



Your MONTHLY Garden Gnome News! "with a little help from my friends!"

Volume 1, Issue 11

HOME OF THE GNOME!

November 2016

November 6th! Don't forget!



Contacts For Condo Owners

By Kate Buckley

Florida residents (Snow Birds or year round folks and by the way, Snow Birds have the same rights and privileges as full time residents) who own condominiums enjoy a wide variety of city, county and state agencies. They are well versed in the statutes that were enacted to protect condo owners. Remember too that Snow Birds are "no load" condo owners since we all pay the same fees but we only use half the services as full time residents do. An important matter to make note of if someone tells you otherwise.

Some helpful government agencies are listed below along with the statutes and kinds of matters they can be of assistance with.

I've started at the local (City of Fort Myers) level and worked my way up the ladder to state levels.

Our community is located in Ward 1 in the City of Fort Myers. Our city councilwoman is **Teresa Watkins-Brown** and she has an impressive curriculum vitae; access it at <http://www.cityftmyers.com/296/Ward-1>.

Ms Watkins-Brown is our liaison at our monthly neighborhood watch meetings and she has an excellent and competent staff who can offer assistance and advice about city ordinances and regulations. If you are uncertain which agency can best serve your needs, the Selectwoman is the right place to start.

Our state senator is **Lizbeth Benaquisto**; her office is downtown and her staff is also very professional and helpful.

You can learn more about our senator at <http://m.flsenate.gov/senators/s30>. The senator or her staff can direct you to the appropriate state agency to assist you with your concerns or questions regarding state condominium statutes. They were kind enough to print out the full Florida State Statute 718 (condominium laws) for me and of course there was no charge.

The Florida Ombudsman's Office is located in Tallahassee and their website is very comprehensive. You can find them at <http://www.myflorida.com/condos/> It's important to know that we are governed by condominium regulations not HOA statutes. They are significantly different in regulatory matters. This agency can help you determine if your Board is interpreting Statute 718 correctly, among dozens of other functions including handicapped access.

If your question concerns a condominium association manager, there is a state agency that regulates their licensing, duties and regulations; info can be found at http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/pro/cam/documents/cam_faq.pdf. This agency can tell you how long a cam has been licensed, if there have been complaints and/or charges made against them and also let you know if they have no complaints filed.

While each agency has distinctively differing roles in condo regulations, if you reach the "wrong" department they are very professional and will graciously direct you to the "correct" one.

Please remember that while these offices technically work for us, you'll always get more help and better advice when you are courteous and patient.

In closing, if you are not internet proficient, each website includes phone numbers so you can either speak with a real live person, or leave a message. And yes, they really will call you back!

As property owners and taxpayers, these government agencies are here to help us. Please don't be shy about asking questions and requesting assistance or just being a better informed consumer. Attending our Board meetings is the most important thing you can do as a condo owner. It's only one day a month and is absolutely the place to be if you want to voice concerns or pay someone a compliment.

This November 2016 issue of the Garden Gnome Newsletter is sponsored by Tech In a Flash and Our Owners!



An Official recipe from the Broadway Palm Chefs!

1380 Colonial Boulevard Fort Myers, FL 33907
(239) 278-4422 www.BroadwayPalm.com



Pineapple Casserole

List of Ingredients

- ¾ cup butter
- 1 ¼ cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 (20oz.) can crushed pineapple, well drained
- 1 ½ teaspoon lemon juice
- 4 cups firmly packed cubed white bread (crusts removed)
- 8 oz. cream cheese softened

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°. In a mixing bowl cream the butter, sugar and cream cheese. Add eggs one at a time, making sure to mix after each addition. Stir in pineapple and lemon juice, fold in bread crumbs. Spoon mixture into a greased 2 quart baking dish; bake casserole uncovered at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

PS: please send me your favorite recipes or ones you've prepared for us in the clubhouse and every month The Gnome will feature one, THEN several of us would like to publish a recipe cook book to hand out to all new owners! Fun, eh?

The Garden Gnome would like to thank everyone who's been so helpful in contributing to the content of The Gnome all year long:

Kate Buckley, Janey Hesche, Marg Prozacki, Denise Rees and so many of the currently seated board.

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The December Gnome is in process as I dont' know when I'll have to go to Orlando for my foot surgery and I want it almost done by the time I leave.

DON'T FORGET!!

By Denise Rees

1. If you place furniture (or other items) at the end of the driveway at Van Buren, you are responsible to dispose of it after 24 hours.

We are considered commercial property & the city charges us if they have to pick up items from our property. Same thing with anything sitting next to the dumpster--we are charged for them to take away.

2. The pool heater is on. If you are the last swimmer of the day, please ask someone to help you put the solar cover on the pool.

3. Reminder: Next board meeting is Nov 13, 10am.



We LOVE Hibiscus (Hibiscii?) here .. this one is STOLEN KISSES, contributed by Kate Buckley (thanks, Kate!)

September Kudos:

Thanks to Ray and Janice Noble for replacing the can crusher. The first one has been getting so much use that we wore it out!

Hi, All..

We're going to start a new monthly addition: Monthly FOODIE FOCUS! (tried & true recipes) What that means is, we are so interested in the deLISHious dishes we get to so enjoy at the monthly pot luck dinners. We'd love to have the recipe for Denise's MeatBalls, The Cornbread Casserole, Ray Noble's Choco Chip Cookies! All of it!!!

And as we start getting these recipes in, we'll put one a month into the Gnome! Sound fun! start sending them to me! at beki1949@gmail.com

ON-SITE GENERAL INFO!

Trash pickup: M, T, Th, F, recycle: M

Pool cleaning, Gary: M & F

Board Building Reps: A: Marg, B: Alexis, C: Johnie Mason, D: Richard Slater, E: Kate, F: John Wiley

Committees: (the board member is the liaison, the chairman will be a non-board owner):

Grounds: Richard Slater, Ray Noble, ground chair

Maintenance: Johnie Mason, to : John O'Neill

Pool: Marg Prozaki, chairman: Janey Hesche

Clubhouse: Alexis Linder, chairman: Steve Hesche

Social: Janice Noble, chairman: Janet Rasmussen

The newly revamped and repaired sprinkler system cycles on Wednesday & Saturday very early morning like 3am to that great info spot.

Please for those who don't get emails, please check the bulletin board by the mailboxes when you check your mail boxes and see if the white board is on top of the mailboxes, It is our best form of communication for 'pop up' events!



Gentle reminder:

SSHHHHHH... please don't think that someone is being rude when you come to the pool and they are deeply involved in reading a good book, listening to music, or even taking a nap and choose not to visit. Some days it is just okay to just be quiet.



heard.in.the.hood:

My parents moved here thirty years ago and I think it is more beautiful now, than it was then.

The Daily Mojo

By Janey Hesche

Well, I began the month of October with a trip out west.

Steve and I flew into Las Vegas for a few days of rest and relaxation and then flew to my hometown of Visalia, California to attend the wedding of my Godchild, Cortni. I should add that she is also my niece and that her mom, Lori, is my only sibling. I refer to her first as my Godchild because I love being a Godmom! My Dad, who is a very young 83 years old, and my Sister walked her down the aisle. It was beautiful, poignant and an honor to celebrate the day with her, her new husband, and my family. Priceless is the word I am looking for. For everything there is a season. Cortni, in the spring of her life and me in the autumn of mine. No melancholy here, just extreme happiness that I am where I am at in my life.



But, enough about my vacation.

Friends, I missed my morning runs and walks . I missed strength training. I missed swimming. I missed doing nothing, if I felt like doing nothing. Most of all I missed home.

Where was my MOJO when I was on vacation? Hmmmm...my purposeful, powerful, positive state of mind figured out that being with my family was my Mojo! It is always there.

Janet and Jack picked us up from the airport. It is amazing how much a dog can miss you! The next morning, Janet and I were right back on track (even with my jet lag) with our 6 mile walk and hitting the weights. I love our routine.

It is amazing what a hurricane and eight days can do to the weather pattern! It was easy to feel the difference in the dryer air of the Fall season. All of a sudden it is not raining every afternoon like it did for over 100 days straight! The breeze on the pier at sunrise is awesome. The beautiful October full moon in the late evening sky was powerful.

A word that is used in Reiki, is "Intention." Do what you do with intention. I mull words over and over in my mind. Steph and I ran with "intention" this morning! It was a great run. My intentions are to make every day a good day, with good vibes, and good people. My Daily Mojo.

Going to close with this quote that I have known since I was four years old:

You've always had the power, my dear,
You just had to learn it for yourself. ~~ Glinda, the Good Witch



Kitchen Wenches!
(Janey And Stephanie)

It's That Time Again!

Soon you all will be receiving the notice of the annual meeting, the proposed budget for 2017 and an opportunity to volunteer to serve your community on the board. It is the latter I would like to discuss in this article.

This is the first year I volunteered for the board. I must say it has been a very interesting experience. I had no idea what I was getting myself into! Others have asked what is involved. So, from my perspective, here we go in no particular order.

1. It is a position without a paycheck.
2. It is a position with no benefits.
3. It is a position that provides a tremendous opportunity to serve the community and carry on the work of our previous boards'.

4. It is very much a balancing act. On one hand you must be fiscally responsible while at the same time fulfilling your fiduciary responsibility to maintain and enhance the property and it's value.

5. You are dealing with your friends and neighbors. You want to continue these relationships. At times you will be called upon to make tough decisions.

6. You also must be responsible to yourself to set borders and boundaries in order to enjoy your life as an owner as well as a BOD member.

7. The hardest part I think is your ability to be able to separate what you want from what is good for the community as a whole.

8. You will have a lot of reading to do just like in any new job. Think of it as orientation. My suggested reading list would include the following:

- A. Fl Statues Chapter 718
- B. Fl Statues Chapter 607
- C. Our documents
- D. All current condo contracts

9. Continuing education in the form of checking several times a year for changes in the above as well as federal and state laws that could impact items of importance to our community such as mortgages.

10. Our community relies heavily on volunteer labor to keep a balance between things that are needed vs items we would like to have in order for us to continue to be a low cost community.

In conclusion, you need to decide if you have the time, desire, personality and ability to separate business from personal.

The term runs from the end of the annual meeting in Jan until the following year. This means if you are a

snowbird you are expected by the owners to continue to participate while you are off property via all the wonderful technology available today. "The term runs from the end of the annual meeting in Jan until the following year. This means if you are a snowbird you are expected by the owners to continue to participate while you are off property via all the wonderful technology available today." ~ *Marg Prozaki, A7*



Up to the minute Updates....

By Janey Hesche

Pool News!

Things are going swimmingly at the pool! A new Coolgrip handrail cover was purchased and installed. The last one was bought in 2013 and served its purpose well. The cost was \$50.00.

The safety rope and floats were also replaced at the pool. Earlier this summer we superglued the floats due to cracks and other things but they finally bit the dust, so to speak. A new rope was also purchased because we couldn't get the knots out of the old one to replace the floats! The approximate cost for rope and floats was \$40.00.

We have bleached the pool pavers three times this summer and it has not cured the problem of moss/mold that grows in the cracks. I recently spoke with Gary, the pool man, and asked for his advice. He said not to dilute the bleach with water but use it full strength. We will try that.

I saved the best news for last. The Board approved the purchase of a Blower for the pool area. It is battery operated and was purchased at Sears, a nice Craftsman model and does a great job. "A" building gave us permission to hang it in their closet since it is closest to the pool. It hangs nicely on a hook along with the battery charger. You can charge it at the light post by the pool when needed. I used it four times before it needed a charge which takes 30-40 minutes to fully charge. The cost was \$106.00.

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Clubhouse update:

The Board approved the purchase of a vacuum for the Clubhouse. It is a "smooth ride!" Extra vacuum bags are in the clubhouse. The vacuum was \$43.00 plus tax.

I want to add that the Clubhouse is well used, and quite an enjoyable "venue" for us here at Seminole Gardens. And that, my friends, is the end of the Up to the minute updates!