



President's Message...by Tim Maciolek

In my last two letters I addressed were we have been in the last year and were we are headed and with a solid program in place to enforce the standards in the Covenants, this message is going to focus on 4 items that I deal with in everyday e-mail. Some comments will be direct and blunt and I do not apologize:

1. Neighborly Responsibility: More and more homes are leaving their trash cans out for several days, a few owners have poured hazardous waste into the drainage system, more and more owners are using the lack of maintenance on the front entrance as an excuse as to why they should not have to maintain their property causing our legal bills to increase.

Please think how your actions affect your neighbors. Pouring paint or oil into the drainage system affects us all and can cost the association hundreds of dollars to have the drainage cleaned if the offender cannot be identified. This can result in a fine by the city and a special assessment against all homeowners.

Put your trash cans and recycle bins away the day trash and recycle is picked up. Do not put trash, recycle or yard waste out earlier than the night before pick up. If you know your neighbor is not home, put their trash cans and recycle bins away for them.

Maintaining our homes and property is not a contest. Just because house 1234 Maple drive is a mess does not mean you should follow suite. Just because the front entrance is a disaster area does not mean that our yards should be. The yards not being main-



tained in accordance with the covenants are being addressed by the Community Association Manager and our lawyer. We have the opportunity to fix the front entrance, so find another excuse for why you can't mow your grass, pull your weeds or fix your fence.

2. Owners Association: It isn't going anywhere. Even if we voted to disband the association, per Florida Statutes, we need to get approval from the St John's River Water Management District before doing so. I have not been able to find any case in recent years in which this was allowed.

On the contrary, I have found information from failed associations that resulted in hundreds of dollars in city and state administrative fees being levied against all owners in the failed association until the association was properly re-instated. Basically, it will cost us more to dissolve the association than it will to build it up. So put your efforts into something like finding ways to better our association rather than looking for ways to tear down it down.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

2009 Assessment Deadline is Jan 31st...



Deadline for submission of the 2009 Annual Assessment is Saturday January 31st.

Payments that are received with a postmark after this date will be subject to a \$25.00 Late Fee, Interest at 18 percent (18%) from January 1st, and Certified and First Class postage costs of approximately \$5.74.

Also, in accordance with Florida Statute 720.3085 any payment received will first be applied (in this order) to any interest accrued, administrative late fees, any costs and attorney fees incurred in this collection effort and then to any delinquent assessment.

If you have not mailed in your \$132.00 annual assessment, please do so today so you do not incur these additional collection costs!

Inside this issue:

LET'S RENEW AMERICA TOGETHER	2
SPECIAL ASSESSMENT-WHY THE NEED	3
OPERATION GRATITUDE	3
FENCE SELECTION AND STANDARDS	4
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS	5
IMPROVEMENTS AHEAD	6

HOMEOWNERS' MEETING

**FEB 12th @ 6:30 P.M. at
Holy Spirit Catholic
School Assembly Hall**

Let's "Renew America Together"...

"We are one people; We are one nation; and together we will begin the next great chapter in America's story." — President Barack Obama

The President believes that we, as Americans, have a responsibility to help our communities and fellow citizens. In summoning a new spirit of service, he is calling on us to make an enduring commitment to our neighborhoods. Every time our nation faces crisis, our national experience has shown Americans rise to the challenge.

While government has an important role to play in helping rekindle our economy and addressing the problems of a distressed nation, President Obama believes each of us, as Americans, have a responsibility to do what we can for our communities and fellow citizens.

We are one nation...

The United States is once again at a crossroads and that is why the President hoped to use the occasion of his Inauguration to rally our nation to commit to service in our communities. We are asking for your participation in meeting this challenge.

In 1994, Congress transformed the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday into a national day of community service to further commemorate a man who lived his

life in service to others. As a tribute to that legacy and the very real needs of our nation, the President and Vice President launched a national organizing effort on the eve of their Inauguration to engage Americans in service.



This national day of service fell on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and, unlike past calls to service, President Obama is calling on all Americans to do more than just offer a single day of service to their cities, towns and neighborhoods. He is asking all of us to make an ongoing commitment to our communities.

Never has it been more important to come together in shared purpose to tackle the common challenges we face.

The website <http://www.usaservice.org> is designed to help promote these events and for Americans to make their commitments, build communities, find opportunities to serve and share their results.

These can be events that engage people in direct service, or bring people together to reflect on Dr. King's legacy and how they can commit to becoming more engaged citizens.

We ask all of you to please create an event or sign up to volunteer today, even in our community there are people who need your help!.

Mark your Calendars NOW all the 2009 Meeting Dates have been set...

For everyone out there that uses Microsoft Outlook, a paper calendar, or other type of scheduling system, we've taken the time to set the dates for all of our regular and special meetings and events for the rest of 2009.

Hopefully this will help everyone get more involved and will allow you the ability to put our dates on your calendar NOW so you won't schedule something else in its place. We really need your presence and involvement this year, so we look forward to seeing everyone at the following events:

February 1st - Super Bowl Sunday
February 12th - General Owners

Meeting: VERY IMPORTANT: PLEASE BE AT THIS MEETING!

March 21st & 22nd - Community Yard Sale

April 12th - Easter Sunday

April 18th - Community Clean Up

May 10th - Mothers Day

May 19th - Owners Meeting

May 25th - Memorial Day

June 5th - Last day of School for 2008/2009 School Year

June 21st - Fathers Day

June 27th & 28th - Community Yard Sale

July 18th - Community Clean Up

August 18th - Owners Meeting

August 24th - First Day of School for 2009/2010 School Year

September 7th - Labor Day

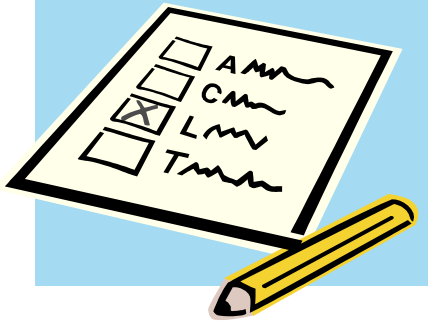
September 19th & 20th - Community Yard Sale

October 17th - Community Clean Up

November 17th - Annual Owners Meeting 2 Board Positions will be available.

All Owners meetings are held at the Holy Spirit Catholic School Social Hall, 11665 Ft Caroline Rd, at 6:30PM

Special Assessment, Why the Need...



Unfortunately we did not receive enough responses last year to the proposed Special Assessment to take on the responsibility of maintenance at the front entrance to the neighborhood.

We hope each of you will go online at www.carolinecove.com and review the proposed Special Assessment options and fill out a

Proxy so we can get this issue resolved once and for all.

The Board understands these are hard economic times but if we do not get this area under some sort of maintenance program our property values will continue to slide as this neighborhood's first impression is one of neglect. That negative perception truly affects what a buyer is willing to pay for a house in our neighborhood.

We hope you will give serious consideration to helping us get this neighborhood back to a more presentable state.

Just like the new President is asking, we all have to work together to make our communities

a better place. If you know of someone in our neighborhood that needs special help, please let us know, or more importantly, we ask you to head up the effort to help them overcome their shortcoming. We are certainly willing to get involved in any effort to help those who may need assistance but we cannot do it alone.

Your involvement in our community is critical if we are to make our community reflect the true spirit of cooperation and friendliness that most of us moved here for in the first place.

Please vote YES on the Special Assessment so we can begin our own rebuilding process.

Operation Gratitude — Sending Care Packages to U.S. Troops...

As part of President Obama's national "Call to Service" you are encouraged to participate in community service. Making a care package for one of our troops overseas is a way for you to participate and help others.

Hundreds of thousands of American troops are deployed in hostile and remote regions of the world, including the Middle East, Afghanistan, Africa, Guantanamo Bay and on ships throughout international waters. The physical conditions they must endure are difficult and they may be separated from loved ones for long periods of time. **OPERATION GRATITUDE** seeks to lift troops' morale, and bring a smile to their faces by sending care packages addressed to individual service members deployed overseas. **OPERATION GRATITUDE** care packages contain food, toiletries, entertainment items and personal letters of appreciation, all wrapped with good wishes of love and support.

Here's how to do it.

STEP 1: Write a letter or a card to say "Thank You" to the soldier that will receive your package. You may decorate your letter however you'd like. Soldiers really like bright colors and drawings and would love to see your artwork. You don't need to put a stamp on your letter! It will be included in your package.

STEP 2: Make your Care Package. You can include such things as: AA Batteries; Crossword or Sudoku Books; Baby wipes or Pampers hand wipes; Ziploc bags; Playing cards; Writing notebooks; Pens; Stationary/note



cards; Beanie Babies; Packs of Gum; Girl Scout Cookies; Lip Balm; Socks; Toothpaste and toothbrush; Stamps.

STEP 3: Send your Care Package: Operation Gratitude is an organization that works with the military to find soldiers who need a care package. Please send your package to Operation Gratitude and they will get your package to a soldier. Address is: **Operation Gratitude, 16444 Regugio Road, Encino, California 91436.** If you cannot send a package, please make a financial donation to help this valuable organization continue its mission to help our service members. **Web address is:**

www.opgratitude.com

Fence Selection & Standards, it's more than you think...



Probably the most hotly contested area in this community is a lack of any specific fence standards and the need for some sort of standard with specifications.

What you probably don't understand is that there is a requirement for 6-inch wide picket shadowbox fencing for neighborhoods constructed after 2003.

This standard was actually mandated by the State of Florida in response to the building code enhancements that were enacted after hurricane Andrew tore apart southern Florida in August 2002.

Shadowbox fencing actually reduces the wind load pressing

against a fence during high winds. The open slating (spacing) between the fencing pickets allows air to go through the fence and thereby relieves the stress on the fence and reduces the likelihood of the fence collapsing and then being picked up and hurled into neighboring properties.

Hurricanes probably pose the single greatest threat to living in Florida. Winds in excess of 70 miles per hour can cause extensive damage and if the wind picks up an improperly installed fence, there's no telling of the damage and possible loss of life that can result.

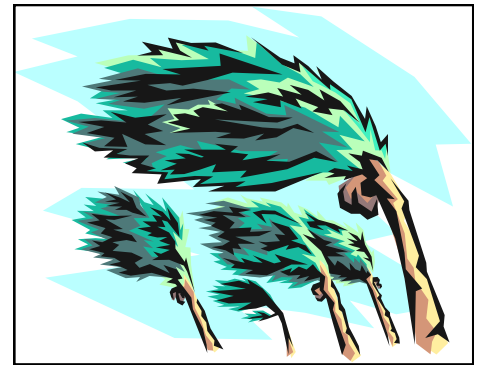
That is specifically why the Board of Directors will be developing new fencing standards to describe in detail the requirement that all new wood fencing be constructed with 6-inch wide pickets and be assembled in a shadowbox configuration, not a privacy configuration nor board-on-board configuration.

However, with advances in technology some of the newer space-age fencing materials can

actually withstand even greater wind loads than wood fencing and this will be taken into consideration when someone applies to install new fencing or replace their existing fencing as it wears out.

Thankfully the governing documents give the Board some flexibility in approving fencing materials and designs that may be constructed or installed so long as the newer types of fencing meets or exceed the new hurricane standards.

We will be working on these new standards and will mail you a copy once they are finalized. If you have any suggestions, please let us know via e-mail: board@carolinecove.com.



Weed Control Begins With Proper Management...



Proper management practices that encourage a dense, thriving turf are the best method of weed control. Healthy turf shades the soil so sunlight can't reach weed seeds ready to germinate. A thick turf also minimizes the physical space available for weeds to become established.

There are several management practices that will promote a healthy, dense grass.

- **Proper Turf grass Selection:** Proper management begins with selection of the best turf species or variety for a particular area. For example, heavily shaded areas will support only a few turf grass species. This results in thin, weak turf that is very susceptible to weed invasion. Good grass choices for shady conditions would be certain cultivars of St. Augustine

grass, zoysia grass, and to a lesser degree, centipede grass.

- **Proper Cultural Practices:** Proper fertilization, watering, mowing, and control of other pests are required to produce a dense turf that will prevent weed infestation. If turf is over- or under-watered, over- or under-fertilized, or mowed too low or too infrequently, the turf is weakened and cannot compete with weeds. Damaged areas resulting from using unsharpened mowers increase time needed for turf recovery, allowing for weed invasion. It is very important to understand that weeds don't create a void, they fill a void.

- **Sanitation:** It is extremely important to prevent the introduction of weeds into lawn areas. A good practice is to wash off mowers and trimmers used in weed-infested areas before mowing or trimming in weed-free areas. Similarly, rototillers should be thoroughly cleaned prior to and after using to minimize dispersal of weed seeds found in the soil. Yard clippings that contain weeds should be properly disposed of or composted to reduce the possibility of unwanted contamination

President's Message Continued from Page 1....

3. Association Volunteer Opportunities: In my last letter I asked for volunteers to assist in creating new Architectural Standards and to create a Community Outreach Committee. So far: no volunteers. Both of these efforts are critical to maintaining our neighborhood and our community. Without clear and up-to-date Architectural Standards, the board will be required to deny request for certain types of fencing or even commercial procured garden sheds.

With the aging community, many of our residents lack to mobility they once had. They need our help. They took this country through the great depression, WWII, Korea and put a man on the moon. Don't you think we owe it to them to lend them a hand? This is a great way to show our children how to help others. One day we will be the old people, I hope the next generation takes care of me better then the way we are taking care of the ones that came before us.

4. Front Entrance: On February 12th we will have another vote on what we want to do with the front entrance. The number one complaint from owners is the front entrance. Realtors' that I know and have talked to state it creates a negative first impression on the neighborhood. It invites the wrong type of home buyer and tenants.

I ask both residents and those that have investment property in Ft Caroline Cove; to invest on our community while we have the chance to attract upstanding citizens because if we don't it will only be a matter of time before this neighborhood declines to the point that we will not be able to correct it. If you vote **yes**, your cost is \$105 dollars this year and \$44.00 dollars each year thereafter to pay for professional maintenance

and upkeep.

If you are tired of hearing about the front entrance, come to the meeting ON February 12th and vote **YES** on the Special Assessment or vote me off of the board. I care about our community and truly feel action is needed now.

OTHER COMMUNITY NEWS

On January 24th we had the first of four community clean ups that the City of Jacksonville has agreed to sponsor. They paid for they signs, fliers, tools and materials. They are also coordinating a special pick up of the waste. We had 10 enthusiastic volunteers. These clean up efforts are the only way to keep the front entrance under control until the association votes to take control. For those that participated, thank you for you help and your community spirit !

COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS

December Holiday Yard of the Month Winners: *Classical/Traditional Theme:* Richard and Raeann Smallwood, 11206 Mikris Drive North
Candy Cane Lane/ Santa Claus Theme: Enrique and Mary Fernandez, 11182 Mikris Drive South
Overall winner: Enrique and Mary Fernandez, 11182 Mikris Drive South

Next yard of the month judging with be: **February 12th – Best Valentine Decoration & April 20th – Best Easter/Spring Decoration with two categories – Peter Cottontail and Classical/Traditional**

TIM MACIOLEK, President

Questions & Answers...

Q1: I heard you were going to stop mowing the retention ponds and start assessing owners who live around these areas a special fee for the mowing. Is this true?

A1: Great question! The Association has the responsibility for maintenance of the bottom and culverts leading into these areas. It is an owner's responsibility to cut the embankment behind their house to the bottom of the retention area. However, for the time being we will continue to mow the entire area around these retention areas because the cost to stop cutting the embankments is negligible. If the prices increase drastically we may have to resort to levying a special assessment on properties that border the ponds so we can continue to mow these areas

Q2: I got a bill when I received a 3rd Notice of Violation, I do not agree with these fees and won't pay them.

A2: The fees for sending the 3rd and 4th notices of Violation by Certified and First Class mail are required to comply with the Florida statutes. Since you did not respond to either of the two or three previous notices or you did not correct the problem, the fee is required because our management company must send an inspector to re-inspect your property and to begin building a case file for a hearing if the problem is not corrected. These fees are authorized and must be paid or you can incur additional late fees and interest.

Q3: Why can't you make the annual dues payable later in the year? January 31st is so close to the holidays and hard for me to find the money to pay.

A3: While it would be easy to say that we could extend the deadline to April or sometime later, the Association would have to recalculate all of the bills to add the additional 3 to 4 months to the annual amount as a pro-ration if we were to change the

deadline to a later date. Because this is an annual bill we feel it is better to plan accordingly throughout the year so that the funds are available to pay the bill, which is actually due on January 1st but not considered late unless the payment is not postmarked by January 31st.

Q4: The house across from me continues to have a trailer in the driveway and their yard is always a mess. I thought this was a violation?

A4: You are correct, it was a violation and was addressed. This was a case of a tenant living in a soon-to-be foreclosed house and the owner was not responsive to our requests to correct the problem. Our attorney contacted the tenant and they removed the trailer and mowed the lawn. Unfortunately they were evicted the following week when the bank took back the house. This does highlight the problems being faced as the foreclosure rate jumps. The Association will go the extra distance to get both the city and the courts involved so the neighborhood will not adversely suffer because of these neglected properties.

Q5: Are there any plans to provide a extra police presence in the neighborhood? I thing we really need this because of all of the break ins.

A5: Unfortunately due to our tight budget, we have not allocated any funds for this, however, if we collect the projected dues payments on-time and are successful with some of the impending legal actions on properties with large outstanding balances, we should be able to fund stepped up patrols. However, if you continue to let the police know of problems they will step up patrols without us having to pay for off-duty officers. If we can get a Neighborhood Watch program up and running, that would help make crooks think twice before coming here.

What's being considered for the community...

Website Enhancements—Although we don't pay anything for our web page, Florida Property & Association Management is having their entire website redesigned to meet the new 64-bit Internet standards and in the process will be adding several new features to our community link. Some of them will be a community calendar and more interactive forms. We will let you know when the new website has been rolled out.



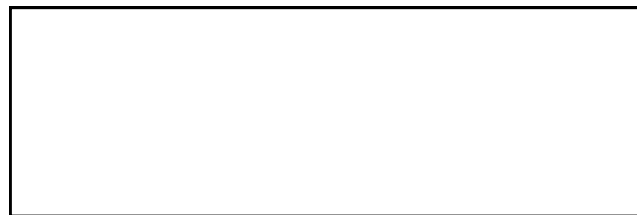
Front Entrance—Please come to the meeting on Feb 12th so we can discuss the options available and please vote YES on the Special Assessment so we can finally get the front entrance in shape and make Ft Caroline Cove a better place to live. We need to get this nasty area completely rebuilt from the irrigation to the entry sign to the shrubbery

and sod. It can only happen with your support and a vote of YES!

Landscaping—A new lawn vendor takes over on February 1st to cut the two retention ponds on Ridgetop Lane & Mikris Drive North. Please remember these are not play areas and children must not be allowed to dig forts or otherwise disturb the embankments or culvert areas in these areas. Damage

caused by your children will be your responsibility to repair. Last year that cost the Association nearly **\$1,600.00**. as we had to fill in large holes dug by children and we had to install new rock runoff areas because of severe erosion. These water retention areas must be maintained as per St Johns River Water Management District rules and local city codes.

Caroline Cove Owners' Assn
P.O. Box 350210
Jacksonville, FL 32235-0210



Return Service Requested