



BATTLECREEK COMMONS COMMUNICATOR



Issue 118 Page 1 February 2026

In the end,
only three things matter:
how much you loved,
how gently you lived, and
how gracefully you let go of
things not meant for you.

~Buddha

Committee Volunteers Appreciation!! -- SAVE THE DATE!



At Jeanne Dalton's suggestion there will be a Volunteer Appreciation Reception on **Sunday, March 15th from 2-4 in the clubhouse** with cupcakes and beverages. So if you have participated on any BCC committee in 2025, please plan to attend. We want to thank you for the gift of your time and service. 🌲



Our Grounds Crew Goes Over and Above



On December 9th, a large city owned tree fell on the north side of the BCC property blocking the well-used sidewalk. This sidewalk is used by many for daily walks and for those who have dog walking needs. So it was imperative to get the sidewalk cleared as soon as



possible. Our Grounds Crew stepped up quickly, dropping their other important work to come in with chain saws and clear the sidewalk within a very short period of time. Thank you to Brayan, Billy and Ruben!! 🌲



*I found a book called 'How to Solve 50% of Your Problems'
I bought two."*

CALENDARFebruary 2026 – April 2026HOA Activities

These meetings are all open to all members.

For the time being, follow the instructions provided in the emailed meeting notices about how meetings will meet or contact the Chair of the committee you wish to attend.

Board of Directors	Finance – Jean Dalton, Interim	Planning & Projects---	Neighborhood Watch – TBD
February 24, 2026-5:30p - ZOOM	February 18, 2026-5:00p - Clbhse		
March 24, 2026-5:30p - ZOOM	March 18, 2026-5:00p - Clbhse	TBD	
April 28, 2026-5:30p - ZOOM	April 22, 2026-5:00p - Clbhse		

Grounds – Megan Trow & Virginia Ferguson, Co-Chairs	Maintenance/Repair/Paving –	Architectural –	Emergency Prep – Aline Autenrieth
February 10, 2026-6:00p - Clubhouse	Paving project in progress!	Meets as needed-contact Chair	April 7, 2026-7:00p -Clbhse
March 10, 2026-6:00p - Clubhouse	Meets as needed-contact Chair	TBD	We'll meet quarterly unless
April 14, 2026-6:00p - Clubhouse	TBD		needed and called sooner

We hope you will join these meetings to share your concerns and views, and become more involved in our community. Please come join us!

Social Activities: Thirsty Thursday – Thirsty Thursdays are BACK!!! The clubhouse is reserved every

Thursday 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm for this fun gathering. Bring your own drink and an appetizer to share.



South Salem Senior Center Needs Your Old Appliances

The South Salem Senior Center needs your old appliances (computers, TVs, microwave ovens, washing machines, dryers, ovens, and so on). They need these old appliances for their metal recycling program. If you need to have your items picked up, please call the Senior Center at 503-588-0748 (preferably in the morning) and they will call you back to arrange a convenient pick up time. Remember, the South Salem Senior Center is just across the street from our clubhouse on Fairway. Thank you for considering this.

Bob Mason

Are You Ready for The Unexpected??? (from Emergency Preparedness Committee)

Unexpected does not have to mean unprepared. It is only a Crisis if you are not Prepared! Remain Calm and Be Prepared!!!

An Emergency is The Absence of Choice....

Disclaimer: Please remember information shared here are ideas and suggestions presented for your consideration and are not recommendations by the BCC Board of Directors.



13 Everyday Items That Could Start a Fire—Without You Realizing It

<https://www.cleverdude.com/content/13-everyday-items-that-could-start-a-fire-without-you-realizing-it/>

Most of us think we know what causes house fires. Things like candles left burning, overloaded outlets, or unattended stoves are common suspects. But the truth is, some of the most dangerous fire hazards are hiding in plain sight. From common kitchen staples to overlooked electronics, these everyday items can ignite under the right (or wrong) conditions. The good news? Once you know what to look for, you can take simple steps to protect your home and family. Here are 13 everyday items that could potentially start a fire in your home.

1. Dryer Lint

Cleaning the lint trap after every load and checking the vent regularly can prevent this common fire hazard. It's a five-second habit that could save your home.

2. Power Strips and Extension Cords

Power strips are convenient, but they're not meant to handle high-wattage appliances. Plugging in space heaters, microwaves, or hair dryers can overload the circuit and spark a fire. Extension cords are also risky

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*"Sometimes, I worry my partner can find a better partner than me.
But then, I remember they can't find anything."*

when used long-term or daisy-chained together. Always check for frayed wires and never run cords under rugs, where heat can build up unnoticed. When in doubt, plug directly into a wall outlet.

3. Toasters

Crumbs inside your toaster can become a fire hazard if they build up and ignite. Toasters need regular cleaning to stay safe. Always unplug your toaster when not in use and clean the crumb tray weekly.

4. Heating Pads and Electric Blankets

These cozy comforts can become dangerous if left on too long or folded during use. Overheating, frayed wires, or old age can cause them to catch fire. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and never sleep with them turned on. Replace older models that lack automatic shut-off features.

5. Candles near Flammable Decor

Placing them near curtains, books, or holiday decorations is a recipe for disaster. Always use sturdy holders and keep candles at least a foot away from anything that can burn and never leave unattended. Better yet, switch to flameless LED versions.

6. Lithium-Ion Batteries

From phones to e-bikes, lithium-ion batteries are everywhere, and they can overheat or explode if damaged. Charging them on soft surfaces like beds or couches traps heat and increases the risk. Use only manufacturer-approved chargers and avoid overcharging. If a battery looks swollen or smells odd, stop using it immediately.



7. Cooking Oil

Grease fires can erupt in seconds when oil gets too hot. Leaving a pan unattended, even briefly, is all it takes. Water makes grease fires worse, so always keep a lid nearby to smother flames. Clean your stovetop regularly to prevent oil buildup.

8. Nail Polish Remover

Acetone-based nail polish remover is extremely flammable. Spilled remover near a heat source or open flame can ignite quickly. Always use it in a well-ventilated area and keep it away from candles, cigarettes, or space heaters. Store it tightly sealed and out of reach of children.

9. Old Newspapers and Magazines

If stored near a heat source or in a cluttered area, they can ignite and spread flames rapidly. Recycle old papers regularly and avoid letting them pile up. Keep storage areas clean and dry to reduce fire hazards.

10. Space Heaters

Placing portable heaters too close to bedding, curtains, or furniture can lead to ignition. Always keep a three-foot safety zone around your heater. Choose models with tip-over protection and automatic shut-off. Never leave them running unattended. Plug these into a wall outlet; never into a power strip or attach to an extension cord.

11. Air Fryers and Countertop Appliances

Air fryers, coffee makers, and other small appliances can overheat if vents are blocked or cords are damaged. Leaving them plugged in 24/7 increases the risk of electrical fires. Always unplug when not in use and inspect cords for wear. Keep appliances clean and free of grease or crumbs.

12. Mirrors and Glass Objects

Mirrors or glass bottles left on sunny windowsills have been known to ignite curtains or paper. Keep reflective items away from direct sunlight, especially in dry seasons.

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“Arguing with someone is like reading the Software License agreement. In the end, you ignore everything and just click “I agree.”

13. Smoking Materials

Cigarettes, cigars, and even e-cigarettes are still a major cause of house fires. Falling asleep while smoking or improperly discarding butts can lead to tragedy. Always use deep, sturdy ashtrays and never smoke in bed. If you vape, avoid charging devices overnight or near flammable materials.

Fire Safety Starts With Awareness

You don't need to live in fear, but you do need to stay informed. Many fire hazards are easy to overlook because they're part of our daily routines. But with a few simple changes, like unplugging appliances, cleaning lint traps and toaster crumbs, and storing flammables safely, you can dramatically reduce your risk. Fire prevention isn't about paranoia; it's about peace of mind. And it starts with knowing what's hiding in plain sight. 

The next FREE CERT Training Course:

Preregistration is required! Contact Lola Hackett (lolahackett@yahoo.com) for more information. - See below first!

Dates	Classes: February 5, 12, 19, 26 March 5, 12, 2026 Final exercise (mock disaster drill): Saturday, March 14, 2026
Times	Classes: 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm Final exercise (mock disaster drill): 8:30 am - 12:00 pm
Location	Classes: Training Room @ Fire Station #6, located at 2740 25th Street SE Mock Disaster Drill: also @ Fire Station #6, located at 2740 25th Street SE



If you would like to enroll for this series of classes, **three (3) enrollment forms need to be filled out**. Please let me (Aline Autenrieth 301-588-5399 or aautenrieth@juno.com) know if you are interested and I can get the forms to you and provide further instructions. If you have any questions about the forms, the classes, or the CERT program, please feel welcome to contact me. If you are interested in joining the other 12 of your CERT trained neighbors, please let me know!! Aline Autenrieth at aautenrieth@juno.com or 301-588-5399. 

!! Item(s) of the Month !! Considering all the very cold weather we've been having, one thing to consider is a portable propane heater. There are several types and sizes available that are safe for indoor use. You can find them on Amazon and at Lowes to name two places.



Here is one example: https://www.amazon.com/Mr-Heater-F232000-Indoor-Safe-Portable/dp/B002G51BZU/ref=sr_1_5?keywords=%2Bheater%2Bmr%2Bheater&qid=1642094186&sr=8-5&th=1



The Mr. Heater Buddy heater uses the small green propane canisters found at most sporting goods and variety stores and are estimated to burn for around four to five hours on low heat setting.

They can be used with the bigger BBQ type propane tanks, too, if you have a suitable adapter and hose. This will allow for a much longer total heating time.

So, shop around, read reviews from users, and then decide if something like this would be useful for you. Last thing: This is not an endorsement of any particular product. And remember even if a heating unit is certified for indoor use take care to always have plenty of ventilation, do not use in enclosed areas, keep plenty of space around the heater, and be sure your home carbon monoxide detector is good working order.

Stay warm and stay safe! 



PLEASE send in your Emergency Prep Information Form to Mary Schroeder.
(If you need another one contact Mary at felines@comcast.net!!!!)

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00 PM in the clubhouse**. Emergency Preparedness meets the **1st Tuesday of each quarter (April 7, July 7, October 6, 2026)** at **7:00 pm** in the Clubhouse unless called sooner to which **ALL are welcome!** Please contact one of us if you wish to join the meeting, have questions, or something to contribute. Stay healthy, happy, and safe!! 



"I came across a recipe that calls for leftover bacon. You might as well require dragon loin or unicorn shanks."

Finders Keepers!

Our Rock Hider continues to hide these beautiful rocks with crocheted coverings. So, go out there and find them!! They are placed around the beginning of the month!! We Love It, whoever you are and thank you so very much for this very fun activity!! So search on, everybody!!



"If you ever picked up a rock and thought, "now this is a good rock," then we're family." 🌲

BCC CONCERTS

Concerts are up in the air for the moment. Stay tuned for more information via your email. When it happens will be on a Sunday, 2:00 – 5:00 pm.



Bring a snack to share and a beverage of your choice and enjoy an afternoon of music with your friends and neighbors. Some cushions are available to make the folding chairs more comfortable. The recommended donation to the artist is \$15 per adult. Call/text Sharon Grasseth to reserve seats for you and your guests – 503-559-8414, sharose47@yahoo.com! 🌲



The **Year of the Horse in 2026** will start on **February 17, 2026**, and will end on **February 5, 2027**. This year will be characterized as the **Year of the Fire Horse.**



"If chocolate can't fix it, then you're not using enough chocolate."

Do you have something to share with the community? The Newsletter is a good place to get out the word. Write it up and send it to me (aautenrieth@juno.com). Please send the article rather than just the idea! Articles should be from 100 words to 600 words. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. Microsoft Word compatible is desired. PDF files are more difficult! **DEADLINE: 10th of the month, please!** 🌲



If you have a recipe or several you would like to share, please send them to me – always searching for good contributions!! Thanks!

Recipe Corner!**Super Creamy Lemon Mousse****Ingredients**

2 14 oz cans Condensed Milk
2/3 cups heavy cream
Juice of 6 lemons

**Instructions**

Blend well in a blender.
Pour into 1 quart serving dish.
Grate zest on top.
Refrigerate for at least 4 hours. 🍋

Contributors to this month's Newsletter: Jeanne Dalton, Sharon Grasseth, Steve Starkey, Bob Mason, Crocheting Rock Hider, and me!,-Aline Autenrieth. 🌲

**February 17, 2026**

"If chocolate can't fix it, then you're not using enough chocolate."

BCC Office Hours
Monday thru Friday (except holidays):

10:00 am - 3:30 pm

NOTE: The office will be closed for holidays on

May 25, July 4, Sep 7
Nov 26, Dec 25

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