



STOP WAITING - CELEBRATE LIFE NOW

Sometimes we overlook celebrating those important in our lives. The following is a thoughtful piece written by Ruth Ostrow in the Weekend Australian magazine.

Earlier this month I was invited to what might be considered a strange event. A leading international businessman hosted what was described on the invitation as an event to celebrate "An occasion of Happiness" in Sydney for a gathering of his Australian friends, many of whom were corporate identities.

The celebration felt like a wedding or engagement party. Guests were seated at tables in a lovely hotel; it was beautifully catered. But while there was speculation as to the "real reason" for the event, including the host's birthday which was coming soon, he maintained that he merely wanted to "celebrate life, love and those close to me".

"Some of these dear people sitting here tonight," he confided to me, gesturing around the room, "won't be here this time next year. Or perhaps the year after that. We never know what the future will bring. We must celebrate the moment, for no reason. Just because now is all we have. We must show our appreciation of each other." The evening's speeches consisted of friends acknowledging him while he, in turn, said fine words about each of us.

It's rare to see a sacred ceremony where people acknowledge one another, particularly coming from the corporate elite. The only other time I've seen it done on a large scale was last year when I went to a "pre-funeral" wake for the former president of the Byron Bay chamber of commerce, Tony Narracott, in which he got to

pay respects to friends who got to pay respects to him in an elaborate party before he died.

It made me reflect on those dear to me who I wished I'd paid homage to while they were alive. Why wait until it's too late to say all those powerful words?

This materialistic society in which we live thrives on making people feel inadequate and unhappy, thereby prompting us all to keep consuming in order to feel better. As one funny quip I heard on TV in passing the other night went: If women were conditioned to feel good about themselves, whole economies would collapse.

How nice to stop the madness for a short time and celebrate the greatness in us all, simply by telling our friends how valuable they are, how well they are doing, for no apparent reason, and hearing praise in return. Hey, you never know, "Acknowledgement Parties" could end up all the rage in the trendy suburbs on a Saturday night. ruth@ruthostrow.com

GR
Cheers

Gordon Russell CPM

ps: Do you have any friends who need to read our newsletter? Ring and we will post one out

viewpoint



Gordon Russell CPM
Managing Director
mail@unitcare.com.au

EMERGENCY NUMBERS	Service	Number
	Plumbing , Gas, Roof Leaks	8356 2750
	Electrical	8244 0733
	Breakins, & Glazing	0437 818 449
	Police to attend - noise/robbery etc	131 444
	State Emergency Services	132 500

www.unitcare.com.au



NEW WATER CHARGES AND READINGS

SA Water has increased it's water use charges. The following is an extract from the newsletter of Strata Water Solutions. It explains the changes including the quarterly reading of water meters.

We have reported previously of the likely change from half yearly reading of meters to quarterly reading and billing. The first stage in that process has commenced and your SAWater meter is now to be read quarterly. Probably the quarterly account rendering will commence on 1st July 2009 depending on the introduction of Government legislation.

If and when a public announcement is made on this issue it will use this logic

1. Quarterly accounts will be more manageable particularly for the elderly and pensioners.
2. With scarce water resources, the public will be made more aware of their water usage.

It will be "up front" and "in the face" on a regular basis

There would be other reasons e.g. improved cashflow but my prediction is that sooner or later this creates the opportunity for the introduction of seasonal pricing of water. In the quarter January to March when the reservoirs are low, the price per kilolitre is raised to reflect the scarcity. Gas and Electricity providers have summer and winter tariffs why wouldn't the same apply to water ?

There are 600,000 water meters in this State. I suspect the cost of reading those meters four times a year will quickly find its way into the quarterly supply charges to consumers.

Water Price Changes from 1/7/08

- 1—120 Kls \$0.71 per kilolitre
- 120—520 Kls \$1.38 per kilolitre
- > 520 Kls \$1.65 per kilolitre

Average usage (all units with sub meters)

- 2004/5 69.1 Kls
- 2005/6 71.3
- 2006/7 85.1
- 2007/8 69.2 kls **Cost 2007/8** -\$34.60 **Cost 2008/9** - \$49.10 (+\$14.50)

Strata Water Solutions supply, install and read private water meters at some of our client groups

www.stratawater.com.au



UnitCare Services

phone 08 8364 0022

fax 08 8364 6822

web site www.unitcare.com.au

email mail@unitcare.com.au

P.O. Box 4040 Norwood Sth 5067

46 Kensington Road, Rose Park

after hours emergencies - must phone 8364 0022 for up to date numbers

This is a publication of UnitCare Services and is offered as information only and is not intended as a substitute for professional advice.

ABN 193 4872 3265

TREES FOR LIFE - HOW YOU CAN HELP OUR ENVIRONMENT

South Australia has been left with the legacy of excessive land clearing. The long term effects of this include loss of biodiversity, plant and animal extinction, soil erosion, increased salinity and weed invasion.

Trees For Life works with the community to promote and assist in the restoration, conservation and protection of our environment.

One important way to help our environment is by being a grower for TFL. This involves raising seedlings from seed and materials supplied by TFL in November each year.

Join over 1900 South Australians and help the environment by growing seedlings for farmers and revegetation projects in your backyard over summer. Grow seedlings in your backyard

- a practical and rewarding experience for anyone
- materials and comprehensive instructions provided
- green thumb not required ... just a little spare time, a sunny spot and
- a commitment to doing a good job because seedlings require daily attention from November to May

Seedlings are grown and supplied directly to farmers and others on the land who are TFL members.

"We have been growing trees for farmers for over 16 years", said Gordon Russell, Managing Director of UnitCare Services. "It is great to see the little trees

grow and to meet the farmers we help. They are so grateful".

Growing the seedlings can suit a small unit yard or balcony as long as there is full sun for some of the day. You can choose to grow 5 or 10 boxes of seedlings.

Alternatively you could spend a little time in the Bushcare programme.

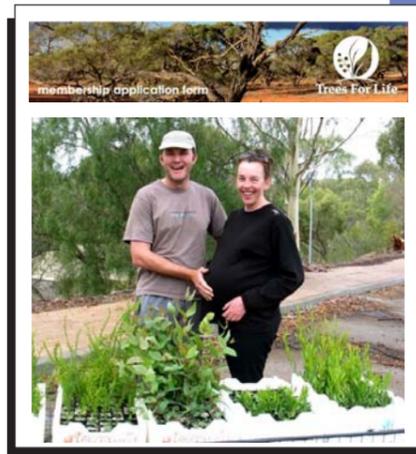
join our team of over 650 bushcarers

- learn techniques for protecting bushland in our free one day workshops
- volunteer at a time that suits you

It is not essential to be a financial member to volunteer for Trees For Life - anyone can participate!

Volunteer grower numbers are confirmed during September and October, you will then collect your growing supplies in November from a depot near you 2008 grower registration ☐

www.treesforlife.org.au



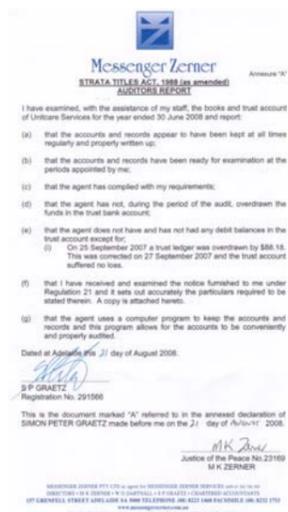
trees for life volunteer

ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT

The annual independent audit has been undertaken. As is our policy a copy of the report warts and all is forwarded to the Treasurer's of our client groups. Our clients trust us with their money and pay for the audit, it's the least we can do.

We are concerned at recent evidence that some strata managers are not undertaking the statutory audit. Ask your manager for a copy just to make sure they are doing the right thing by your group and the law.

View a copy of the latest audit on our web site unitcare.com.au/audit.pdf



APPOINTMENT PLEASE

If you need to drop into our office to do anything other than pay your levies we ask you to make an appointment.

We can only be sure of addressing your queries or concerns if you make an appointment with your manager.

Please give us the best opportunity to serve your group by giving us a call on 8364 0022



PAUL HAS MOVED ON

In case you have not heard Paul Raine, one of our managers has moved on to sell real estate. His fellow team member Janice Marshall has been joined by fellow staff member Kate Plew to look after the portfolio. We wish him well in his new career ☐

BEST PRACTICE - MEETINGS & QUORUMS

We are continuing our new column where we tackle body corporate issues and look at best practice in resolving them.. This edition we look at calling meetings and quorums.

For Strata and Community Titled groups there are two types of meetings. The first is a general meeting of all owners, these include the Annual General Meeting. The second is a meeting of the management committee.

General Meetings:

The legislation for both community & strata titles requires at least 14 days written notice to all owners [Strata Titles Act (STA) Sect 33. Community Titles Act (CTA) Sect 81]. Those calling the meeting must take reasonable steps to ensure that the proposed day, time and place are reasonably convenient to a majority of members of the corporation.

Who can call a general meeting?

For a Strata Corporation, a meeting can be called by the secretary of the corporation, by any two members of the management committee of the corporation or the unit holders of one-fifth or more of the total number of units.

For a Community Corporation, a meeting can be called by the presiding officer, treasurer or secretary of the corporation, by any two members of the management committee of the corporation or by a member or members of the corporation, the value of whose lot entitlement or combined lot entitlements is 20 per cent or more of the aggregate value of all the lot entitlements; or who holds, or who together hold, 20 per cent or more of the total number of community lots in the scheme.

How will we know if we have a quorum?

For Strata - a quorum consisting of persons entitled to exercise the voting power in respect of not less than one-half of the units, is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business. The quorum for a strata corporation of 9 units would be $9/2 = 4.5$ (round up for whole number) = 5, for a group of 10 would be $10/2 = 5$.

For Community - a quorum for the transaction of business at a general meeting is determined by

dividing the number of persons entitled to attend and vote at the meeting by two, disregarding any fraction and adding one. The quorum for a community corporation of 9 units would be $9/2 = 4.5$ (ignore fraction) = $4 + 1 = 5$, for a group of 10 would be $10/2 = 5 + 1 = 6$.

Do not forget to count proxies as persons present.

What to do if you are short of a quorum?

Both the STA & CTA allow for the meeting to be recalled in 7 to 14 days time if a quorum is not present within 1/2 hour of the meeting start time. Whoever turns up at that time forms a quorum.

Hint: If you have less than a quorum continue as if you do with all decisions subject to ratification at the reconvened meeting in 7 to 14 days time. Distribute the draft minutes to all owners with the notice of the reconvened meeting. On the proxy form the secretary can ask owners to approve or otherwise the draft minutes. The benefit is that the owners who showed interest by turning up usefully use the time and do not have to reattend. Our experience is that owners appreciate this approach. Remember that no action can be taken on resolutions of the inquorate meeting until and if the minutes are ratified.



Committee Meetings:

The legislation for both community & strata titles requires at least 3 days written notice to all committee members [Strata Titles Act (STA) Sect . Community Titles Act (CTA) Sect 93]. Those calling the meeting must take reasonable steps to ensure that the proposed day, time and place are reasonably convenient to a majority of members of the corporation.

In residential groups proxies must go to a fellow owner in the group.

Who can call a committee meeting?

For a Strata Corporation the STA is silent however we would expect the secretary of the corporation to call and arrange such meetings as they do for general meetings.

For a Community Corporation, a meeting can be called by the presiding officer, treasurer or secretary or any two members of the committee. CTA Sect 93.

What constitutes sufficient people to achieve a quorum?

For both the STA & CTA the quorum for the transaction of business at a committee meeting is determined by dividing the number of members of the committee by two, disregarding any fraction and adding one ☐

best practice

FINALIST IN STATE AWARDS

UnitCare Services is a finalist in this years Real Estate Institute Excellence in Real Estate Awards.

This is the first year that the REISA has included Body Corporate Managers in its awards.

The awards ceremony will be held at the Entertainment Centre in October this year.

We will of course let you know how we go ☐

