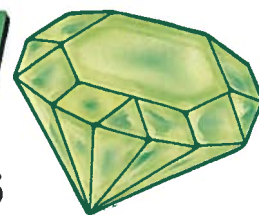


Emerald Gardens Jewel



www.EmeraldGardens.org

Spring / Summer 2016

From the President:

Hello Emerald Garden Residents, I would like to take just a moment and introduce myself. I've been a member of Emerald Gardens for 26 years and have seen our community grow into a wonderful family friendly neighborhood. And now I am happy to serve as your new Board President. I will hold this position until January 2017.

Let's start with some positive news. In the past we have placed mulch on the island at the Jade entrance of the subdivision. It looks great when completed, however after one or two rains it washes away. The board has received three bids to contract with a landscaping company to redesign the center island. One company was referred by a resident, who has had great results. Once a selection is made, we look forward to the results and hope that by the time you read this, the changes will be complete.

The board also contracted with West Coast Lake and Wetland Management, LLC to take over maintenance of our pond. I want to recognize Joan Rosenbaum and Debra Pietsch for their efforts and time to assist in the pond project. They have spent countless volunteer hours, attending meetings and doing research in order to beautify the pond.

I also want to recognize our HOA business manager Kevin Billingsley. Not only is Kevin the association licensed manager, but also a resident. Kevin volunteers his personal time to take care of matters in the neighborhood without hiring vendors. Recently Kevin and his father in law made repairs to the deck at the Jade entrance which were very involved. If Kevin receives an inquiry, he will take it upon himself to correct the situation. In addition to his other duties, Kevin has done a great job with the website in order to keep everyone informed. I encourage everyone to log on: <http://www.emeraldgardens.org>. We are very fortunate to have Kevin as our association manager.

Now some not so positive news. I know this may sound like a broken record, however there have always been issues with residents and non-residents in regard to walking dogs and picking up after them. If you are a dog owner, please make sure to have the dog on a leash and a bag for picking up after them. In walking the neighborhood, I have seen dog droppings on the sidewalks and on the lawn of homeowners that do not have dogs. Please be courteous and pick up after your dog(s). If you happen to see any violations in this regard, please do not hesitate to call the county as there are statutes and laws.

I also would like to address a parking concern, that has not only come up with the residents, but also the County. The streets in our subdivision were designed for parallel parking only. Please be courteous to your neighbors when parking as there have been inquiries regarding difficulty of residents being able to back out of their designated driveways. The county also recently conducted a test of emergency vehicles being able to get through the streets in case of any

continued inside ...

The Current Board of Directors

President John Kelner
Vice President..... Phillip Lucia
Secretary Chuck Berster
Treasurer Melanie Marsh
Member at Large Glenda Pasho

Business Manager:

Kevin Billingsley, CAM37024

Webmaster:.....Kevin Billingsley

Newsletter Editor: ..Kevin Billingsley

SAVE THE DATE -

SEMI ANNUAL MEETING

The Emerald Gardens Semi Annual Meeting is scheduled for **Thursday July 21, 2016** at St. John's United Methodist Church. Please plan to attend, or please return your Proxy to us. The doors open at 6:30 and the meeting will start promptly at 7:00pm.

WELCOME

Our newest homeowners!

Hearing Irrevocable Trust
4409 Diamond Circle North

Aqua Bella Assests LLC.
4424 Diamond Circle West

Eugene Gumienny
4439 Opal Court

Jennifer L. Lytle
4445 Diamond Circle South

From the President: continued

emergencies. I was told if they can't get through they would actually collide with whatever obstacle is in the way and then bill the vehicle owner for any damage caused. The streets in our subdivision are county regulated and parking violations can be enforced accordingly. It was brought to my attention recently that one of our homeowner's vehicles was hit while parked in the road. If anyone witnesses a hit and run, please try and secure the license plate of that vehicle and report it to the county Sheriff.

Please remember the board is here to enforce the deed restrictions only, we are not the Sheriff. If you see something you're not happy with, please discuss it with your neighbor to resolve amicably.

I'm happy to report that the association is in good financial standing and hope there are no catastrophic events to change that status. We are always open to suggestions and volunteers to assist the board in keeping our subdivision a great place to live.

I want to encourage many residents to attend the upcoming Semi-Annual Meeting in July. We hope to see you there.

Regards,
John Kelner

Emerald Gardens GEM Award

Submitted by the Nomination Committee –

Emerald Gardens provides residents a pleasant place to live, good home value and nice people in an established, attractive neighborhood. Our homes require regular attention and care to maintain "curb appeal". In 2015, the Board of Directors established a semi-annual GEM Award recognizing a home as the most improved property with a bonus of a gift card to the homeowner(s) and a Beautiful Property Award sign for display on site.



The property selected for this community award is *4453 Diamond Circle South* for the visual and landscaping enhancement the homeowner, *Theresa Domanski*, has maintained since purchasing the home in 2014. We extend our congratulations and appreciation to Theresa for her diligent work.

Note: This award will be presented twice per year. Board Members and Committee Members are not eligible for the award. The winner will receive a gift card to a local restaurant, as well as have a sign will be posted in their beautiful yard and a picture of their home will be displayed on our web site.

Welcome, First-Time Buyers



Few events in life are more exciting than buying your first home. We're glad you've chosen us! You're now a member of our community association. We're proud of our association and trust it will contribute to the quality of your experience in our community. Here are a few tips and bits of information to help you make the most of community association living.

Your Own Space

There's one important difference between renting and owning a home that you need to keep in mind. Unlike renting, your home and its upkeep belong entirely to you. You're responsible for all maintenance for any part of your home that is used only by you or your family. So, when the faucet leaks, the first person to call is your favorite plumber, not the association manager.

Common Elements and Assessments

The community has a few common areas and services—like the grounds and the maintenance to keep them attractive and enjoyable. We share these areas and their expenses when we pay our assessments.

Community Rules

Because many residents share the common areas, it's necessary to have a few basic rules so everyone can enjoy the community. If you don't have a copy of the community rules, please contact the manager.

Membership

When you bought your new home, you became a member of our community association. Membership entitles you to attend and observe board meetings and vote in board elections. You may even want to consider running for a board seat yourself. Our community thrives because residents volunteer for committee assignments and eagerly stand for board elections. Get involved—we need you.

Please contact the manager for more information or if you have questions about the association.

From the Management Desk

Just a quick note from the Manager. Things have been busy through the first part of the year. As many folks may know, I am licensed by the State of Florida as a Community Association Manager (CAM). With that said, I am required to complete twenty hours of continuing education over the two-year period of my license. The State divides these hours into several categories, to make sure CAM's are educated in various areas of the business. These include Law Updates, Human Resources, Financial Management and Operation of Physical Property. I recently completed all requirements, in-order to renew my license for another two years.

One of the classes I recently completed was titled "Disaster Prevention and Response for Community Associations". This class was very informative and especially at this time of year - Hurricane Season. This prompted me to include the article "How to Prepare for the Worst" later in this newsletter. We've been very fortunate over the past several years to not have a storm, but we should never get too complacent.

Thank you for allowing me to continue on as manager. I hope everyone enjoys their summer and we look forward to seeing you at the Semi-Annual Meeting.

Thank you again.

Kevin Billingsley

Community Association Manager, CAM37024

How to Prepare for the Worst

While September is National Preparedness Month, this information seems perfect for the start of Hurricane Season. Take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in your homes, businesses and schools. Think first about the basics of survival—fresh water, food, clean air and warmth, according to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Ready Campaign.

Here are some items recommended for a basic emergency supply kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for each
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit & Local Maps
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)

You might consider adding these additional items:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or similar information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper. When diluted nine parts to one-part water and bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire extinguisher
- Personal hygiene items
- Paper cups, plates and towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencils
- Books, games, puzzles and other activities for adults and children.

For more information, visit www.ready.gov

Emerald Gardens, HOA

PO Box 21401

Sarasota, FL 34276-4401

Pond Committee Update

The pond committee met with our new service provider West Coast Lake & Wetland Management to review the short and long term plans to return our pond to a healthy state. After representatives from the county reviewed the current pond quality they noted the littoral shelf is out of compliance. Special care and attention needs to be paid to the littoral shelf as it is the filter for our pond, before water flows out or is percolated back into the aquifers, which feed our drinking water. They understand we are working to bring it to compliance and have verbally stated we will not be put on monitoring, which carries a monthly cost. We do need to move quickly to meet compliance as we do not know how long this grace period will last.

As we approach the board with the short and long term options, please keep in mind this is a Community-Wide effort and everyone's efforts are needed for our success. We ask that everyone be conscious of the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, dog droppings, grass clippings and household chemicals, which all run off through the storm drains ending up in the pond. All of these are contributors to the unsightly algae which many homeowners have voiced concerns about. We again ask that homeowners who live on the pond maintain a low maintenance, no-mow buffer zone. This allows any runoff of chemicals to filter through the grasses and also helps create a larger root structure to anchor the soil thereby reducing bank erosion which is visible around the pond. These are not merely suggestions they are critical changes everyone needs to practice.

Once the littoral shelf is back to compliance, we can then move forward with plans to apply for matching grants from Sarasota County for plantings and other projects, that will enhance the pond and make it more self-regulating thereby reducing the need for chemical treatments. Community support is vital for our efforts to be successful to restore our pond to a healthy and attractive water feature and serve as the water filter it was created for.

Free Directory Assistance for Cell Phones

If you've ever had to call directory assistance using your cell phone, you know cell phone companies are charging \$1.75 or more for 411 information calls. AT&T charges \$7.00 per call! If your car has broken down or a big business deal depends on getting a number from information, \$7 might be acceptable. "Despite the charges, U.S. consumers continue to avail themselves of the 411 directory assistance service, placing about six billion such calls per year," explains the rumor-busting website snopes.com.

For the rest of us, however, an economical alternative is now available. You can get directory assistance on your cell phone (or land line) at 1-800-FREE 411 (or 1-800-373-3411). And it's free. Add this number to your cell phone now, before you actually need it. The service is voice activated and offers the option to connect the call. Of course, nothing is entirely free, so be prepared to listen to a brief audio advertisement. For more details, visit www.snopes.com/inboxer/nothing/free411.asp