

LakeRidge Falls

4200 LakeRidge Blvd.
Sarasota, FL 34243

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Here are the more important stories we had this past and upcoming weeks:

Tuttle Sidewalk – For those who walk or drove outside the community recently, it is hard to miss the major work that is taking place along the community wall on Tuttle Ave. Just in case you are unaware of what is going on, Manatee County crews are working on the long stretch of sidewalk adjacent to the west side section of the community 's perimeter wall. More specifically, Manatee County crews, for the last couple of weeks, have been removing a significant amount of raised sections of the sidewalk, eliminating the source that caused them to be lifted, and preparing the grounds for the cement pouring stage. Thankfully, it seems the work is near completion. However, this work did not take place out of the blue. It is a result of the hard work of the Roads & Grounds Committee (R&G).

As reported in the past, the Roads & Grounds Committee (R&G) conducted a long and detailed survey of the community's sidewalks. The survey, which was performed by all members of the R&G, identified all areas in the community that the R&G felt needed to be addressed. During this survey, the members of the Committee felt that the area outside the community, mainly the sidewalk along Tuttle Ave, should be addressed. However, the responsibility of maintaining this stretch seemed to fall on Manatee County as they repaired and maintained it in the past. Therefore, attempts were made since last year to ask Manatee County to address this issue.

During its January meeting, the R&G revisited the matter of sidewalk maintenance. Knowing again that not much progress was made to correct the issue, the R&G suggested that its members attempt to contact Manatee County individually, as concerned residents, urging the County to step up in eliminating these significant tripping hazards. One member, Mr. Ron Dampier, step forward promising not to stop until this issue is addressed. For the next 4 months, Mr. Dampier made sure to follow up with the County, again as a concerned resident, on a regular base. Once he was he got confirmation that the County will address this matter, he ensured the issue would not be put on the back burner. Thanks to Mr. Dampier's power of perseverance and the work of the R&G, residents from all around will be able to walk safely along Tuttle Ave.

Landscape – The past week will not be remembered, to say the least, as the best mowing job in LakeRidge Falls' history. Here is why. As many noticed, the grass in LakeRidge Falls is getting taller and fuller by the day. This is the result of a winning combination of warmer weather, proactive fertilization program, and much -needed rain. Because of that, a mowing job can be quite challenging at times. While in most cases West Bay Landscape, the Association's landscape maintenance company, knows how to handle the situation with no or little issues, this week proved to be a little bit unique.

The first issue was that the length of the grass, which, using contemporary terminology, grew exponentially since the last time it was mowed. You see, the taller and thicker the grass, the harder to execute a clean mow. Why? Well, taller grass means that there is a good chance grass clipping will be stuck on the mulching blades, especially Bahiagrass which is stringy. In order to cut the grass properly, therefore, the mowers need to go slower than their normal speed. The problem is that a slower mowing rate would mean a weeklong or longer mowing schedule, which is of course unrealistic. Therefore, unclean mow, which may include grass clipping, uneven mows, etc., is inevitable.

Speaking of grass clippings, the second issue was the much-needed rain. Rain means wet grass. Wet grass means a greater likelihood of a large pile of grass clippings. Of course, wet turf also means potential ruts which are caused by the heavy machinery used. The much-needed rain also was accommodated with thunderstorms. While West Bay may attempt to work while there is light rain, they do not have much choice when lightning is present. Therefore, West Bay had to cut the day short on Monday. When work is stopped in the middle of the day or is rushed to accomplish tasks before the heavy rain/lightning starts, it's bound that some aspects of the work will be overlooked, mainly areas that were not edged and/or mowed.

This leads us to the next point which is equipment malfunction. When using mowing machinery on well-saturated turf while attempting to accomplish a task before the heavy rains /lightning start, there is a chance the equipment being used will break. On Monday and Tuesday, the stars aligned in a way that a couple of mowers, among them the large batwing mower, which is used for larger areas, broke. This meant that if on Tuesday West Bay had no much choice but to step up their game. For this reason, another crew was added and even the trimming crew stepped in to help. Yet, attention to detail is not in one's mind when knowing that a task must be completed by the end of the day because tomorrow another community needs its turf to be mowed.

To sum it up, it was not an easy week for the mowing crew because the grass was taller than usual, the rain made it harder to mow/finish the task on time, and equipment malfunction interfered with the flow of work. Combining all these made for a less than satisfactory mowing job. The good side of the story is that despite all the above we were able to identify and address most of the affected areas. With the help of residents who brought their concerns to our attention and thoroughly inspecting the Association grounds on foot for several hours, substantial matters were addressed late Tuesday afternoon and early morning on Wednesday. Of course, the Association does not accept such performances regardless of the circumstances. Therefore and for the future, West Bay promised to minimize the factors under their control that lead to the performance mentioned above.

The first step is that West Bay will start its weekly mowing schedule this coming Monday. This schedule will continue until late October /early November.

Irrigation – The past few weeks presented us with a few interesting cases regarding irrigation repairs. The first case involved a two-inch irrigation line that was squeezed by the roots of a nearby oak tree. Thanks to continuous reports of a concerned resident, Mr. Victor Martinez, West Bay Landscape Irrigation Technician, was able to pinpoint the reason why the pressure in the irrigation system in this area was low. A week or so later, residents reported a constant leak coming from the ground. Upon further inspection, Mr. Martinez discovered a broken 2-inch PVC slip coupling. Many may not know, but please note that a broken coupling, which is only 3-inch in length, is a rare sight. Another week passed and Mr. Martinez noticed a leak near the bocce courts. This time around, it was a leak in a 4-inch irrigation mainline resulted from a broken T coupling. Below are a few pictures of those unique cases. A final note, please be aware that the irrigation will remain off during this weekend due to the scheduled rains.



As always, have a healthy and safe weekend.

Sincerely,

Oded Neeman - CAM

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