

## A Town with No Locks

*By Hap Hansen*

Every time I turn around, it seems another bond of trust has disappeared, perhaps never to return. In the small town in which I grew up, everyone trusted everyone else. It was unquestioned. If one had to borrow a few bucks from a friend, the loan was gladly given and gratefully returned, in full and on time. I don't think that kind of trust and obligation exists anywhere outside of small towns and close friends anymore. And unfortunately, it doesn't exist in all small communities either. Do you lock your condo door when you leave to go shopping or visiting? You probably do, and I do too, but it wasn't always that way. I don't recall ever locking the door to the house in the small town in which I grew up. It wouldn't have done much good anyway, because the windows wouldn't lock. They only had simple catches on them, which would have been a snap to jimmy open if someone decided to break in. At our house, if someone wanted to steal something, they could have simply walked in the front door! But that never happened. In all the years I lived in a small town, nothing was ever stolen from our house. Nothing. Ever!

A good friend of mine told me a story about locking their home where he grew up in small-town America. Their home was never locked, even when they went on vacation for a week or two. In fact, when my friend's mother finally sold the family home, no one could find the key to the front door! You know what? The key probably never existed, or perhaps the builder thought he ought to keep it so it wouldn't be misplaced. The best part about the key story was that the purchasers of the home weren't concerned, because they never locked their home either!

Can we ever go back to those simpler, more trustful days? I don't think so. Life and living have gotten too complicated, too adversarial, too protective. It's unfortunate that it has to be that way. But we must fight for the remnants of trust that remain. Remnants that may exist only in some small towns and perhaps at Windsor Gardens. As long as we can remember what it was like, there's still a chance that kind of lifestyle can be recovered.