

DEEP CREEK GAZETTE

SECTION 23 PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA

August 2013

PRESIDENTS REPORT

This Article was originally printed in the September issue of the Deep Creek News and is reprinted for larger distribution.

Recently it has come to our attention that owners are asking about Section 23 owning various properties. Those same people are asking why we are using the association's money to buy these properties. We have 22 properties in Section 23 and we obtained them all by default. When owners do not pay the annual assessment, we file a lien against the property. Most of these liens are because the owners are years behind in payments. We must file or we lose any chance of collecting our fees.

Although this changes from time to time, we currently have 22 properties. Twenty (20) of these are vacant lots and of these lots 15 are scrub jay lots. (This means they cannot build on these properties without lots of money and trouble). Two (2) of these 22 properties have houses and are abandoned. In fact most of these properties are abandoned.

We have 8 of these properties up for sale to collect the back assessment fees. Most of the 22 properties have a large mortgage and back taxes. We do not pay either of these. Some the county takes over and some are sold by the banks. Also, we have sold two (2). We pay for cutting the grass and keeping up the general appearance of the properties. We have trimmed many of these properties, removed an abandoned pool and re-screened a pool cage, all at a cost to the POA. We eventually will attempt to recover this cost when the property is sold. Also, I would like to point out that in many cases, neighbors keep up these properties. The neighbors volunteer to cut the grass, trim the bushes and remove the weeds. I would like to thank all who join in to help keep up the

neighborhood. These are special people.

If you have any questions on this issue, please call the office, leave your name and phone number. I or someone else will get back to you.

Also, please mark your calendar or your smart phone for October 30th of this year. At 7:00PM we will have our annual meeting at the Lutheran Church on Luther Road. All are welcome.

As the kids are now back in school, please drive carefully, especially on the main roads.

Ron Woods, President

VACANT LOT OWNERS

The Board of Directors has decided to offer a revised program for the mowing of vacant lots. Instead of having two or three different lot mowing contractors, and in some cases the owners mowing their own lots, the Association is offering to contract with mowing contractors on your behalf.

This will eliminate having to send out notices to the owners that their lots need to be mowed, thereby the owner having to make contact with their mowing contractor and paying \$65 per mowing plus a \$25 admin fee when the Association has to have the problem taken care of.

For the same fee as being charged by individual lot mowing contractors, the Association will have your lot mowed and you can be sure that you will always be in compliance with the deed restrictions regarding lot mowing.

The Association will be sending a letter to all vacant lot owners outlining more details of the vacant lot mowing program. Please watch for this correspondence and respond as soon as possible.

A REPORT ON OUR GOVERNMENTS

Well the long delayed sidewalk on Capricorn Blvd. is finally done! In addition, the Sandhill Blvd. sidewalk has been completed.

Now our goal is to convince the County to keep their promises regarding repaving selected streets this year. The one in most need is Capricorn, as it has been severely degraded by the construction of the water interconnect line on one side, and the sidewalk on the other. It is a major connector street and sees significant heavy truck traffic. I have seen many unpaved roads in Maine that are in far better condition than Capricorn.

Although not in Deep Creek, the mega construction project on Rampart surely affects many of us. This project was supposed to be completed by the end of July. I am writing this on July 31st, and it looks like we will have our annual meeting before this road building project is done! Apparently this project is being paid for by Benderson Dev. Co., not the County. It seems as though much of the work consists of moving dirt back and forth! Once the new part of the road is completed, the existing part (the west side) will be torn up and raised to meet the grade level of the new construction. Of course the existing bottleneck of the bridge over I-75 will remain, as the State is unwilling to widen that bridge.

If you travel up and down I-75, you will see that additional lanes are being built everywhere. Eventually additional lanes will be constructed here. We need to be vigilant and insist that a sound barrier wall be constructed along I-75 where it passes through Deep Creek adjacent to Capricorn Blvd. Additional lanes would significantly increase the sound and air pollution from the highway and we want the same sound walls that have been constructed along the other parts of I-75.

The clean out of the Desoto canal is slow but ongoing. The concern is for wildlife in the canal including gopher tortoises and scrub jays. We will continue to monitor the project, and advocate for a timely completion.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any other concerns with our County, State or Federal Government.

Harvey Goldstein, Vice President

LAKES

We are fortunate to have six (6) lakes in Section 23 with a total of 226 acres; Zappa 105 acres; Henry 37 acres; Bengal 31 acres; Barnes 21 acres; Rio 20 acres and Explorer 12 acres. A great deal of effort goes into the beautification of our lakes such as keeping them free of algae and weeds. The lakes are stocked with grass eating carp which helps with keeping algae under control.

A few years ago six (6) cages were installed in Lake Zappa. These cages are ideal for the growth and development of very young fish.

Fishing in the lakes is limited to Section 23 homeowners and their guests. If you use a boat, remember only electric or manual propulsion is permitted.

It is important that we keep our property owner information current. Please notify Section 23 of an address change as soon as possible!

PAYMENTS

You can now make payment of the annual assessment safely and securely On-Line. Visit the website www.section23poa.com and follow the Link that will take you to our Payment Page.

CUL-DE-SAC BEAUTIFICATION

There have been ten (10) cul-de-sacs completed this year. Drive by and check them out. They are located at:

Olla Court
Kindel Court
Obelisk Court
Razorbill Lane
Templar Lane
Salonika Lane
Ocelot Lane
Northern Cross Road
Rosamond Court (x2)

DEED RESTRICTIONS

As a resident of Charlotte County since 1978, I have seen the area grow from under thirty thousand residents to over one hundred thousand.

Our first home was in PGI and I signed an Acknowledgement of Deed Restrictions. Like most I didn't pay detailed attention to them, because I considered myself a good citizen and I would not have any conflict with the Deed Restrictions. Overall my violations were minor, although my first letter to comply felt insulting and embarrassing, and as most I got defensive and felt singled out or discriminated against. After all I was a 27 year old with a customized van that I could not fit in the garage. My other violation was not keeping my garbage cans in the garage or out of sight. At that time I felt that the restrictions violated my rights, however over the years I realized that deed restrictions are important in maintaining the quality of life and value of our property.

Florida attracts people from all over the world with different backgrounds and life styles. It makes sense to have basic guidelines to maintain an attractive neighborhood that would attract like minded residents and would maintain the property values for everyone's benefit.

Although the POA's voluntary directors do the best they can at inspecting, it is always helpful to receive reports from the residents. Once the Association office is aware of a violation it is confirmed by the committee, and then the compliance process starts.

A first letter is sent as a friendly reminder that a restriction is being violated. The second letter is sent citing the Article that is being violated. The final notice is much like the second notice. Once the final notice date expires, without compliance, the matter is turned over to the Association Attorney for litigation. All attorney's fees and court costs are charged to the property owner.

The majority of property owners comply, however, we do have residents or property owners that would rather be difficult. This leads to letters from our attorney, mediation and lawsuits that take time and

money. That is why you as a good citizen, see violations that persist and seem like there is no enforcement. I assure everyone that the Board is as diligent as legally possible.

We welcome any help that you can give by reporting deed restriction violations. Monthly board meetings are open to all property owners, I encourage you to attend to get first hand knowledge of our efforts.

Our homes are an investment that we want the value to increase over time. Deed restricted communities maintain their value better than non-deed restricted areas. I can personally verify this fact, since I've seen with my own eyes over the past 35 years owning three homes in Charlotte County.

Andy Kontos, Treasurer, DR Committee

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Permits issued

October 2012 thru August 2013:

Single Family Homes-----	3
Multi Family Dwellings-----	0
Pools-----	8
Fences/Enclosures -----	14
Additions-----	5

Permits are required for the following:

- ◆ New Homes
- ◆ Pools
- ◆ Fences/Enclosures
- ◆ Additions/Remodels
- ◆ Concrete Flatwork
- ◆ Exterior Paint Color
- ◆ Garage Sales

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Financial Statements for fiscal year 2012-2013 will be available at the Association office for your review by October 31, 2013.

DEED RESTRICTION SUMMARY:

- Properties are to be maintained in an attractive condition, the lawn is to be mowed, weeds are to be removed and trees/shrubs are to be trimmed on a regular basis. Dead plantings and trees are to be removed and replaced. Properties are also to be in compliance with Minimum Landscape Requirements.

- All trash, garbage containers and recycle bins must be stored out of view, behind a 5 foot high enclosure/landscaping or in your garage.

- One "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign is permitted, not to exceed 6" x 8" in size.

- Vehicles are not permitted to be parked on the grass, including vacant lots, greenbelts, cul-de-sacs and the right of way.

- RV's, motor homes, campers, travel trailers & boats may be parked, in the driveway, for 48 hours within a 7 day period to outfit/prep.

- Utility trailers of any kind are restricted to the garage only and are not permitted to park overnight.

- Commercial vehicles, including those with advertisement are not permitted to park overnight.

- Miscellaneous items, including lawn mowers, wheelbarrows, ladders, BBQ grills, storage bins, etc. must be stored out of view.

- Pets are to be leashed when taken beyond the property lines of the owner. Pet owners must remove "messes" left by their pet from all areas of the properties.

ASSOCIATION OFFICE STAFF

Assoc. Manager	Jay Carlson
Office Manager	Teresa Boucher
Office Secretary	Dorothy Cabott

WATCH YOUR STEP!

Deep Creek residents are lucky to have beautiful roads and surrounding landscape to walk on, run, and bicycle. What spoils any of these activities is a large or small "load" left by some one's dog. The POA office receives numerous complaints from residents reporting dog owners who walk on vacant lots, in the swales and greenbelts who do not pick up after their precious pets. Please be courteous to your neighbors. Bring a plastic bag when taking a walk with your dog so if it "has to go" you can pick it up and dispose of it at home. If you are taking your dog out to "do his business" don't do it on someone else's property!

HOW TO REACH US

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Ronald Woods
Vice President	Harvey Goldstein
Treasurer	Andrew Kontos
Secretary	Guy Neroni
Director	Joseph Harris
Director	Karen Perry
Director	Cyril Schrage

COMMITTEES

Architectural Review	Ronald Woods
Lakes & Greenbelts	Ronald Woods
County Liaison	Harvey Goldstein
Deed Restrictions	Harvey Goldstein
	Joseph Harris
	Andrew Kontos
	Guy Neroni
	Karen Perry
	Cyril Schrage