

LakeRidge Falls

4200 LakeRidge Blvd.
Sarasota, FL 34243

08-27-2021

MIS, the Deputy, and Piggybacking – Back in July, we reported about an incident in which a member of the community discovered an unknown man in their home. The member shouted at the man who immediately fled the scene. The man then got into his SUV vehicle and drove at a high rate of speed through the front exit gate of the community. Thankfully, no bodily harm nor stolen personal property was reported. We also reported that the intruder “piggybacked” into the community from the back gate about an hour or so before the incident and that security footage was shared with the Sheriff’s Office. Since the report, we were able to share some additional information, which we felt may be helpful, with the Sherriff’s Office. It is our understanding the intruder is yet to be caught.

Following the above, the Board of Directors and the Security Committee started to explore ways to further improve security around the community. In the last four weeks, the Security Committee met three times to discuss this matter. During these meetings, the Committee met with Moss Integration Solutions (MIS), the Association gate maintenance company, and with a Manatee County Sheriff’s Office’s representative. Knowing that the intruder “piggybacked” into the community from the back gate, the Committee met a couple of weeks ago with MIS to investigate options to further tighten the access of non-authorized vehicles from entering the residents-only back gate. To better learn about the incident, its outcomes, and ways to improve residents’ security and safety, another meeting took place this week with Deputy Russell Younger from the Manatee County Sheriff’s Office’s Crime Prevention Department.

The meeting with MIS was very productive. In it, different ways were examined which should assist in preventing piggyback vehicles from entering the community from the back gate. The Committee asked MIS to provide proposals for several of the ideas raised in the meeting. It was agreed that once these proposals are submitted, the Committee will meet again to formulate a recommendation on the matter.

The meeting with Deputy Younger didn’t provide too much insight on trespassing incidents or the issue on hand. Nevertheless, Deputy Younger made three clear and distinguished points which he asked to be shared with the community:

- The Sheriff's Office is Short-Staffed - Deputy Younger asked residents to petition Manatee County asking to increase funds so more Deputies could be hired.
- The Sheriff's Office is Limited with Enforcement Measures - Deputy Younger explained that if trespassers are not caught on-site, i.e., within LakeRidge Falls property, their ability to enforce the law is limited.
- The Sheriff's Office is Urging You to Call 911 in Case of an Emergency - Deputy Younger urged all residents to call 911 in case of an emergency instead of calling the gatehouse.

With the above in mind, rest assured that both the Board of Directors and the Security Committee are doing everything in their ability to investigate and address the issue of preventing non-residents from gaining access through the back residents-only gate.

Keeping this in mind, please make sure to follow these simple steps to better protect yourself from theft attempts:

- Never share your plans with people you don’t trust and especially with your vendors.

- Never leave your keys or valuables in your car.
- Never leave your home and car unlocked or alarm off even if you go for 30 minutes to Publix for example.
- Never leave your garage door open if you are not there.
- Never leave your doors or windows unlocked including your lanai sliding doors.

With this in mind, please make sure to:

- Report suspicious activity to Manatee County Sheriff's Office. Remember, call the Sheriff's Office first! It may save valuable time which may assist in intercepting suspicious individuals. Understandably, members and residents may be afraid to make a call to the Sheriff to report suspicious activity. However, it is always better to be safe than to be sorry.
- Consult with private security companies on how to better protect your house.
- Install timers while you are on vacation, out to dinner, or even while you are at work maintaining an appearance of occupancy.
- Consider a second locking mechanism for your windows and doors such as an extra lock, pan head top screws, and/or bracing devices.
- Install a security sign in your front yard even if you don't have an alarm.
- Consider installing smart security cameras such as doorbell cameras, floodlight cameras, etc., which are widely available, relatively inexpensive, easy to operate, and simple to install.

Taking the suggested steps above can assist in keeping LakeRidge Falls a safe place to live.

Parking on the Streets – This week, a resident informed us that a car of a visitor of hers was side-swiped while parking on one of the Association's streets. Thankfully, the visitor was inside the resident's house at the time of the incident. Unfortunately, however, no one took ownership of the damage. If you witnessed the incident or maybe have some piece of information related to this event, please share it with us. It will greatly assist in preventing incidents like this from reoccurring in the future.

With this in mind, please ensure your invitees park their vehicles in your driveways or the Clubhouse's parking lot. We spoke in great length in the past about the rationale behind the rules that govern this Association. At times, these rationales sound more like a theoretical argument than a real possibility. However, this incident is a real-life example and an unfortunate reminder of why the parking restriction was drafted to begin with.

Just in case you are unaware of it, LakeRidge Falls' governing documents, Initial Restrictions, and Rules, Paragraph 2, Restricted Activities, (a), prohibited within the Community the "[p]arking of any vehicles on private streets or thoroughfares; and parking of commercial vehicles or equipment, mobile homes, campers, and similar recreational vehicles, golf carts, boats, and other watercraft, trailers, stored vehicles, or inoperable vehicles in places other than enclosed garages; however, construction, service, and delivery vehicles shall be exempt from this provision for such period of time as is reasonably necessary to provide service or to make a delivery to a Lot or the Common Area."

Please understand that parking on the road can be hazardous especially when parking on both sides of the road and/or parking at night. Therefore, we kindly ask you direct to your invitees to park their vehicle/s in your driveway or at the Clubhouse parking lot. Following this simple direction will greatly assist us in eliminating potential hazardous and safety incidents as the one mentioned above. And as said before, thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding on the matter.

Absence – For those who were not aware, I was out of the office since August 16th. Here is why. On August 15th, my oldest son developed a fever. A test revealed that he was positive for the wicked COVID virus. A few days later, my

youngest daughter came back positive as well. Thankfully, no other family member came positive for the virus during this time. Also thankfully, both kids suffered from mild symptoms for no more than a couple of days. Nevertheless, and to be on the safe side, my wife and I decided to quarantine the family for the required period not before all family members showed a negative test result. While I was able to work remotely, I am happy to announce that today was my first day on-site after this long and exhausting quarantine period. I am also happy to say that all family members are feeling well.

With this in mind, I have a personal request. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 topic, like most topics in our day and age, was politicized. That is, the issue is viewed and/or debated many times, but not all the time, based on a political point of view. However, COVID is a health concern at its core. It is not my place to argue one way or another regarding what is right and wrong nor what beliefs one should hold. I can only ask, please, get vaccinated, and please make sure to wear a mask in closed places. You see, I care dearly about this community and its members. Please stay safe.

Have a healthy and safe weekend.

Sincerely,

Oded Neeman - CAM

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