

I am sending this special message to all LCI members, to air my feelings so to speak.

I've been on the job as President for nine months and it feels as if, right from the start, I have been lurching from one emergency to the next.

First, it was a barge, which was inoperable and costing us an arm and a leg while sitting idle most of the time. (I had to figure out how to quickly get out of our long-term lease.) Then, it was the removal of trash that had piled up for years and years. (Removing the trash was a huge and expensive undertaking.) Our pickup truck was dead. (We bought a "new" one.) The tractor was dead. (It took a complete overhaul and rebuild to get it running.) The members' dock was falling apart and the landing was unsafe. (We fixed those.) The shop was a disorganized disaster, and dangerous to boot. (Steve is rewiring it, with a new breaker box and new fixtures throughout.) Everywhere I looked shown light on a problem that needed fixing – the piling under the Duplex, the siding on the Turtle House, the rotting Tryke sheds. There was no inventory of Association property and our supplies of material were a haphazard mess and not inventoried. The list goes on and on.

And, now, another problem has risen to the top of my "to do" list. Conditions in the Superintendent's cottage are so bad that candidates to replace Steve Owens are turning down offers of employment. One of our promising candidates said, "I would not move my family into a dwelling in such bad condition," and went on to say that anyone who would live in it was probably someone who would not have very high standards for maintaining the rest of LCI's property.

Fixing the cottage up, not to be anything fancy, but just to make it decent will take money we do not have. The dilemma is this: if we don't refurbish the cottage we won't get anyone decent as our top employee.

It seems to me, we have no choice but to make the place livable.

The Annual Meeting of LCI members is right around the corner. I hope we have a good turnout and a robust meeting. Unfortunately, all of the voting materials that need to be sent out ahead of the meeting have already been "chipped in marble" and are on their way to the post office. I say unfortunately only because one of the items to be voted upon is a special assessment in the amount of \$47,000. The reason for that special assessment is to pay off the bank borrowing we incurred to pay for the emergencies I cited above.

Now, I see that we should have added another \$53,000 to it so that we can attend to the improvements that are needed in the Superintendent's cottage.

There is no one on the island who wants to keep the annual assessment low more than me. However the time has come to admit that we do not have the funds required to maintain what we have.

The island infrastructure has been in a downward spiral – witness the trash situation and docks – for quite a few years. We didn't do the maintenance and now, if we want to have anything, we will have to pay for replacement.

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but it's the truth (as I see it).

Repectfully,

Jim Klauder, President

catastrophe Steve Owens, bless his soul, came to our rescue on an interim basis and has been trying to cope with the worst of the problems.