



Falls Forum

MARCH 2021

A message from your Board...

by Scott Sims, President

Every year at LakeRidge Falls, we usher in a new Board of Directors as prescribed in our documents. This year, we proudly have five directors, three of whom are new, and two with one year of valuable experience. It is our hope to bring with us, ways of guiding our community that will earn the respect of our residents. Earning that respect holds true for our committees as well. We are all here to serve you.

The outgoing board had many new challenges to deal with, primarily the effects of the Covid-19 virus, and they rose and met those challenges. Who would ever think that we would be meeting on computer and phone screens in this community, made up of seniors, could handle this new technology. Let's hope, that this year, we can slowly return to in-person meetings and social events, finally utilizing what our new clubhouse has to offer.

Your new board consists of:

Suzanne Weinstein serves as Vice President. She is a retired educator and a very active swimmer, previously serving as co-chair of the Pool Committee. This year she will be liaison to both the Architectural Review Board and the Pool Committee. Welcome Suzi.

Our Secretary, Judy Buffa moved to LRF in 2002 from Okinawa, Japan having retired from the Department of Defense Dependents School System. She then took a part-time job at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee just up the street. After



fully retiring in 2015 from USFSM, she became more active in LRF joining the Buildings and CRC Committees as well as being a part of the Vision Project, the Design Group and the Long Range Ponds Working Group.

Treasurer Calvin Fitzgerald attended California State University at San Diego in the early 1960's with the goal of becoming an Aeronautical Engineer, when he was drafted and became a member of the US Army. After basic training, he was sent to The US Army School of Finance and thus avoided going to Vietnam. This began a life-long romance with numbers and accounting. After completing his time in the army, he went back to Cal State, switched his major to Accounting, and got a part-time job with an Aerospace company in (yes) Accounting. Over the years, Calvin has held positions, starting with Army Payroll Clerk, Book Keeper, Tax Accountant, Accounting Manager, Controller, VP Finance, Treasurer, and Chief Financial Officer of both privately held and publicly traded business organizations. Four years ago, Calvin and his wife Terry, moved to LakeRidge Falls and finally retired. Or did he?

Katie (Kate) Corning serves as Director at Large, a position equal to any other Board member. She is an avid nature photographer, has served for 13 years on the Fort Myers

LRF ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Scott Sims: President@lakeridgefalls.org
VP, Suzanne Weinstein: VicePresident@lakeridgefalls.org
Treasurer, Calvin Fitzgerald: Treasurer@lakeridgefalls.org
Secretary, Judy Buffa: Secretary@lakeridgefalls.org
Director, Kate Corning: Director@lakeridgefalls.org

Committees

Architectural Review Board (ARB)

Scott Sims, Board Liaison
Suzanne Weinstein, Co-Board Liaison
Lanny Weintraub, Chairperson
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of the month at 10:00am

Budget Committee

Scott Sims, Board Liaison
Calvin Fitzgerald, Co-Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings as needed

Buildings Committee

Scott Sims, Board Liaison
Judy Buffa, Co-Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of the month at 2:00pm

Community Relations Committee (CRC)

Judy Buffa, Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings: 4th Friday of the month at 9:00am

Landscape Committee

Kate Corning, Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10:00am

Roads and Grounds Committee

Calvin Fitzgerald, Board Liaison
Kate Corning, Co-Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings: 4th Friday of the month at 10:00am

Pool Committee

Suzanne Weinstein, Board Liaison
Dorie Parsons, Chairperson
Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of the Month at 2:00pm

Security Committee

Judy Buffa, Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings as needed

Hurricane Preparedness Group

Judy Buffa, Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings as needed

Long –Term Landscape Plan Working Group

Kate Corning, Board Liaison
TBD, Chairperson
Meetings as needed

Social Committee

TBD, Chairperson
Meetings: 1st Monday of the month at 10:00am

Art League

TBD, President
Meetings as needed

www.lakeridgefalls.org

Beach Library Board of Directors, a PTA president, and is well versed in communications and technology. Welcome Kate.

My working background is in retail management. I owned and operated a traditional camera store in Rochester, NY and if you remember something called “film”; my store specialized in quality film processing. I enjoy taking pictures in my travels, as well as volunteering in our Sarasota community.

At the last Board meeting on February 12, we approved the contract for West Bay Landscape which runs through next January; approved the contract for the audit of the 2020 financials; allocated up to \$8,000 to begin executing the plans drawn up by the Long Term Planning Committee with West Bay; approved a palm tree treatment plan to help save the community’s palms; approved an ARB amendment; approved a contract for mulching; approved a contract to maintain the fitness equipment; and discussed the role of committee liaisons. That was one large agenda.

Your Board as with most of the committees meet once per month. These meets are open to all members of the Lakeridge Falls community, and I urge you to attend virtually, or in person, respectful of the CDC guidelines which we continue to follow. As is our long-standing policy, we follow a predetermined agenda to which you can contribute in advance, but when time allows, we are able to hear from you.

Your new Board wishes all the best for a fruitful and healthy year to come.

Office

Property Manager: Oded Neeman
Phone: 360-1046 Line #101
email: PropertyManager@lakeridgefalls.org
After hours Emergency Only - 941-951-4034

Community Assistant/ LRF Falls Forum: Paula Murray
Phone: 360-1046 Line #103 Hours: M-W-F 9:30am - 12:00pm
email: Paula@lakeridgefalls.org

Guardhouse: 355-1328 / Security@lakeridgefalls.org

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Property Manager Report

by Oded Neeman

2021 Election – Last month, LakeRidge Falls held its Annual Meeting, but this year it was done mainly on the virtual platform or Go-To-Meeting. It was amazing to witness how LakeRidge Falls, as a community, proved once again, as it does each year, an outstanding positive community spirit as around 330 members, out of 399, turned in their proxy and amendments votes ahead of the meeting. After a long night, mainly because of the long counting process of one election and five proposed amendments, the three new directors who were elected to a two-year term are Ms. Kate Corning, Mr. Scott Sims, and Mrs. Suzi Weinstein. Dr. Judy Buffa and Mr. Calvin Fitzgerald will continue their second year in office. Please note that unlike each year, the organizational meeting in which the Board of Directors chooses its officers took place the following week and not right after the annual meeting.

At that organizational meeting, Mr. Sims was elected as LakeRidge Falls' new **President**; Mrs. Weinstein was elected as LakeRidge Falls' new **Vice President**; Mr. Fitzgerald was elected to continue and serve as the **Treasurer**; Dr. Buffa was elected also to continue and serve LakeRidge Falls as its **Secretary**; and Ms. Corning will serve the community as **Director at Large**. More than ever, your Board will need your full support as it navigates through what are truly difficult times (i.e. COVID-19). Therefore, I am sure all will join me in congratulating the new Board of Directors and wish this community a successful and productive year.

This is a good time to thank Ms. Lori Klein and Ms. Lynn Gregg for an utterly amazing two years in office. And of course, thank you to all the other great members of the different committees who finished their terms this year in what proved to be a truly challenging year. It was a great pleasure working with all of you during this past year and I am sure all members of this Association appreciate the long hours you contributed and the dedication of your services.

Amendments – Also during the annual meeting, the members of the Association voted on five proposed amendments. The following are the unofficial results of the vote counts:

Article III – under review

Article IX - 233 Yes vs 88 No

Article XVIII - 191 Yes vs 120 No

Article XX - 231 Yes vs 86 No

Article XXII - 197 Yes vs 117 No

Continued on Page 5

At this point, amendments to Article IX, XVIII, XX, and XXII did NOT pass. While the Yes's overwhelmingly defeated the NO's in all of these votes, they failed to reach the 267 Yes votes required to pass an amendment to the Association's declaration. Many asked, and therefore this will be a good opportunity to explain, that to pass an amendment 267 members, out of 399, need to vote YES. Because none of the amendments above reached 267 Yes votes, these amendments didn't pass. Regarding Article III, the count is under review because the amount of Yes and No votes exceeded the number of total votes submitted. It is most likely the result of truly a long night.

Therefore, the new Board of Directors voted during its latest meeting to perform a recount on not only Article III, but of all the proposed amendments. Ensuring to address this matter diligently, the Board appointed the three inspectors of election who volunteered at the annual meeting to perform the count. We hope that by the time you read this article the recount already took place or at least was scheduled. Once the review is over, we will announce the official results.

Front Gate Emergency Access – As reported in the past, all gated communities in Manatee County must, per County Code, have a designated access control system, or systems, in addition to the community's own access control system. The emergency access system, as the name may indicate, is designed to allow first responders access to all of the gated communities in Manatee County. This way, emergency service vehicles can enter any community when they need to without any delays. One of the approved systems is referred to as the Emergency Clicker System.

The Association first noticed an issue with the Emergency Clicker System somewhere around 2014. Through resident reports and footage from the security cameras, many non-emergency vehicles, mainly Manatee County vehicles and parcel delivery trucks, such as FedEx and UPS, were gaining access to LakeRidge Falls via the Residents Only Gate off of Lockwood Ridge Blvd. We attempted to identify how these vehicles were able to enter the community but were unsuccessful. Then a lightning strike, literally. As a result of a lightning strike, a power surge damaged the emergency clicker system's motherboard. Because we had to order a new motherboard, the Emergency Clicker System at the back gate was down for almost a week. During that week, we noticed that Manatee County, FedEx, and UPS trucks were attempting, unsuccessfully, to enter the back gate. Once the motherboard was replaced, you guessed it right, they were able once again to enter the community without interruption or registering with the front gate as required by the Association rules. This led us to the realization that these drivers obtain, somehow, an emergency clicker.

So, one day I intercepted one of the UPS drivers who entered the community from the Residents Only Gate. What we learned from this was amazing. Apparently, any person who wants to purchase an emergency clicker can do so by purchasing it from Amazon.Com. The driver even shared with me the code sequence used for the clickers. The code was, and still is, an open secret. Thereafter, we paid extra attention to the activity at the back gate and witnessed how on a daily basis Manatee County employees, delivery trucks, waste management vehicles, plumbing companies, cable companies, unmarked private cars, and many others were entering the community

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from the back gate while using emergency clickers. Of course, attempts were made to intercept each one of these trespassers asking them to stop using the emergency clicker. Warning letters were even sent to such companies/entities/individuals. However, these efforts were fruitless.

As a result, the Security Committee and the Board of Directors started drafting an action plan to address this concern. To make a long story short, a delegation from LakeRidge Falls met in late 2016 with the County Commissioner and County Administrator. In the meeting, the delegation explained the problem and asked that the code that controls the emergency access system be changed at least bi-annually to minimize the problem. However, nothing was done as the reality of daily unauthorized vehicles entering the community without permission continued. As one can imagine, many in the community were unhappy with this especially knowing the Association invests over \$150,000 per year on security measurements. Therefore, Board sought the advice of its attorney who argued that the Association must act to ensure the safety and security of its residents. After much consideration, the Board approved a couple of years ago to deactivate the emergency access system, of course, not before officially notifying all of Manatee County Officials. Since then, the problem of unauthorized vehicles entering the community without permission while using emergency clickers has stopped. It is important to note that first responders are successfully using the other two available emergency access systems that are available to them.

Fast-forwarding to 2020. The Gatehouse started reporting more and more incidents in which Manatee County vehicles, waste management trucks, and parcel delivery trucks are entering from the Residents Only Lane at the front entrance to the community. Following on these reports, the Association collected significant evidence, mainly from security footage, and presented it to Manatee County's Commissioner, Administrator, and Public Safety Director. Once again, nothing was done by the County to solve or even address this matter.

Left with no other choice, the Security Committee investigated the emergency access requirements per Manatee County's Land Development Code and after much deliberation and discussion recommended to the Board of Directors to consider disconnecting the Emergency Clicker System at the front entrance to the community. As with the back gate, the Committee suggested first responders use one of two available emergency access systems. Following this recommendation, the Board of Directors approved, once again with the Association attorney's blessing, disconnecting the Emergency Clicker System at the front gate early on this year. Following the approval, official letters were mailed to Manatee County's Commissioner, Administrator, and Public Safety as well as to Manatee County Sheriff's Office and Southern Manatee Fire Department's Chief and Fire Marshal advising them on the Board's decision. Please note that the Emergency Clicker System was disconnected effectively on February 1st, 2021.

That said, this action does not affect residents' ability to enter the back or front residents only gates. As hoped for two years ago, the goal is to ensure the security and safety of LakeRidge Falls' residents while encouraging the County to act on the matter.

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Sign-Up Requirements and Hours of Operations – During its last meeting, the previous Board of Directors reviewed in length the issue of sign-up requirements for both the pool and fitness center. Ms. Dorie Parson, a member of the community who graciously enough agreed to create and maintain the on-line sign-up format, and Mrs. Paula Murray, LakeRidge Falls Community Assistant, presented information and statistics indicating that a significant time has passed since the last time the sign-up or in-person attendance reached the maximum number allowed in both the pool area and fitness center. Following this and after much consideration, the Board of Directors agreed to amend the sign-up requirements. Therefore, please note that there is no longer a need to sign-up in advance before using the pool or fitness center. Instead, attendance in these two amenities will be based on a First Come/First Serve system. Please note that the number of people allowed to use the pool and fitness center within a given hour was not amended at this time. This means that no more than 15 people can attend the pool area, or 5 people can occupy the fitness center, within any given hour. Again, this is done with members' and residents' safety and well-being in mind.

Another decision that was made recently was to amend the hours of operation of both the Clubhouse and Club Room (i.e. formally known as the Annex Building). Therefore, please note that the Clubhouse hours of operations are 6 am to 11 pm and the Club Room hours are 7 am to 11 pm.

ARB Guidelines – Recently, two recommendations by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) to amend Articles 12 and 19 of the ARB Guidelines were approved:

Article 12, Landscaping, in General:

The ARB realized that some areas in the community may not be ideal for functioning as a landscape or a mulched bed. Therefore, the ARB suggested amending the restriction of using rocks and shells as mulch material in front entrance beds where the entire bed is bordered by concrete. After much discussion, the ARB recommended, and the Board approved, accepting the following amendment (addition is Underlined):

Mulch in front and rear yard planting beds shall not differ from Associations chosen color brown. Any other mulch is permitted in the side or rear beds only. Rocks and shells are not approved mulch material. except at front areas of homes surrounded by concrete where no grass area adjoins the shell or stone mulched area. These areas would include along the front walkway and front planting area adjacent to the garage. The color of stones and shells will be a light neutral color. Example: shells used for mulch are commonly bleached shells. The motion passed.

Article 19, Pavers, Tile, Landscape Edging, Driveways, and Front Door:

To avoid poor installation of outdoor pavers and future and/or ongoing maintenance issues, the

Continued on Page 8

ARB recommended further clarifications. Therefore, the ARB recommended, and the Board approved, that the ARB Guidelines require applicants to remove the sod and use gravel base when installing pavers. The rationale behind the requirement is to prevent pavers from sinking as gravel allows for moisture to be absorbed and for a better drainage base. The following is the amended paragraph 4 of Article 19 to read (addition is Underlined):

“Pavers or cast-in-place concrete around the exterior perimeter of the lanai is permitted when equal to or less than 36 inches in width. Pavers must be installed flush to ground level upon a bed of gravel. The sod must be removed where they are installed. Color of the thresholds and pavers to match the roof or painted to match the roof or the lanai. Patios outside lanais or pool cages are not allowed!”

Please note that the ARB Guidelines are posted on the Association's website.

Landscape Mowing – As some may have noticed, West Bay Landscape skipped one mowing cycle in February. Here is why. Cold temperatures during the end of January and the beginning of February affected the growth of the sod. While Bahiagrass and bermudagrass tend to go dormant when temperatures drop below 55 degrees, Saint Augustine will still grow in the same condition. However, when temperatures drop to around 40 degrees, as we experienced during the period mentioned above, Saint Augustine will stop growing almost completely. Therefore, there is not much sense in mowing lawns that are lower than the mowers’ blade level. Of course, mowing during a frost is never a good idea as it may damage the lawn. For this reason, West Bay Landscape advised us that they have no other choice but to skip one of their scheduled mows.



Picture by: Ms. Maggie Gat

Continued on Page 9

However, there is no bad without good. In exchange for mowing, West Bay Landscape fertilized that week all the palms in the community. Here is why. Not many know, but there has been an increased concern among professionals and scholars regarding a variety of palms' diseases, such as Gernadoma and Lethal Bronzing, which may leave Florida palmless within a couple of decades. LakeRidge Falls is no exception. In recent years, the Association has been losing palms at an alarming rate due to these diseases. In an attempt to address this issue, the Board of Directors formed the Long-Term Landscape Group asking it, among other things, to explore alternatives for these lost palms. At the same time, the Board of Directors asked the Landscape Committee to find immediate operational routes to slow this process down.

And indeed, the Long-Term Landscape Group came up with several alternatives that were included in their long-term architectural landscape designs, some of which the Board of Directors has already considered during one of its meetings. On the other hand, the Landscape Committee came up with a recommendation last year to adopt a palm fertilization program at a total cost of \$8,000 a year which potentially may make the palms more immune to the diseases mentioned above. While the palm fertilization program could not have been adopted on time for this year's budget, i.e. considered after the Budget Committee concluded its work on the 2021 Budget, the Landscape Committee didn't give up and drafted a motion during its last meeting that recommended the Board of Directors will adopt such program and fund it by exchanging two mowing cycles for it.

In simple terms, the Landscape Committee recommended that instead of having 40 mows in 2021 the Association will direct West Bay Landscape to execute 38 mows. This act will save the Association \$8,175, which is the same amount needed to adopt the palm fertilization program mentioned above. This recommendation was reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors during its latest meeting. However, sometimes an opportunity presents itself without trying. As you may guess by now, West Bay Landscape went ahead and executed the first part of the annual fertilization program which includes boron, magnesium, potassium, and other necessary nutrition that palms need to stay healthy. After all, their crews were available. Moreover, this helped West Bay Landscape the "headache" of figuring out a way to fit an extra mow sometime in the future. More importantly, this service was at no extra cost to the Association. We truly hope it will help with lowering the loss of palms that so many members in the community cherish.

West Bay Appreciation Breakfast – Staying with West Bay Landscape matter, LakeRidge Falls recently organized the appreciation event which is held each year in recognition of the hard work by West Bay Landscape's mowing, pruning, enhancement, and irrigation crews. The event which was initiated and organized by the Landscape Committee under the leadership of Mrs. Karen McGee and Mrs. Mary Cochran, co-chairpersons of the 2020 Landscape Committee, included breakfast for 20 West Bay employees. Unlike previous years and due to COVID-19 limitations, the event took place outdoor. We are sure all would agree that this can be considered a small token of appreciation for all the hard-working women and men of West Bay who serve this community year-round.

Continued on Page 10



On behalf of **Meals On Wheels** of Sarasota, Sharon Rosenthal and I would like to thank the **Sociable Stitches** of Lakeridge Falls for their generous contribution of handmade scarves and lap blankets numbering over 90 pieces. This donation went to home bound clients of **Meals On Wheels** for the holiday season.

Again, thank you **Sociable Stitches** for your generosity and beautiful gifts.

*Adele Lepow
Sharon Rosenthal*

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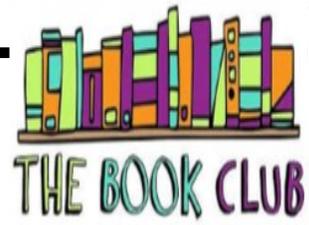
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The Lakeridge Falls Book Club continues to hold "Zoom meetings" on the 2nd Monday of each month at 11:00am to discuss the monthly book selections. If you would like to participate please contact Kathy Kendall at (941) 306-5128 or kathy52847@yahoo.com.

Selections for 2021

- A Woman is No Man** by Etaf Rum, 2019, 352 pp. March
- Anxious People** by Fredrik Backman, 2020, 352 pp. April
- Hidden Valley Road** by Robert Kolker, 2020, 400 pp. May
- Oil and Marble** by Stephanie Storey, 2016, 320 pp. June
- American Dirt**, by Jeanine Cummings, 2020, 400 pp. July
- The Exiles**, by Christina Baker Kline, 2020, 384 pp. August
- The Paris Hours** by Alex George, 2020, 272 pp. September
- The History of Love**, by Nichole Krause, 2005, 272 pp. October
- Say Nothing** by Patrick Redden Keefe, 2019, 464 pp. November
- December, select books for 2022



RECURRING ACTIVITIES

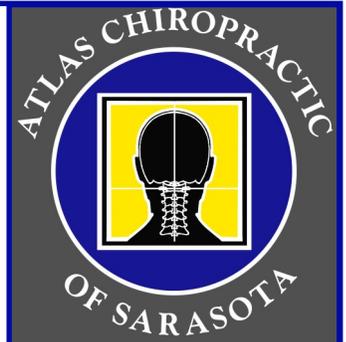
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8:00am	Water Aerobics	CD - Free
8:30am	Bocce	Bocce Courts
10:00am	Water Aerobics	CD - Free
3:00pm	Table Tennis	Multi-purpose
Tuesday	Activity	Room
10:00am	Water Aerobics	Instructor - \$4
1:30pm	Table Tennis	Multi-purpose
Wednesday	Activity	Room
8:00am	Water Aerobics	CD - Free
8:30am	Bocce	Bocce Courts
9:00am	Ladies Chat	Activities Rm
9:30am	Table Tennis	Multi-purpose
10:00am	Water Aerobics	CD - Free
3:00pm	Table Tennis	Multi-purpose
Thursday	Activity	Room
3:00pm	Table Tennis	Multi-purpose
Friday	Activity	Room
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8:30am	Bocce	Bocce Courts
10:00am	Social Stitchers	Activities Rm
10:00am	Water Aerobics	Instructor - \$4

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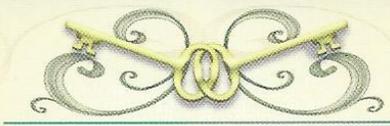
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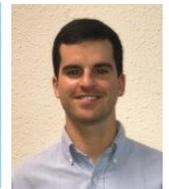
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