



Emerald Gardens Jewel

SPRING 2019

From the Desk of the President:

Welcome to the Emerald Gardens Spring Jewel 2019. A special welcome to all of our new homeowners! We pride ourselves as a very desirable community. We are close to the beaches to the west, and just a stone's throw to the interstate to the east. Our area is growing by leaps and bounds.

According to our records along with MLS data, our home values have gone up progressively over the past several years. We would like to think this is a result of our active Homeowner Association & Management, who encourage residents to maintain and improve their homes, whereby upgrading the entire Emerald Gardens community.

We recently formed a Care & Appearance Committee, which has proven valuable to our community. Our neighborhood is inspected on a regular basis, to identify any property that may need attention. I encourage everyone to participate and communicate via our website. As we work together, I'm confident our community will continue to thrive and increase in value.

The board is currently working to update our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, with regard to non-compliance fines and several other items. We encourage all residents to participate in the process and vote. We plan discussions at our semi-annual meeting in July. If you are unable to attend, we encourage you to return your proxy. This enables us to have a quorum.

Please join me in recognizing our Board & Committee members and welcome anyone who would like to volunteer. Please know your Association is committed to our community and pride ourselves on our availability and results.

Sincerely,
John Kelner
Association Board President

www.EmeraldGardens.org

WELCOME NEW HOMEOWNERS

January - June 2019

4450 Diamond Circle S.
Anthony & Lisa Bosco

4427 Opal Court
Katarzyna Maziarka

4497 Opal Court
Nataliya Pecher

4501 Diamond Circle E.
Lisa Griffith

SAVE THE DATE!

SEMI ANNUAL MEETING

The Emerald Gardens semi Annual Meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, July 25, 2019** 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.

Door Prizes to four (4) lucky homeowners!

DATE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Emerald Gardens

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Current Board of Directors

President	John Kelner
Vice President	Phillip Lucia
Secretary	Melanie Marsh
Treasurer	Virginia Phillips
Member at Large	Chuck Berster
Business Manager:	
Kevin Billingsley, CAM37024	
Newsletter Editor	Kevin Billingsley
Webmaster	Kevin Billingsley

THANK YOU DAVE & JUDY!

On behalf of the Emerald Gardens Board of Directors and all Emerald Gardens residents, I would like to thank Dave and Judy Lutes.

For many years, Dave and Judy have had countless volunteer hours putting up Christmas lights and putting out flags for the various holidays. They have decided to officially retire!

Thank you Dave and Judy. Your efforts over the years are much appreciated!

“LEND A HAND” IDEA

Here’s an idea to consider: We could establish an on-line community of Emerald Garden residents to create and strengthen connections and the sense of community within our neighborhood. It would also give you an easy place to borrow a cup of sugar!

We all have friends and maybe even family in this area and hopefully immediate neighbors we can lean on, but this would expand the support system. This would create a network.

What form would it take? The simplest might be an email distribution list. People would opt in and provide their contact info and note what they may be willing (or unwilling) to do. Maybe we would create a listserve with a moderator? Does anyone have an interest in doing that for us? We would have a disclaimer, that we are not vouching for the reliability of people and we would not hold the homeowner’s association responsible. It is simply neighbor to neighbor.

Why would you want to be a part of such a list?

- ✓ Resident does not want to appear to live alone: They contact someone on the list to simply be present. For example, if they want to sell an item on Craig’s List, where potential buyers would come to the house. Also for deliveries, service people and sales people.
- ✓ If resident is out of town: Meet uber/lyft/taxi when resident is departing. Some people are hesitant to use these services, as they don’t want to appear to be leaving an empty house behind when they leave.
- ✓ Neighbor can double-check that mail (newspaper) has been stopped and be sure no solicitation items are hanging on front door.
- ✓ Lend a hand: help hang a picture/carry, lift or move something/ act as ladder spotter.
- ✓ Borrow a specialized power tool, household equipment, tables, chairs and entertaining supplies.

Other possibilities:

- ✓ It can become whatever anyone wants it to become. If people want to share house keys, that is totally their choice. That opens the door (bad pun!) to additional ways to help:
- ✓ Emergency pet care if someone gets unexpectedly stuck away from home, retrieving packages and placing them inside the home.

If you have any thoughts on this idea, please email Laurie at LaurieLSrq@gmail.com

Laurie Lachowitz
Emerald Gardens Welcome Committee

CARE AND APPEARANCE COMMITTEE

Page 5, Section 21. Care and Appearance of Premises (reads in part):

All improved lots shall be fully sodded. Each owner shall be responsible for maintaining all landscaping, grass, driveways, structures, and grounds in good condition and repair in a neat and attractive manner, to include mowing, edging and clippings cleanup.

This is taken from our Emerald Gardens deed restrictions. We all read and signed them when we bought homes here.

Having lived in Emerald Gardens for almost thirty years, we have seen a lot of changes. Mostly for the good, especially in recent months. If you walk or drive around, you'll notice the majority of properties now look well maintained.

The appearance of your yard and landscaping is the first impression people see. On our side of the neighborhood, we are very lucky to have to friends around us who take great pride in the appearance of their properties. This includes a wonderful 92-year-old senior, Doris, who maintains her property beautifully. Another of my neighbors went above and beyond when the Care and Appearance committee recommended some "cleaning and sprucing up" of landscaping. In addition to making these corrections, she had her whole yard re-sodded! We thank her and all the homeowners who have made corrections when asked to do so.

Our current concern is there are homes in EG that have reached the point of having very little or no sod/grass at all and some homeowners who are not edging their lawns on a regular basis. Additionally, some homeowners have ignored the deed restriction



and added stones, crushed concrete, or concrete where there should be yard or landscaping. The Care & Appearance Committee and the Board will be discussing these specific issues in the months ahead. I think it is time we encourage our neighbors to take pride and care in the appearance of their homes and properties. When we take the time to prune, plant, edge and nurture our yard and landscape, it's appreciated by those who live around us.

I will close with this last observation- There was a homeowner who decided it was time to sell her home. The exterior landscaping and yard had been badly maintained for years. Through the suggestion of her realtor, she spent time and money fixing things up, so she could get more money for her home. I guess she didn't realize that her neighbors had been looking at her messy property for years.

Thanks to the support of the Board in creating the Care & Appearance Committee, we aim to keep situations like this from happening to you.

Jo-Anne & Roger

Did You Notice a Change?

Recently the Florida Legislature changed the rule for HOA mailings. The new rule reads as follows –

Florida Statute 720.306 Meeting of members; voting and election procedures; amendments. Subsection 1 (g) A notice required under this section must be mailed or delivered to the address identified as the parcel owner's mailing address on the property appraiser's website for the county in which the parcel is located, or electronically transmitted in a manner authorized by the association if the parcel owner has consented, in writing, to receive notice by electronic transmission.

This means, if you have provided an address to the HOA, that is not the one listed on the Florida Property Appraiser web site, your association addressed mail will be different. We are now required to use the PA address. All of our 127 homes have been checked and/or corrected. This we will do on a regular basis.

LANDSCAPING WITH FLORIDA NATIVE PLANTS

**ZACHARY WIERZBA,
DIAMOND CIRCLE EAST**

Have you planted an ornamental exotic shrub, only to have it thin out and look sickly after a year or two? Has it been preyed upon by insects, with any new growth being chewed up and badly damaged?

Chances are, you've got the wrong plant in the wrong location. Ornamental and exotic plants may look tropical, but they are not adapted to Florida's poor soil and hot climate and may not last long without excessive fertilizer and pesticide use. If you're suffering from ornamental failure, ask your landscaper or nursery about using Florida native plants. There's always a native replacement for an exotic plant! Native plants have been in Florida since sea levels dropped 23 million years ago. They have adapted to the sandy soils and hot, dry springs with little to no rainfall. If you look around in nature, you'll note that natives are growing quite well on rainfall alone. Once established, native grasses, flowers, shrubs, and trees need no irrigation or fertilizer.

Planted in appropriate settings, natives minimize or eliminate fertilizer use. Much of Florida has nutrient-poor soils, and the species that grow naturally in those soils do so without need of fertilizer. Never over-fertilize - it will run off into our pond and contribute to algae blooms and water pollution.

Planted in lieu of grass, natives minimize the need for pesticides. Native plants have adapted to the pests of Florida and have natural mechanisms to prevent infestation. Pesticides not only kill detrimental insects, but beneficial pollinators such as bees (both native and honeybee variants), wasps, butterflies, and beetles. Many have heard about the declining bee populations - now is your time to help reverse this trend. Native plants have adapted their flower shapes to the native bees' bodies, allowing them access to



nectar while pollination occurs. Ornamental exotic plants have flowers shaped for their own native insect species, which could prevent our native bees from gaining access to nectar.

Native plants provide food and shelter for native wildlife. Many songbirds rely on the fruit, seeds, and insects that occur on native plants. Walter's Viburnum, Yaupon Holly, Florida Privet, Marl berry, Wax Myrtle, and Simpson's Stopper all produce beautiful flowers and fruit which songbirds, small mammals, and insects alike feed on.

Have a large oak tree that casts shade all day? Florida has native plants that thrive in the deep shade. Try wild coffee (*Psychotria nervosa*) — the more shade it receives, the glossier the leaves are. This shrub has small white flowers year-round that bees love and produces gorgeous red “beans” that songbirds enjoy. Planting large islands of native trees, shrubs, grasses, and flowers in your yard will save you both time and money over trying to keep turf grass alive, all while contributing to Florida's unique ecosystem.

Pond Update

After recently completing a study on the plant coverage in the littoral shelf, it appears that the steady efforts over the few years have put us in compliance for Sarasota County. The coverage was just a few points over compliance so this means we are on the edge, but remain hopeful that continued efforts will push our percentages higher. With that said, we are now making efforts to apply to the Fall 2019 Cycle of the Neighborhood Initiative Grant Program to seek out matching funds, to put the aerator into the pond and plantings along the lakeshore but not in the littoral zone.

To compile the materials and prepare the proposal for the Board of County Commissioners we needed certification. [Deb Pietsch and Melanie Marsh attended the county workshop on April 30, 2019 and both received certificates of compliance. We have much to do to meet the September 2nd deadline and with that said a key component of the application process will be community support. We need as many signatures as possible from Emerald Garden homeowners to show the support of the community, in our efforts to do all we can to support the healthy environment of our storm water retention pond for the health of our drinking water and to support the aquatic life that we all enjoy seeing in and around the pond. We will be at the Semi Annual Meeting gathering signatures so please make plans to attend and if we do not get](#)

enough signatures, we will need to take our efforts to the streets and may be knocking on doors for support.

Remember this is a Community-Wide effort and everyone's efforts are needed for our success in reducing the algae blooms we see on the pond. We are asking 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 and 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.

Remember our plans to put in an aerator and do plantings along the water shoreline will enhance the pond and make it more self-regulating thereby reducing the need for chemical treatments. If we are successful in being awarded the grants it is a wonderful opportunity to match our contributions with matching County funds. Community support is vital for our efforts to be successful to restore and keep our pond to a healthy and attractive water feature and serve as the water filter it was created for.

Thank you for your continued support.
Pond Committee

TO GARAGE SALE, OR NOT TO GARAGE SALE?

My article this edition, deals with the Annual Garage Sale held every year in our community. For the last several years, it has been the first Saturday in November and for the past many years, it has been my pleasure, not only to participate in the sale, but to volunteer my time to help in the coordination of the sale. My involvement includes, ad placement, retrieving the signs from storage, placing the signs the day of the sale, tallying the participants, then retrieving the signs at the end of the sale and returning them to storage.

While this has always been my pleasure to volunteer in this capacity, over the past couple of years, the increased complaints and negativity by homeowners has made this very difficult. Complaints include the lack of community participants, the date of the sale and the small crowds because of other activities in the Sarasota area.

For these reasons, I will be stepping back from my volunteer duties and referring this to someone else. Whether this is an individual or a committee. It is time for someone else to step up and help out. Should Emerald Gardens continue to have an annual sale, this will be up to the new volunteer(s). If you would like to fill this position, please complete the **Contact Us** page on our web site and we will refer all questions, comments and suggestions to you.

Thank you.
Kevin



Emerald Gardens HOA

PO Box 21401

Sarasota, FL 34276-4401

DO YOUR NUMBERS SHOW?

Having your house numbers in a visible location, is very important in a residential community. While it is not the law, it is highly recommended according to the Sarasota Fire Marshall. These are the guidelines often used by communities. In order for house numbers to be visible from the street, it is recommended the numbers:



- Be large. Jurisdictions that regulate the size of street numbers generally require them to be 3 to 6 inches tall. Many jurisdictions require that the numbers be of a certain thickness, such as 1/2-inch.
- Be of a color that contrasts with their background. Reflective numbers are usually helpful because they are easier to see at night than numbers that are not reflective;
- Not be obscured by any trees, shrubs, or other permanent objects;
- Face the street that is named in the house's address. It does emergency workers no good, if the house number faces a different street than the one the workers are traveling on;
- Be clearly displayed at the driveway entrance if the house is not visible from the road.



We are currently looking for volunteers to take over the Flag duties as well as the Christmas lights. Are you up to the call? If so, please let us know. You can go to our web site and fill out the "Contact Us" page, or send an email to the manager. SRQCAM37024@gmail.com
Thank you for your consideration.