

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

LIFT-OFF 2019

Celebrating the accomplishments of our associates

HOW TO COMMUNICATE

So residents in your association listen

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS - DID YOU KNOW?

Seasonal advice from FirstService Financial



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Message from *Mark Gittleman*

President
FirstService Residential Minnesota



Dear Clients,

We are delighted to provide to our client Board members the Winter edition of our quarterly newsletter.

Since our Fall newsletter, we have been busy at work! We closed out 2018 with significant accomplishments and spent a considerable amount of time in Q4 planning for a successful 2019. We have focused on initiatives that are geared to enhance our services, increase engagement, and respond proactively to feedback that we have received from both clients and members of our team.

On January 10th, we gathered with our full-time associates at #LiftOff2019, a company-wide meeting to focus our energy behind our top priorities and direction so that we are fully aligned as a team as we begin the year. We have included highlights of our coming together in this newsletter.

Each quarter, we seek to share through our client newsletter touchpoints and articles on issues of common interest to many of our client boards of directors. We hope you enjoy this edition and find it to be an interesting and helpful resource.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Gittleman'.

Mark Gittleman
President
FirstService Residential Minnesota



MEET THE TEAM

Our clients benefit from a depth of resources that's unmatched in the Twin Cities. We're introducing a new regular feature in Community Connect, **Meet the Team**, to introduce the teams that support you, our valued clients. Each newsletter will introduce a team that contributes to serving your Association.



EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Mark Gittleman President

As President and Principal of FirstService Residential Minnesota, Mark Gittleman (AMS, Broker) has responsibility for overseeing the leadership team for community association management operations and business development. Mark is in his 23rd year with FirstService Residential. Mark has also previously served in leadership roles with the Community Association Institute of MN (CAI-MN) including as its President.



FUN FACT: Mark enjoys live music, photography, and gardening.

Andy Gittleman Executive Vice President

As Executive Vice President and Principal of FirstService Residential Minnesota, Andy Gittleman (AMS, MBA, Broker) leads the company's team of urban directors and managers, urban condominium developer relationship management, and the FirstService Residential contract management team. Andy is in his 35th year with FirstService Residential and its predecessor company, Gittleman Management. Andy is very active in the local real estate community and is a frequent speaker and moderator at real estate conferences.



FUN FACT: Andy enjoys sailing, biking and traveling.

Sally Andrist Manager, Human Resources

As Director of Human Resources, Sally Andrist (SPHR, EMBA) is responsible for overall direction of the HR function including creation and implementation of strategic initiatives to support the business, talent management, associate experience, change management and organizational leadership. Sally joined the FirstService Residential team in September 2018 and has over 25 years of leadership experience in human resources change management and organizational leadership.



FUN FACT: Sally was previously Vice President of HR for the Milwaukee Brewers, and is a MN State University-Mankato alum.

Shaun Zavadsky Vice President, Community Management

As Vice President of Community Management, Shaun Zavadsky (PCAM) leads the company's team of suburban directors and managers. Shaun also co-leads the organization's cross-functional client experience team and related initiatives. Shaun has over 12 years of experience in property management the last 4 years of which have been in leadership roles with FirstService Residential. Shaun currently serves on the CAI-MN Board of Directors.



FUN FACT: Shaun grew up on a farm in Illinois with the closest town (population 800) over 10 miles away.

Mike Laukka Senior Vice President

As Senior Vice President of Gittleman Construction & Maintenance (GCM) a FirstService Residential affiliate, Mike Laukka (PCAM) leads its property maintenance and construction divisions. Mike has responsibility for strategic initiatives, business development, customer relationship management, leadership development, and service delivery platform development. Prior to joining FirstService Residential and GCM, Mike owned and operated Laukka Management, a community association management company, and co-owned an unaffiliated construction company.



FUN FACT: Mike enjoys golfing, his dog, and is a former St. Olaf hockey player

Tammy Johnson Vice President, Finance

As VP of Finance, Tammy Johnson (CPA, MBA) performs leadership roles in client and corporate accounting, financial planning and analysis, system integration, and operational innovation. Tammy joined the FirstService team in 2011 and has over 18 years of experience in corporate and public accounting.



FUN FACT: Tammy enjoys playing soccer, snowboarding and spending time with family on the lake.

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LEARN MORE
about our senior leadership team



LIFT-OFF 2019

Celebrating our associates

On Thursday, January 10 we held a half-day session with 300 of our full-time associate around the theme of Lift-Off 2019.

We focused on our mission of delivering exceptional service and solutions that enhance the value of every property and the lifestyle of every resident in the communities we manage.

We talked about our accomplishments in 2018 and our top goals for 2019 in the context of our mission and values with a focus on service excellence, people and leadership development and growth.



FirstService Residential associates at Lift-Off 2019.

Each member of our Executive Leadership Team reviewed priorities and accomplishments in their areas.

We heard from CEO of Habitat for Humanity, Chris Coleman about Habitat's journey with its partners including FirstService Residential to support the broader community health and affordable housing.



Chris Coleman, CEO of Habitat for Humanity, was a keynote speaker.

We engaged in a learning exercise on building your own personal brand led by Clare Jackson, VP of HR for FirstService Residential, North Region.

We provided recognition to seven FirstService Residential associates for representing the best of our company values.



Six of the seven FirstService Residential associates recognized for representing the best of our company values.



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE *Minnesota Chapter Recognitions & Awards*

Community Association managers, team members and vendors gathered to be recognized for outstanding service and commitment to our communities. Our very own **Shaun Zavadsky**, VP of Community Management was elected to the Board of CAI-MN!

CAI is the oldest, largest and most established organization in the community association industry, created specifically to meet the needs of community association stakeholders.



Congratulations, Shaun!



We would like to congratulate **Chris Campbell** on earning his Professional Community Association Manager (PCAM) designation!

The PCAM designation is the highest professional recognition available nationwide to managers who specialize in community association management. To earn the PCAM credential, managers must have five years of community association management experience, complete more than 100 hours of course work and successfully pass a Case Study. There are only 2,200 Managers nationwide have earned their PCAM.

Way to go Chris!

OUR MISSION

Deliver exceptional service and solutions that enhance the value of every property and the lifestyle of every resident in the communities we serve.

Making a
Every Day

FIRSTSERVICE RESIDENTIAL *Highlights and Initiatives*

2018 Highlights

- Achieved client retention above 98%.
- Welcoming 16 new client communities to FirstService Residential.
- Over 20 associates achieving additional certifications in their area of expertise.
- Established an Executive Leadership Team of experienced, capable, and proven leaders.
- Created additional organizational structure around our urban and suburban property management divisions.
- Building a foundation for a 2019 people development plan including the roll out of performance management system in Q4.
- Fully integrated the former Paradise & Associates team into our organization.
- Improved our after - hours on-call service with a shift to a new service provider.
- Rolled out an updated management agreement form.

In 2019 our priority initiatives for the year include:

- Moving in Q2 into a larger and more collaborative work space with a more robust technology infrastructure.
- Adding tools, resources, and additional leadership to our urban and suburban teams in support of service excellence.
- Evaluating and implementing best practices in our administrative and property support functions to serve our clients, associates, and organization.
- Implementing the next stage of the FirstService Residential people development plan for associates at all levels.
- Continuing to improve our channels of communication and engagement with both clients and associates with a focus around listening to feedback, engagement, and response.
- Expanding our community engagement and social action.

FIRSTSERVICE RESIDENTIAL

Associate recognition from our clients

Erin Basavage, Association Manager, was recognized for demonstrating the value of Be Genuinely Helpful:

"Based on the minimal reported observations, I would like to comment that the building is in the best condition that I have seen it in the many years I have been doing these walkabouts.

I would like to thank Erin for her follow-up on resolving reported observations and scheduling repairs/maintenance with outside vendors."
-Condominium Maintenance Committee

Jerry Tupa, Master Plumber at Gittleman Construction & Maintenance was recognized for demonstrating the value of Improve It from a home owner:

Plumber Jerry Tupa proposed installing a new cartridge part in the old Moen faucet, Jerry had the part in his truck. It took him just a few minutes to make the exchange and as a result the faucet works better than it ever did. When we purchase a new vanity and sink, we'll ask Jerry to install the new faucet. While Jerry was here, he also quickly got our kitchen sink garbage disposal unit working. Jerry does excellent work and he's is a creative problem solver!

Mike Sabo, Gittleman Electrician, was recognized for demonstrating the value of Build Great Relationships from condominium homeowners:

"If Mike Sabo is a fair representation of the quality / professionalism of the staff at Gittleman, we're sold. He was on time, pleasant and efficient. We're very happy to have gotten this work done.'

Bryan Weeks, Onsite Maintenance, was recognized by Condominium Board Members for demonstrating the value of Own It:

"Boy does Bryan ever deserve a BIG KUDOS for this job of gathering quotes and handling vendors. I had several discussions with him while he was working on this issue and I can do nothing but applaud him for his tenacity and skill in "motivating" the vendors to give us their best bid.

Please MAKE SURE Bryan knows of our appreciation for his work on this project!"

Mark Vincent, HVAC technician, was recognized by a homeowner for demonstrating the value of Be Genuinely Helpful:

"Hi Gittleman/FirstService, I'm writing to thank Mark Vincent for the work he did at my Centre Village condo this week. Mark was prompt, courteous, and very clean about his workspace. He quickly identified the problem, got a replacement part, installed it, and showed me the old part before wrapping up his work. He was both friendly and professional and I cannot thank him enough for efficiently solving a problem that could've been a real headache. Please ensure that he knows how much his work and demeanor are appreciated by me and, I'm sure, by all the residents he helps. Many Thanks"

Tiffany Johnson, Association Manager, was recognized for demonstrating our values from Michael, PCA President:

"I want to extend our praise for Tiffany and the job she has done. I have enjoyed working closely with her as association president. She is professional and timely in her work. She has been a welcome addition to the association, and we would be very disappointed if she were to leave!"

Colleen Nesseth, Association Manager, was recognized by a Board Member for demonstrating the value of Aim High:

"Your professionalism, talent, responsiveness and kindness is extraordinary. FSR is so fortunate to have someone of your caliber doing what you do, day in and day out. And so are Ashcroft residents!

Hanna Frawley, Community Manager, and Christopher Campbell, Reginal Director, were recognized from a Board Member for demonstrating the value of Aim High:

"Thank you very much for your Holiday Season Letter. I would like to thank you and the many outstanding employees of FirstService Residential, including but not limited to Hannah Frawley and Christopher Campbell, for the extraordinary professional service that they provide to the City Heights Board. Their care and concern for our Owners/Residents is unparalleled and should establish the benchmark for your industry."



CELEBRATING AND PROMOTING *Social engagement at client communities*

We spend an increasing amount of time in our organization on community giving and team building.

While doing so, it occurs to us that we have opportunities to recognize and promote giving within the many communities that we manage. We recently reached out to our Association Managers to gain insight on organized volunteer efforts and the culture of volunteerism within the associations that we serve. We also talked to a few leaders within client communities about the manner in which the community impacted their giving.

Here are some great examples of giving from our client communities:

Grant Park, Minneapolis: Each year during the month of July, the Shelf of Hope runs a fundraising drive to

distribute food and necessities to those in need. In an effort to promote awareness and involvement, a weekly notice of the drive is published in the Grant Park Newsletter asking Grant Park residents to participate. Residents have been generous. Over the past four years, the fund has collected between \$3,000.00 and \$6,000.00. These funds are matched dollar for dollar by a collective of Minneapolis municipal workers. Several Grant Park residents have also been involved in the Gethsemane Community Garden across the street from Grant Park. In collaboration with the church and various organizations, the Garden provides fresh produce (a few thousand pounds of it over the past three years) to the Shelf of Hope. Grant Park community members also organize baby blanket making for children in need, sandwich making for a local soup kitchen, collecting mittens and scarves for kids, Toys for Tots, and donation of community garden vegetables to local shelters, Earth Day Clean Up and spring planting events with the Friends of Triangle Park.



Grant Park giving back to the community (left to right): Toys for Tots donation drive, volunteering at the local soup kitchen, Earth Day Clean Up and spring planting event at Triangle Park.



River Park Lofts, St. Paul: Reaches out to Association members through Social Committee to promote Face to Face, an organization dedicated to youth without homes.

Airye Condominium, St. Paul: \$1,000 donation to the Friends of Mears Park and volunteers to help maintain the beauty of the park. Photos labeled Airye Condos.

510 Groveland: Donation of tables to the Steeger Wildneress Center's new cafeteria.



StoneBridge Lofts collected toys for a community Toys for Tots event.

StoneBridge Lofts, Minneapolis: 4,875 pounds of clothing, housewares, and small furniture to Society of Vincent de Paul for people in need and 116 toy donations plus the monetary donation of \$1,175 for a community Toys for Tots event to purchase 116 toys.



The Airye Condominium community volunteered time and raised money to beautify Mears Park.

As we think about opportunities to promote more giving, we are asking ourselves about some of the attributes that promote engagement in the broader community.

1) Does the community have a mission statement? Is community engagement included in that mission statement, and publicized to the community as a whole? Can we help the Association develop or update its mission statement?

2) Are there close connections to a local neighborhood association and community engagement activities with the neighborhood through the Board, a committee, or members of the Association? Are there volunteer efforts for neighborhood associations that can be publicized to the membership? Can we help communicate these activities?

3) Where do community members wish to direct their energy? Is it productive to have a social action committee? We have seen examples of such committees work well and examples where community members wish to devote all of their energy to direct engagement and don't want to work through a committee. What are the best ways to promote committee activity where it's helpful and to lean away from it where owners wish to engage independently within the community?

4) Does the demographic of the building drive how community members may wish to volunteer, whether they wish to organize themselves, or simply respond to prompts for giving?

Celebrating Giving over the Holidays at FirstService Residential

Social engagement and action in the broader community has been a high priority for FirstService Residential and we continue to explore ways to increase our efforts and positive impact. As we look back on 2018, we have continued our longstanding partnership with the Minneapolis Foundation in providing 25K in Grants for Community Excellence to local organizations supporting health and well-being in communities we serve.

We also celebrate the volunteer leadership of our associates, particularly over the holidays. A big thank you to Colleen Nesselth, Stana Gerlach, and Melissa Manning for organizing campaigns within our office to help families in need. Colleen and Stana have organized the Toys for Tots drive for the last 12 years including the most successful drive ever in 2018 with over 100 gift contributions. Melissa is in her second year organizing “The Best Christmas Ever” drive. This year’s efforts support two families in need where kids have experienced a sudden loss of a parent and need community support. Last year Melissa and our company volunteers raised \$9,404 and this year the numbers are even greater at \$15,160.84!

Our Social Purpose

Throughout FirstService Residential, we are not only driven by our strong desire to deliver exceptional service and solutions to our managed communities, but also by our compassion for others. We instinctively direct that compassion to our customers, to the underserved people in our communities, to causes that help those in need and to each other in times of suffering and crisis.

It is our proven passion for caring for others that has sown the seeds of our company’s Social Purpose. We, together with our sister companies at FirstService Corporation, engage in socially responsible activities in our local markets, in our regions and as an organization. Our core values unite our efforts and further define and reinforce our commitment to helping our local communities and each other. As a company with the strength of more than 15,000 associates throughout North America, our ability to impact the lives of others is limitless!

To learn more, visit
www.oursocialpurpose.com

#FirstServeOthers



The second annual Best Christmas Ever drive raised money and donations for families in need in our community.



HOW TO COMMUNICATE

So residents in your association listen

Are residents in your community always aware of upcoming events, construction projects and board meetings?

Do they understand their responsibilities and the policies they need to comply with? When your board clearly and effectively communicates with residents, it has a positive impact on the overall wellbeing of your condo or homeowners association (HOA). Open and honest communication creates the perception of transparency and facilitates a feeling of community. Poor communication, on the other hand, can negatively impact your community's reputation and even your operating budget and property values. "When there is a lack of communication, you get angry or confused residents and in severe cases the lack of information may lead to legal or financial implications for the community," says Shaun Zavadsky, Vice President of Community Management for FirstService Residential Minnesota. He explains that association members will often fill that void with misinformation and rumors. "That negative word of mouth spreads faster and further than people realize."

"It is always best to be as transparent as possible when working on a Board for a residential community. This should be a priority for all HOA Boards," Zavadsky says. "People may begin to think that decisions affecting their home values are being made in secret or without their input." Ironically, that belief can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. "When you have a community that isn't happy with where they live, it will directly affect their home values," he points out.

Start with a communication plan.

- 1)** Break down your objectives into attainable goals. Outline what you want your communication plan to accomplish using the SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time bound).
- 2)** Think of your audience. Consider their current knowledge and understanding of the issue, and if necessary, simplify complex concepts.
- 3)** Use all available communication resources and channels. Residents have different preferences when it comes to receiving communications, so use as many as you can to be sure you're not missing anyone, including e-blasts, newsletters, billing statements, announcements, reminders at board meetings, social media and resident alert systems.

Prioritize topics.

Ideally, you want members of your community to be informed about everything that's affecting them, but if you have limited time or resources, what should you focus on first? Your association has to make sure it is complying with legal requirements and association bylaws, such as notifying residents about board meetings, so these communications are nonnegotiable. However, there are other topics that you should prioritize as well. For example, communicating about financial matters is particularly

important. This includes general communications regarding the association's overall finances as well as those about individual accounts. It's always a good idea to remind residents when their assessment fees are due and the amount they owe. Information about payment plan options should be included in those communications as well.

You should also **reiterate rules and regulations regularly** so that everyone in the community is aware of them. Community members are more likely to comply with policies if you provide them with frequent reminders. If your community experiences a period of higher-than-normal resident turnover, that's a great time to send out a reminder of your policies. This will help prevent excessive violations, which can cause property values to decline – especially if they affect the community's aesthetics.

Architectural modifications are another area that requires adequate communication. Residents need to understand your policy, restrictions and process for requesting approval. Even if your governing documents clearly spell this out, residents may still make assumptions based on past experiences or hearsay. For instance, if the board fails to communicate in response to a request, a resident may assume there are no objections. This can have unpleasant consequences for a community's curb appeal and, ultimately, property values.

Communicating openly and effectively with residents takes time, effort and careful planning. But it pays off. Residents will feel better about the community if they are kept in the loop, and they are more likely to follow the rules if they are reminded regularly. All of that contributes to the success of the association, the satisfaction of residents and the value of everyone's property.

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READ MORE ARTICLES



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION TERMS

That every board member should know

New to an association, or need a refresher? We put together some vocab you will want to be familiar with:

Property/Association Manager

Property/Association Managers oversee the association's daily management and operations. They help enforce rules, regulations and bylaws, administer board-approved policies and guidelines, and facilitate important tasks such as financials, mass communications, grounds and building maintenance, and other administrative tasks.

Governing Documents

A shorthand term for the Declarations of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, but may also refer to Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and/or Rules and Regulations of the association. Articles of Incorporation are the equivalent of Declarations in a cooperative, which does not have a Declaration.

Articles of Incorporation

Filed with Minnesota's Secretary of State, this document is what legally establishes your Minnesota homeowner association, condominium, or cooperative. It defines its purpose and powers, and denotes the structure of its board of directors. Typical articles specify the purpose of the corporation, whether it is operated for profit, what officers it has and other similar items. Most master planned communities are non-profit, non-stock entities; whereas condos and co-ops are largely operated based on the corporation concept.

Bylaws

By definition, bylaws are "rules that govern the actions of its members". In this document, you might find topics like the requirements for membership, how often meetings are held, member voting rights, board member term length, quorum requirements, and duties of various offices of the board of directors. Bylaws are often subject to modification by the Board of Directors or by a vote of the membership of the association.

Declaration (of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions)

A legally binding document filed in the county where the property is located. This means that when you purchase a lot or a home in a neighborhood with a Declaration, you automatically become a member of that association. This document is like the constitution of the association because it defines the rights of members and the powers and authority of the association and its board of directors, including:

- Architectural control standards, restrictions, and obligations
- Activities that promote communal harmony
- What property is owned by individual homeowners and what is owned by the community
- The relationship among all homeowners and the community for funding, governing and maintaining the development
- Transition of control of the association from the developer to the homeowners

Recorded Plat Map

This document is a map drawn to scale by an engineer, showing the divisions of a piece of land. Approved by the county and filed in the recorder's office, it shows the precise layout of a condo or planned community. Recorded plats help distinguish an owner's and community's title to the property, as well as determine who is responsible for maintaining property.

Assessments/Association Fees

Association Fees are what fund the operation of an association. Every member pays a pre-determined amount to cover their portion of maintenance and upkeep of the association and its common amenities like swimming pools, tennis courts, and fitness centers; and shared services like landscape maintenance, snow removal, waste and recycling collection, and building security. These fees also pay for intangibles such as insurance, administrative work, accounting, property taxes, among much more. Regular assessments are levied and paid on a regularly occurring schedule.

Special Assessment

An assessment levied to finance a single project or undertaking. Distinguished from a regular assessment which is levied regularly for the regular operations of the association. Though levied only once, special assessments may nevertheless be paid in regular installments over a period of time.

Common Area

Also referred to as common elements, it is those parts of the property which are not part of any individual unit and which are shared by some or all unit owners. These areas are administered by an association and the boundaries between common areas and individual units is specified in the governing documents of the association. Also see Limited Common Area.

Limited Common Area

A part of the common area which is reserved for the use of an individual unit owner. Exterior decks are the most common example. Though reserved for the use of a specific unit, they are nonetheless part of the common area and as such may be maintained by the association.

Proxy

The authority to cast a vote for another who is not present, usually at a meeting. The right to cast votes by proxy is not automatic, but must be authorized by the governing documents of an association or by the board of directors operating under authority given by the Declaration or by statute. Many declarations also contemplate the use of proxies, either explicitly or implicitly.

Quorum

The number of persons who must be present in order to hold an official meeting and conduct business. In the case of an association, it is the number of units that must be represented, either in person or by proxy (if proxies are allowed), for an official meeting to be held. Quorum requirements are generally specified in the governing documents or bylaws.

Board Resolutions

A board resolution is a motion that follows an established format and is formerly adopted by association board members. Resolutions assign rules and regulations to an association. Here are four types of resolutions for a community association:

- **Policy:** Affects owners' rights and regulations including shared common areas, architectural requirements, and enforcement procedures.
- **Administrative:** Addresses internal workings of the association including operating procedures, collections policies, and location of meetings, etc.
- **Special:** Board rulings specific to an individual situation such as a violation.
- **General:** Outlines routine, ordinary events on a community's calendar such as adopting the annual budget and approving service contracts.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Did you know that carbon monoxide is often referred to as the silent killer? Inhalation of this colourless, tasteless, and odorless gas can lead to poisoning and even death. Most non-fire carbon monoxide incidents occur in residential properties between the months of November and February. The most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, confusion, loss of consciousness, and death.

Use these tips to protect yourself:

- Install a carbon monoxide detector in your home
- Have your heating system and chimney cleaned and serviced annually
- Install and use appliances according to the manufacturer's instructions
- If you smell gas from your appliances, have them serviced immediately
- If you live in a multi-unit dwelling and smell gas in the hallways, seek immediate assistance
- Do not use portable, flameless, chemical heaters indoors
- Do not use a gas range or oven for heating purposes
- Do not burn charcoal indoors
- Only use gas appliance carrying the seal of a national testing agency, such as Underwriters Laboratories
- If you experience symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, seek immediate assistance

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DISCLAIMER: All information provided by FS Insurance Brokers is advisory in nature. Any such information may not identify or contemplate all unsafe conditions; others may exist. FS Insurance Brokers does not imply, guarantee or warrant the safety of any of the client's properties or operations or that the client or any such properties or operations are in compliance with all federal, provincial, or local laws, codes, statutes, ordinances, standards or recommendations. All decisions in connection with the implementation, if any, of any of FS Insurance Brokers' advice or recommendations shall be the sole responsibility of, and made by, the client or other recipient of the information.

Since 1998, FirstService Financial has been providing best-in-class financial services for condominiums, cooperatives, homeowner associations and commercial properties managed by FirstService Residential. We stand apart by combining the capital markets and treasury management expertise of a bank with a rare and in-depth understanding of real estate and insurance fundamentals. Our broad knowledge base allows us to create meaningful value for our clients through advisory services, individually tailored financial solutions, and insurance product offerings that set the industry standard.

Our experience is our clients' resource—an experience that has strengthened our credibility and the relationships we enjoy with our partners. It allows us to leverage our pricing and to access capital and insurance markets both domestically and internationally.

FirstService Financial and FS Insurance Brokers are affiliates of FirstService Residential and subsidiaries of FirstService Corporation. All of our programs are created for FirstService Residential clients and are optional; however, many FirstService Residential clients participate because of their added value.

LEARN MORE
about FirstService Financial



**FirstService
Financial**

DECADENT BERRY DESSERTS



Sometimes, you just need dessert: something rich and decadent, bursting with chocolate or vanilla or coffee or fruit and full of flavors that linger delightfully on the palette. [Check out our three options](#)

for rich, but easy to make desserts spiked with the tang of strawberries or raspberries.

White Chocolate Raspberry Cheesecake

Cheesecake strikes fear in the heart of many otherwise competent bakers. Relax! The key to great cheesecake is not overbeating the eggs once they are added (stop as soon as they are blended in) and to follow the tips worked through this recipe: make sure the ring of your springform pan is greased, add cornstarch to your batter and put a pan of water in the oven to replicate a bain marie without the work (or risk of soggy crust!).

Servings: 12

Prep Time: 45 minutes

Cook time: 60 minutes

Check off the ingredients you already have:

- 20 Shortbread Cookies
- ¼ cup Melted Butter
- 3 8 ounce packages Cream Cheese, softened
- 3 Eggs
- ¾ cup Sugar
- 1 cup white chocolate pieces
- 2 tablespoons Cornstarch
- 2 cups raspberry preserves

1) Heat oven to 350. Crush shortbread cookies in a food processor to fine crumbs. Combine with melted butter and press onto the bottom only of an 8 or 9-inch springform pan. Bake crust for 8 minutes. Set aside and let cool.

2) Place a baking pan of very hot water on the lowest possible rack of the oven. Place the upper rack in the middle.

3) Beat cream cheese and sugar on high speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, and beat on medium speed until well blended. Melt the white chocolate in the microwave in 30 second bursts, stirring between each one, until melted and smooth. Stir the white chocolate into the batter by hand, and then add the cornstarch and mix gently until blended.

4) Spray the sides of the springform pan with nonstick cooking spray or rub them with butter.

5) Spread 1 ½ cups raspberry preserves onto the crust. Pour batter over. Dot remaining jam on top of the batter and swirl gently with a knife. Tap the side of the pan all around to eliminate air bubbles that can cause cracks. Bake for 45-60 minutes (longer for an 8-inch pan than a 9-inch) or until cake wobbles only slightly in the middle when nudged gently. Remove from oven and let cool for at least one hour. Chill until serving. Garnish with whipped cream and fresh raspberries.

Can't get enough very berry dessert recipes?
GET MORE



elements OF LIVING

Living and Thriving in a FirstService Residential Community