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COMMUNITY MOMENTS

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Truc Skye
Director of Resident Success

SEPTEMBER

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As a Texas-based company with offices in Houston, we continue to have a heavy heart from witnessing the immense damage and devastation from Hurricane Harvey but we also stand inspired by the overwhelming response from the entire nation in such a severe time of need. The great people of Southeast Texas have shown themselves to be so resilient and committed to their community, which is a great example for all Americans to emulate. We are devoted to doing everything we can to help our client communities restore their neighborhoods back to immaculate condition.

With school starting for many families soon, right now is the perfect time to re-focus on personal, family and community goals. The start of fall is a second chance to attack those New Year's resolutions that may have been missed due to other life responsibilities. As a military and corporate leader, one of my focuses in life has always been defining and achieving far-reaching goals. It is one of the most important aspects of living an enriched life. It's so important to take time out to refocus on your goals for the second half of the year and finish strong.

We are so honored to serve as your management company of choice and are committed to serving as your partner for many years to come. If you have any concerns or feedback surrounding your community or our organization, please feel free to email us at clientsatisfaction@realmanage.com.



Chris Ayoub
President, RealManage

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Truc Skye

DIRECTOR OF RESIDENT SERVICES

There is always that one person at a company that is the "go to" person; that one person that can solve the most complex matter with simple ease. That is the best way to describe Truc Skye, our Director of Resident Success. Truc has the innate talent to evaluate intricate processes and simplify them for both RealManage employees and residents. In the complicated industry of community association management, RealManage is fortunate to have someone with that skill set that Truc possesses. She positions people for success by utilizing simple techniques to produce the best outcomes.

In September of 2014, Truc began her career at RealManage as an Assistant Community Association Manager for the Dallas market. With her unwavering dedication to the company, she was quickly promoted to lead the Administrative Services Group, a newly formed organization that offered centralized administrative support nationwide to all of RealManage's offices. Truc earned success early in this new endeavor by identifying the most common needs of the markets and producing a program that allowed Community Association Managers to focus the majority of their day on key management tasks and not general administrative duties.

Truc's background in customer service and her drive for efficiency are key elements for the success of the Administrative Services Group. Her charismatic personality allows her to adapt to the constantly changing dynamic of the community management industry. She is detail-oriented and organized, which together allows her to excel in matters of community governance and compliance. She is a natural leader who has built and mentors a core team that serves a central role in the operation of the management company. With her recent promotion to Director of Resident Success, she now oversees the Resident Services Group as well.

With a passion for learning, Truc earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Master of Business Administration from The University of Texas at Dallas. Prior to joining RealManage, Truc worked in several industries, including financial services, healthcare management, apartment leasing and banking. She has been able to apply her experiences from her diverse background directly to each role she has held.

Truc and her husband, Michael, recently welcomed their second son, Henry. Big brother, Tristan, is overjoyed and is already assuming the protective role and leading by a fine example. Their rescue dog, Kiwi, completes this young family. Truc is one of six children and occupies most of her free time with family functions and celebrations, and she has 13 nieces and nephews. Her love for life is truly evident and the employees and residents of RealManage benefit from her positive attitude.



Written by **Terri Porier**

Vice President of Community Manager Support Group



BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Greg Thompson

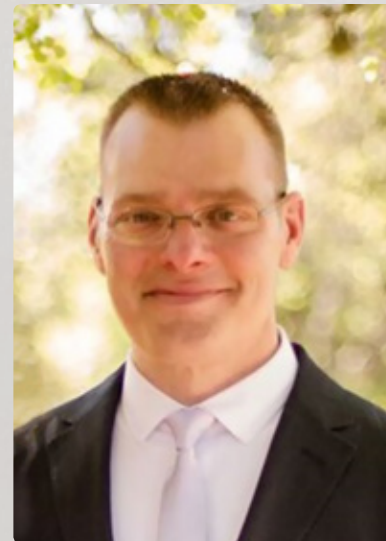
FOREST CREEK HOA, AUSTIN TX

Greg Thompson has served on the Forest Creek HOA Board of Directors multiple times and is currently in the 2nd year of a two-year term. Currently as the Board Secretary, Greg has a perfect monthly board meeting attendance record. He actively engages and participates in discussions at the monthly board meetings. He also is one of the first to respond to email communications regarding association matters discussed or actioned in between monthly board meetings. He is consistent and thorough, and can always be counted on.

Previously when serving in the role of Board President, he prepared and presented the annual state of affairs report to the membership at the annual meeting. He also assists the community's Entertainment/Social committee by providing them access to controlled areas when needed for social events, and helps to spread the word about upcoming events through the association website. Greg has solely maintained the community's website (www.forestcreekhoa.org), providing a great resource for information, documents, and community updates to the entire membership of 1184 homes. Maintaining the website also includes maintaining the email distribution group list, and sending out mass emails to the community on important topics, or just to keep residents informed. He assumes responsibility for sending the legally required board meeting notice and agenda each month and never misses the deadline. He is heavily involved in the maintenance and upkeep of the community's IT needs, meaning the equipment and software needed to run the internet lines, Wi-Fi service, and security cameras at the amenity center. He frequently runs over to the amenity center to follow up on an issue or complaint, often remedying the situation himself, saving the association the expense of a service visit.

Greg decided long ago he wanted to better the community, and make it simpler for residents to obtain pool keys, or get pool key programming issues quickly resolved. So in addition to his full-time job and responsibilities as husband, father, active board member and webmaster, Greg took on the responsibility of fulfilling all requests for pool keys from all 1184 homes, and for programming or reprogramming them as needed. The homeowners of Forest Creek may not realize what an elevated service he is able to provide, as they no longer have to go to an offsite management company to pick up a key, or wait for it to

be mailed. Greg will program a key and leave it on his doorstep at his home in the community for the resident to swing by and pick it up on their way home from work or running errands. He regularly monitors his inventory so he never runs out, and no homeowner is ever disappointed. Knowing firsthand how frustrating it can be to wait for a pool key issue to be resolved, this contribution alone raises the community's spirit as he has eliminated pool key related issues, which are normally a common complaint at most other communities.



Greg is thoroughly devoted to his community, generously donating countless hours of time each and every day. He consistently demonstrates genuine concern for the homeowners in his community, always looking to find "a better way", particularly when it comes to addressing such uncomfortable issues as unpaid assessments and violations of use restrictions. There appears to be nothing you can ask him related to his HOA to which he would say "no". And yet, he never seems to run out of time or energy. He's at the ready, be it a call, email, or even a knock at the door. As someone who has chosen this profession for a career, I am humbled by the selfless giving of one's talents that I am fortunate to be able to observe when working with board members like Greg Thompson.

Written by **Mary Arnold, CMCA®, AMS®**
National Director of Training and Community Association Management Support

Tips For Preparing HOA Landscaping For The Fall

As we move towards fall, many HOAs are starting to consider how to prepare their HOA landscaping and common areas for autumn and winter months. You want your landscaping to look its best, both throughout the fall and winter and when spring arrives again. As a board member of an HOA, there are several things you'll want to do before winter comes.

Fertilizing Subsurface Watering

If you want lush, green grass and thick, healthy plants in the spring, one of the best ways to accomplish it is by fertilizing now. The seeds and plants will draw in that fertilizer throughout the winter months, and then grow back healthy and vigorous when spring arrives. Imagine your common areas filled with green: that's the result you get when you remember your fall fertilizing.

If you're looking for a great way to keep grass, shrubs, and other plants watered throughout the long fall and winter months, sub surface watering is a solution that's worth considering. Instead of delivering water to the tops of plants or the top of the ground, then hoping it will make it to the roots where the plant needs it most, sub surface watering delivers water directly to the roots of the plant, where it's needed most. This is particularly beneficial if you often have dry seasons during the fall and winter, which could lead to poor plant growth the following year. Make sure to consult with a specialist to determine exactly how much water your plants need and whether or not sub surface watering is right for your community.

Snow Considerations

Do you live in a state with frequent snowfall? If so, fall is a great time to prepare for it. Bring out an arborist to trim up your trees, get rid of dead limbs, and make sure that everything is ready for winter. By preparing your trees, you reduce the odds that you'll end up with dead limbs on the ground after snowfall--not to mention you will be maintaining healthy growth on the tree while trimming away dead wood that is no longer necessary to its growth.

Fall Decor

Fall flowers, trees, and shrubs will help brighten your community throughout the season. The autumn months allow for plenty of bright, colorful flowers and shrubs that will enhance your community. As fall approaches, it's time to consider what you want community common areas to look like during the colder months. A bright splash of color is a great way to bring warmth and happiness to cool, dreary days, especially in late fall. Plant cold-hardy plants or flowers that will bloom throughout the fall to help brighten your common areas and keep your community looking its best. If your community is relatively new and you haven't yet gotten to see it during winter, take a walk through and see whether you have evergreen trees or other greenery that will continue to add color throughout the winter. If not, this might be a great time to add them!

Playgrounds And Pools

As you're closing up the pool for the summer, examine it and determine whether or not there's any maintenance that needs to be completed. Contact a professional to decide when is the best time to fix problems: some problems are easier to fix over the fall and winter months, while the pool isn't in use. If you have a playground in your common area, this is a great time to examine it and make sure that it's structurally sound and not in need of any maintenance to keep looking its best.

Fall and winter can be as busy outdoors for your HOA as the spring and summer. Make sure your board has a chance to get together and develop an efficient plan for putting in fall plants, cleaning up limbs, and preparing for the months to come. You want your common areas to be as clean and beautiful during the fall and winter as they were during the spring and summer. Planning now will help make that possible.

Hurricane Preparedness For Your HOA

RealManage encourages all associations to have a Hurricane Preparedness Plan for pre and post storm action and follow up. This plan should be reviewed and updated by the Board of Directors annually, communicated to the members and the association's service providers and staff where applicable. Preparing for the worst storm scenario will help you weather whatever comes your way. The post storm follow up is very important as well.

Preparing

1. Write and publish your plan to your members – let them know what their responsibilities are and where they turn for assistance after the storm when the Association isn't responsible or can't assist.
2. Have a meeting with your service providers and get by in from all of them, confirming their emergency protocol is in line with what your association's needs are.
3. Document and update your files on all community assets – buildings, amenities, and take photos. Make sure all of your assets are listed on the insurance schedule because most carriers will not write additional coverage when there is a named storm approaching.
4. Arrange for someone (staff or vendor) to secure pool furniture. If it can't be stored inside a building, put it in the pool itself, and secure windows on buildings. Buy plywood ahead of time and cut it to fit windows before you need it – plywood is in high demand and short supply in emergencies.
5. Large hanging light fixtures should be removed where possible.
6. Remove and store tennis windscreens, tidi-courts etc.
7. Leave electricity to pool pumps on for self-priming pumps.
8. Have a pool company or trained volunteer on standby to lower the water level in a flooded pool.
9. With adequate time, it is recommended all irrigation systems to be turned off.
10. Evaluate your common area trees and prune/cut down any safety hazards that could cause damage.
11. If you have a lot of trees, arrange for a tree service to be on your property as soon as it is safe to travel. Meet them there to assess the damage to limit tree loss.
12. If you have lakes, work to understand how your lake drainage and outfall systems work; know where the outfall is and assign people to make sure it's clear of debris and flowing when the storm is over.
13. For sanitary sewer and water for residents, post the emergency contact information for this service provider and information on their emergency generator capabilities.
14. If you have on-site staff, discuss the evacuation plan/schedule and their return to duty protocols.
15. All Board members should have contact info for their manager and backup staff personnel, as well as a communication plan in place so the Board and manager knows who does what during a storm.

Post-Storm

1. After the storm passes, it is vital to get out onto the common areas as soon as it is safe to make a thorough and well documented assessment of the damage. Prepare detailed lists, photographs, and place a call to the insurance company to notify them a claim will be filed.
2. Post Storm Property Tour should include a complete tour of the community concentrating on all association fixed assets and common areas first to assess what service providers may need to be called out for and in what order. Then have the community determine what damage may have been caused to residents' homes.
3. Take whatever reasonable actions are necessary for temporary repairs and clean up to mitigate further loss and damage. Make sure to have all these actions documented.
4. The residents are going to look to the Association for information; regardless of whether it is the association's responsibility or not. Gather as much information as you can from the local emergency management offices and make it available. Find out what the city or county will do to assist your association in clean-up of debris – this may take some time to confirm but it is worth the calls.
5. Keep the residents informed of the progress of the common area clean up – if you don't have electricity, post an update on bulletin boards. They will feel better seeing communication and updates.
6. Meet with the insurance adjuster and give them the information they require. Start getting bids for repairs and do not wait for the adjusters. Get in line as early as possible with contractors as the wait may be long depending on the type of repairs you need. Document each visit and communication.
7. Follow the claim through and don't sit back and assume it will work its way through on its own. Assign a champion (like the manager) to keep in contact with the insurance company – the squeakiest wheel gets the grease most of the time.
8. In some cases you may not be satisfied with the proposed settlement. It's suggested if you are uncomfortable with it that you consult your association's attorney for advice on your next step.
9. At the end of the experience review, re-evaluate, and adjust for the next hurricane season.



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