

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:

Residents Directory – Please note that the 2024 Residents Directory is available. As every year, residents are invited to pick up their directory at the LakeRidge Falls Clubhouse. As last year, you will not be required to sign your name when picking up a copy. Please remember that each household is eligible to receive one copy of the directory. If you take more than that, we may need to print more copies which many would agree is an unnecessary expenditure. As advised last week, this year's directory is provided to you at no cost thanks to the businesses that advertise in it. Therefore, it would be great if you showed your support to those small businesses that constantly support this community. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Pool Temperature – This week was a cool week at the pool, literally. It started early on Monday when we received reports from concerned pool users that the water temperature was cold, very cold. We then placed, without a delay, a call with PoolWerx, the Association's pool and waterfall maintenance company. Once on-site and after a thorough inspection of the system, PoolWerx concluded that the pool pump lost its prime.

The technician explained that for some reason the pool auto-fill system, which is designed to automatically fill the pool pit when it drops below a preset level, was not working. As a result, she explained, the pool pump sucked air into the circulation system causing it to lose its prime, which caused the pump to stop working. As a result, the pump can't circulate/push water in the system. No circulation means no pressure. No pressure means no heating. Therefore, and thereafter, the technician filled the pit with water and was able to restart the pool pump by priming it. Issue solved...not quite. Unfortunately, the pool heaters had to be reset as well... Therefore, it took another day of cold pool before it was realized that this small, but nevertheless, important step had to be taken.

While this did the trick as far as ensuring the pool temperature would reach 87 degrees once again, we soon learned another related issue was not addressed. Reports came in that the water level at the pool was a little bit, actually more than that, high. Once again, a call was made to PoolWerx. This time around, however, PoolWerx was already aware of the issue. To their account, the auto-fill, yes the same auto-fill that didn't work a few days before, did not shut off a few days later. They explained that they believed the auto-fill's solenoid valve was defective and had to be replaced. A task that took place a couple of days later. With the complication of this task, we are told the pool is up and running again as expected.

Pool Hours – As you know, Daylight Savings Time will go into effect on Sunday, March 10th. Unfortunately, the Association's FOB system can only be updated manually to reflect the time change. As a result, residents will not be able to enjoy the pool before 7:25 am on Monday. Of course, we will make sure to adjust the system first thing Monday morning to reflect the new Dawn til' Dusk hours. However, there is no bad news without some good news. The longer spring and summer days will allow pool users extended time to enjoy what is truly one of LakeRidge Falls' best amenities. We wish to thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation on the matter.

Pruning Crape Myrtle – Last week, BrightView Landscape, the Association landscape maintenance company, performed a tour of the Association’s ground for two representatives of a neighboring community to which they provide services. The goal of this tour was to demonstrate LakeRidge Falls’ best pruning practices in general and Crape Myrtle in particular, a general pruning plan that is based on the University of Florida’s best plant management practice. More specifically, the representatives wanted to see how the Crape Myrtle trees perform when not severely cut each year.

You see, the University of Florida states that: “[u]nfortunately, many homeowners and landscape professionals prune crape myrtle trees too severely. Topping—commonly called "crape murder"—can be very damaging to the tree. This practice results in a "witch's broom" appearance and a tree that is no longer in proportion. Although topping may result in larger blooms, the flowers will grow on thinner, weaker branches that will drop, especially after rain, and may even break. Topping can also shorten the life of your tree.”

[\(Source\)](#)

With this in mind, it will be a good opportunity to remind residents of the 8 reasons why they should not trim trees in a way that contradicts best practice. This information was provided by the US and Florida Departments of Agriculture, and we are sure residents will find it highly interesting and useful. The following are the eight reasons:

- **Starvation** - Topping removes so much of the tree's leafy crown that it dangerously reduces the tree's food-making ability.
- **Shock** - By removing the protective cover of the tree's canopy, bark tissue is exposed to the direct rays of the sun. The resulting scalding can cause the tree's death.
- **Insect and Disease** -The large exposed ends of topped limbs are highly vulnerable to insect invasion or decay of fungi spores.
- **Weak Limbs** - The numerous branch sprouts that grow from topped limbs are weakly attached. They tend to break as they grow larger, especially when they are subjected to high winds. They also compete with each other for nutrients, to the point where they stunt each other's growth unless you do additional pruning.
- **Rapid New Growth** - Instead of controlling the height and spread of the tree, topping has the opposite effect. New branches are more numerous and often grow higher than before.
- **Tree Death** - Some tree species can't tolerate major branch loss and still survive. At best, they remain weak and disease prone.
- **Ugliness** - A topped tree is a disfigured tree. Even with new growth, it never regains the grace and character of its species.
- **Cost** - The true cost of topping is often hidden -lower property values, expense of removal, and replacement if the tree dies. Needless to say, residents who take it upon themselves to dramatically prune their Crape Myrtle trees without approval would bear all costs and expenses related to such action.

We hope this may help residents to better understand the Association's stand on tree pruning and on Crape Myrtle in particular. As before, we wish to thank residents for their understanding and cooperation on the matter.

Have a healthy and safe weekend.

Sincerely,

Oded Neeman - CAM
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