offered to do an hour+ of work for us! As long as the weather cooperates, I anticipate them washing all of the windows in both buildings, raking the gravel in the driveway, clearing the stone walls, cutting suckers from the trees along Main Road, and washing the walls and woodwork in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor classroom of Potter House. I am so deeply grateful to them (and you should be, too)!

Other rentals in May include a memorial service May 21 and the Westport Garden Club's annual sale May 27-28.

Ed Swidey, the director for the former Summer on Stage theater group, contacted me about doing some theater workshops in the Community House this summer. We will meet sometime in May and see if we can work out a schedule, etc.

### **Outside Lights**

Jeff Kobza put LED bulbs into all 16 spotlights on the property. These should last years! He also installed a new motion detector over the Community House front door, and re-installed the light fixture immediately over the same door. The motion detector will now activate both the bright spotlight over the door as well as the corner spotlights. The switch immediately inside the foyer door on the right hand side has been deactivated.

### **Water Filtration**

Bodington Plumbers installed a water softener system for the Community House. It filters out both the iron and the sediment – the improvement was almost instantaneous! Very satisfying. They did excellent work, professionally dealing with more than they anticipated given the basement configuration of Potter House and the original Community House footprint, and then returned to check the system the following week. The only "oh right" moment was when I realized I had to move ½ of the JYM Sessions Tubs and some of Buddy's Stuff tables in order to get the water softeners in position.....

They also installed a new kitchen faucet, with a built in sprayer, that will accommodate large cooking pots – a huge plus for retreat cooks!

I have been trained by Bodington's to maintain the salt levels for the softener. We can order the salt from Bodington in 40 lb bags. Once a year we will need to have the softeners serviced. .

Please note that we need to be sure both the water softener AND the dehumidifier hoses are IN the sump pump hole AND that the plug directly above the sump pump hole (which runs the sump pump) is plugged in. If this is unplugged, the sump pump will not work, and the basement will flood. Please do not unplug this for any reason!

### **Wifi**

Thanks to Jay and Kevin for getting the Wifi running very well in all 3 buildings! It took installing a small plug in booster unit in the book shed – pretty cool! We've already had multiple users of the buildings express delight that we have wifi!

### **Thermostats, thermostats.....**

I am ready to get certified in thermostats..... One Sunday in early April the Meeting House thermostat stopped working. The heat didn't go on. We had worship in the Community House. The next day I swapped out that thermostat for an old model and got it working again. The very next week, Jeff Kobza got the wires all set up for me to install the new remote programmable thermostats that Property Committee has worked long and hard researching and deciding to get..... but in doing so, the Potter House thermostat didn't sit right; it just kept calling for heat, with no shut off. I went in 2 days later to do a walkthrough of the buildings and noticed how warm it was! I figured out the problem, and solved it by pushing the wires back into the wall more. Woo Hoo. Good thing, as the heat had gotten up to 83 back there.... took 2 days to get back down to 55. Thanks to the wifi booster success, I will be able to purchase the new Nest thermostats for both buildings, install them, learn how to program them, and then begin to be able to see what the heat is from my home! That's gonna be so exciting!

### **Meeting House Exterior Trim Painting**

Property Committee has approved having Tony Martins' company return in June or June to paint the trim on the Meeting House – including all of the window sashes.

### **Book Fair**

The books keep coming.....

Gretchen Baker-Smith, Westport Meeting Property Coordinator