



Bell Tower Property Owner Association's

# BELL TOWER NOTES

## DAVE BARNES LEAVES POA BOARD, BELL TOWER PARK

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An Editorial

By Suzanne Ferguson

Saying that he had “some good news and some bad news” and the assembled residents might have to decide which was which, Dave Barnes announced his resignation and his planned departure from Bell Tower Park at the close of the November 16 POA Board meeting.

In his more than three and a half years as President of the Board, and before that as Treasurer for a year, Dave guided the maturation of the Association, which became independent of the builder’s Board only in 2011, and converted from a three-member to a five-member Board at the election of spring 2012, when he became President.

Many projects contributing to the betterment of the Community have played out under Dave’s leadership, including the addition of the trees and other landscaping along the east end of Bell Tower Park Boulevard; renovations of the Fitness Center and the main Pool; improvements in the gate security –culminating in the hiring of Envera and the installation of the combination walk-in gates at the front and rear of the property; improvements in outdoor lighting; the “rescue” of our large ficus hedges along the south side of the property; and the revival of the struggling Social Committee as the Activities Committee, among others. His renegotiation of our Comcast contract to more favorable terms and his instigation and supervision of the legal revision of our condominium documents to reflect the independent Association and current practice are surely among his signal accomplishments.



FILE PHOTO

Dave Barnes at the helm

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# HOLIDAY GREETINGS FROM YOUR BELL TOWER NOTES STAFF!

JOYCE LINDABURY

## ROGER BROWNELL JOINS POA BOARD

By Suzanne Ferguson

At the November POA Board meeting, Carriage Homes resident Roger Brownell was appointed by the Board to fill the remaining term of Dave Barnes, who resigned. (See story on P.1.) Roger has lived in Bell Tower Park for about a year, after downsizing from a larger home in Fiddlesticks, where he resided over 20 years. He is the owner of a family business, Golf and Electric Vehicles, off Alico Rd.

Roger has a background in finance and banking prior to getting into the golf cart business 25 years ago. He served on the Fiddlesticks board for a term and is a trustee of Kalamazoo College, his alma mater, as well as a director on the board of Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties. "People have a responsibility to participate" in their communities, Roger says. As a Board member here, he has "no preconceived agenda but the positive promotion of the community, inside and out." He sees BTP as a business, to be run according to established business principles. One of his attractions to the community, in fact, was our positive financial status and the care with which the Association has been directed.

The community "is a hidden gem" in south Ft. Myers, he believes—a quiet oasis in a bustling commercial and recreational center. Preservation of residents' "security and enjoyment" should be the prime motivation of the Board. Having experience on other boards has made him specially cognizant of the need for coherence and unity, for the Board "to act as a Board."

Roger met his wife, Dian, when both of them were undergraduates in Kalamazoo, Michigan: he at Kalamazoo College (a private, liberal arts school) and she at Western Michigan University. They have two sons and two "beautiful and delightful" grandchildren, who live in Orlando. □



JOYCE LINDABURY

Roger Brownell

## OUR NEW CAM: PATRICIA MURRAY

By Richard Roux and Suzanne Ferguson

Since the end of October, Bell Tower Park has had a new Community Association Manager, Patricia Murray. Prior to coming here, she was an on-site property manager at a gated community of similar size and amenities to those of Bell Tower Park. Pat's qualifications include being a licensed Realtor in the state of Florida, as well as a licensed Community Association Manager (CAM). She reports that her past business experience before real estate was in industrial and electronic manufacturing.

Born and raised in suburban Detroit, Michigan, Pat received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management from Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant. A resident of Naples, Pat says she "enjoys the Southwest Florida lifestyle, which involves anything outdoors and around water." She enjoys many sports: golf, tennis, swimming, cycling and running. Her current goal is to start training for the New York City half marathon next spring.

She also loves to travel: "Whenever she gets the chance," she says, "she will be on a plane to almost anywhere, but her most memorable experiences have been to India, Vietnam, Peru, Africa, Costa Rica and many European countries. Next on her bucket list are Greece, Morocco and Italy." At home, Pat "has a passion for doing the 'right thing,' and contributing to solutions in animal rescues, Meals-on-Wheels, and the Coalition for the Homeless, to name a few."

While the open office hours remain 9-12 weekdays, Pat is available for appointments Tuesday through Thursday afternoons. Pat says she is "dedicated to quality customer/client service and sustaining owner property values. It does indeed 'take a village' and she hopes to create a community that offers solutions and cohesiveness." As her regular, informative e-mails have shown, she is also committed to communication: Bravo, Pat! □



JOYCE LINDABURY

Pat Murray



JOYCE LINDABURY

Holiday Decorating: Norm Smith, Marge Bruno and her granddaughter, Linda Gratz, Marion Cassie, Committee

## DAVE BARNES (continued from the first page)

The fact that we had four property managers during this time did not make his job any easier.

Although Dave would be the very first to say that many owner/volunteers were involved in the research and planning for all these projects, his persistence and attention to detail as President were instrumental in their being brought to conclusion.

True to form, Dave modestly declined a request for a farewell interview with *Bell Tower Notes*. We will miss seeing him riding his bicycle through the community (helmet firmly placed) in the mornings, and we heartily thank him for his service and wish him all the best in his new life. □

## LARGE ALLIGATOR REMOVED FROM BELL TOWER PARK

By Donald Boreman

On November 12, 2015, as landscapers, residents, and the manager watched, a seven-foot alligator was removed from near the lake between Berkshire Drive and Chelsey Lane. In all likelihood, this is the same gator that had been reported several times in the previous weeks.

Questioning the trapper sent to remove the beast, and with a little additional research, I discovered the following useful information:

Florida has a Statewide Nuisance Alligator Program (SNAP), which is administered by the FWC's Division of Hunting and Game Management. Its sole mission is to address complaints concerning alligators. Persons with concerns about an alligator may call the Nuisance Alligator Hotline at 866-392-4286. Generally, an alligator may be deemed a nuisance if it is at least four feet in length and the caller believes it poses a threat to people, pets or property.

SNAP uses contracted nuisance alligator trappers throughout the state to remove alligators from locations where they are unwanted or unwelcome. If a complaint meets the qualifying criteria, SNAP will issue a permit authorizing the removal of the animal.

Complainants must be able to grant legal access to the property on which the alligator is located, as SNAP does not permit the removal of alligators from private or publicly-managed property without first obtaining permission from the property owner or management authority.

The alligator is caught using bait on a fishing line (see photos) and a "baby alligator" call, which causes the gator to respond. After that it is taken to a refrigerator storage unit in northern Florida, where the alligator goes to "sleep." The meat and hide are sold, which pays for the removal of the alligator. There is no cost to BTP homeowners for catching and removing a nuisance alligator. □



DON BOREMAN

Alligator Removal

## BELL TOWER PARK BURGLARY: Keep your Garage Doors Closed!

By Suzanne Ferguson

Aside from sporadic break-ins into cars in driveways, usually left unlocked, Bell Tower Park has remained essentially crime free. However, in early October there was a burglary, and a couple of weeks later two suspects were seen on a convenience store security camera using a stolen credit card. People were asked to call Crime Stoppers with information. The photo can still be seen in the *News-Press* archives.

At the November POA Board Meeting it was said that the thieves were thought to be friends of the victims' family who got into Bell Tower Park legitimately, then took the opportunity to enter the house through the garage. The Sheriff's Department was said to be pursuing leads.

One of our Rules and Regs tells us to keep garage doors down and locked except when in active use. Aside from aesthetics, the appropriateness of this rule is manifested in this case. It is all too easy to gain access to the units by way of the garage.

Let's not present targets to would-be thieves. Keep garages closed, screen doors locked, and cars in driveways locked. Don't click in vehicles at the Andrea Lane entrance; advise them to go around to the front entrance if they don't have a remote. And, as always, "If you see something, say something." □

## A VISIT TO THE HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, NAPLES

By Susan Knutson

On Saturday, October 24, seven members of the Bell Tower Park community and friends car-pooled to visit the Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Sandalwood Square in Naples. The museum contains more than a thousand artifacts and photographs related to WWII and the Holocaust. Outside there is an authentic WWII boxcar like those used to transport the prisoners.

The tour was even better than we had expected, as we had an extremely knowledgeable docent who spoke for an hour and a half while showcasing some of the museum highlights. He was also amazing and generous in answering our many questions. The time flew by!

Afterward, we ate delicious box lunches provided by Einstein Bagels, while a survivor spoke about her life and that of her family during the Holocaust.

The trip was extremely well received, and if there is interest among our residents I would be happy to plan another trip in "season" ([sgknutson@aol.com](mailto:sgknutson@aol.com)). We were not allowed to take photos inside, but you can see a photo gallery and learn about their exhibits and programs on their website: [www.holocaustmuseumsfwl.org](http://www.holocaustmuseumsfwl.org). □

### Come Celebrate The Holidays

Join us December 12th, 2015

6 to 9 PM

Bell Tower Clubhouse

Dinner Buffet, Dessert and Live Music

BYOB

\$27.00 a person (cash only)



Last ticket sales Dec. 7th, 2-4 p.m.; however, call to see if any tickets are still available.

For information call 239-288-6958  
Kathy Gambino

# HALLOWEEN PARTY THRILLING

By Joyce Berrian Ferrari

On Halloween evening, ghosts and goblins were afoot at Bell Tower Park. More than fifty adults, all in costume, haunted the Bell Tower Clubhouse for its annual Halloween party. In the room transformed with tulle, pumpkins, and assorted Halloween decorations, revelers danced to the music of Yard Dog Charlie, mingled with some old and new neighbors, and entertained each other with some silly and some clever costumes.

Jo Johnson took home a gift certificate to Bahama Breeze for her angel costume, while her husband Bill intercepted the men's prize for his appearance as a Pittsburgh Steeler. A variety of nuns and priests, mimes, medieval royalty, and a very original Caitlin Jenner and Kim Kardashian were among the unrecognizable. Five people went home with door prize pumpkins hand-painted by Joyce Berrian-Ferrari.

*Bell Tower Notes* photographer Joyce Lindabury (whose photos appear in the collage) was everywhere, taking great pictures that she posted in "Albums" on the BTP Website. Check them out for more fun!

Once again, our illustrious chairpersons, Kathy Gambino and Ronnie Vaccarino, along with the rest of the Activities Committee, pulled off another successful gathering. □



JOYCE LINDABURY

## MILLIPEDE MENACE DEMYSTIFIED

By Suzanne Ferguson

For over a year, Bell Tower Park and most other residential areas in south Florida have been plagued by millipedes, creatures anywhere from minuscule to over an inch long. Landscapers have been trying every insecticide at their disposal as residents go ballistic over the creatures, which crawl all over entryways, garage doors, courtyards and lanais, and even get inside some houses! Our Webmaster has posted on our Website articles about the pests from the Florida State Agricultural Extension Service: <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsAZ/Insects/Yellow-bandedmillipede.pub.pdf>.

The creatures seem to come and go, but they never stay away. Why? The problem is widespread, and spreading. After being noticed in Monroe County (the Florida Keys) about eight years ago, the millipedes have been slowly but surely migrating northward. They do not bother any plants, are not poisonous to animals, and do not bite, but they definitely annoy homeowners! On the other hand, the Extension considers them—"I don't make these things up—"a beneficial organism," probably because they enrich the soil.

Here are some tidbits I've gleaned from various web searches. First, millipedes are not insects, but "myriapods" (they have a lot of legs). They feed on and lay their eggs in decaying plant material and moist organic matter. They are commonly found in mulch. Some birds and some monkeys at Miami Zoo have been seen rubbing the millipedes on themselves—insect repellent?

What to do? Our Board has approved the application of mulch containing a millipede-specific insecticide. Other suggestions for deterrence can be found on a website named "wikihow." Warning, the raising of chickens (one of "wikihow's" suggestions) is not allowed in our "Rules and Regulations." One ray of hope is that the Extension article suggests the problem will be "self-correcting," whatever that means. □



WEB CAPTURE

Millipede

## TENNIS CLINICS OFFERED

By Richard Roux

For the third consecutive year tennis clinics will be offered to Bell Tower Park residents on our courts. The classes are free. Two groups are anticipated: beginners and existing players who would like to get on-court drills and exercises. Clinics will be scheduled with the participants so as not to interfere with early morning regular play.

Playing tennis gets you moving -- and moving is good for the body and mind. One of the great things about tennis is that it's a sport that can be played at nearly any age and at any skill level. Because it's a low-impact sport and is not dependent on the strength of the player, young and old alike pick it up relatively easily. Often cited health benefits include:

- Decreased risk of heart disease
- Enhanced flexibility, coordination and balance
- Boost in mood and brain power
- Improved bone health
- Weight loss

The goal of these clinics is to provide residents with another organized BTP activity, increase court utilization, provide an opportunity for player socialization and promote on-court fun. Classes will start in January. Interested residents can contact Richard Roux at [Richard.roux@ymail.com](mailto:Richard.roux@ymail.com). □



FILE PHOTO

BTP Tennis Clinic 2014

## WHAT'S BEHIND THE NAME? SUMMERLIN ROAD



Jacob Summerlin,  
A.K.A. "King of the Crackers"

[Photo Source: State Archives of Florida, <https://floridamemory.com/items/show/34538> ]

By Jim Stewart

*Ed. note: The following is a feature on a bit of local history. If you like it, we might get our reporter to write more. Let us know ([scf@case.edu](mailto:scf@case.edu))*

Summerlin Road was named after Jacob Summerlin, who earned much of his early fortune raising cattle along the Peace River and Kissimmee River just before and during the American Civil War. Wild cattle brought to North America by the Spanish conquistadors roamed free across these vast stretches of land; entrepreneurs could capture, breed, drive and sell these cows for twelve to sixteen dollars each. Summerlin and his business partners developed a lucrative trade with Havana and with the U.S. Naval Base at Key West. After the Civil War, he amassed an estate of 15,000 to 20,000 head of cattle and was considered one of the wealthiest Floridians before he reached age 40.

In this pre-banking era, Jacob kept his gold and silver at his cabin in trunks, meal sacks, tin meat cans, woolen socks, cigar boxes, behind door frames, in the rafters, or tossed in a corner. He used his wealth to purchase large tracts of land sprawling from Fort Meade to Fort Myers. During the American Civil War, he was a blockade runner who smuggled beef and medicine to Confederate Troops. He and his partners reportedly moved their shipping dock to Live Oak Point (present day Charlotte Harbor) where they could load their ships out of sight of the Union gun ships at Boca Grande Pass. With the Confederate money he earned, Summerlin bought the 160-acre Blount homestead in Polk County, near present day

### Bartow

In his later years he became very generous with his donations. He donated 120 acres of the Blount homestead land in Bartow for a high school, a county seat and for each of the town's two churches (Methodist and Baptist). He also personally donated \$1100 for construction of Bartow's first two-story building, which housed the Masonic lodge and school. He also owned land in Orange County, where he opened the Summerlin Hotel.

When Orlando's wooden courthouse burned in 1868, there was pressure to move the county seat to the then-larger town of Sanford. General Henry Sanford was particularly involved in lobbying for the move to Sanford and offered free land for the new courthouse during a public meeting. Legend has it that as Sanford concluded, Summerlin rose to his feet and asked if he had finished. Sanford replied, "I have." "Then I will make my offer. The county seat has been located here [in Orlando] by the free will of the majority of the settlers, the land has been deeded to that particular purpose. I stand here, ready to build a \$10,000 courthouse, and if the county is ever able to pay me back, all right. If it can't, that's all right, too." The county accepted his offer and repaid him over a 10-year period.

Later that year Orlando became incorporated with a population of 85. Summerlin died on November 4, 1893, at the age of 73, and was buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Bartow. □



**Next Coffee at the Clubhouse:  
Sunday, December 20th, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**

## YARBROUGH LINEAR PARK: A PHOTO-ESSAY BY JOYCE LINDABURY

*One of the hidden treasures of Bell Tower Park, our own "Secret Garden," is the Yarbrough Linear Park just east of our property. Just go through the hidden gate, and you are in another world. Here are some things you might see . . .*



From top right: Young Swamp Hen; Great Blue Heron; Bike and Hike Trail, Red Squirrel; Great Egret; Limpkin; Green Heron; Canal.

JOYCE LINDABURY

## WE LOVE MAH JONGG!

By Bee Horner

Please come meet our ladies who love the Chinese tile game that dates back to the time of Confucius. Here in Bell Tower Park we play on Mondays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. We welcome experienced players as well as observers and would be happy to teach anyone who would like to try the game.

Some of the players who have taken up Mah Jongg over the two-plus years we have been playing here have expressed their pleasure in this activity:

Vicky Barnes says,

I have been playing Mah Jongg with the ladies here in Bell Tower Park just over a year. Once I caught on to the game, I could then enjoy the strategy, and, as a bonus, the companionship of some very nice ladies. I always look forward to Monday afternoons and Wednesday evenings when we play.

Vicky is such an enthusiast about Mah Jongg that she now also plays at another club every week. She is always recruiting whenever the opportunity presents itself.

And Marjorie Bruno chimes in:

I love Mah Jongg! I look forward so much to Monday afternoons when I can play the game with a wonderful group of ladies. Having moved into Bell Tower Park last spring, by summer I was looking to make friends and find activities. I joined water aerobics and was quickly invited to join the Mah Jongg group. I didn't know anything about the game other than being familiar with the appearance of the tiles from playing the simple matching game on the computer. The ladies are very willing to teach newcomers and are also very patient.

Joyce Lindabury adds,

When I retired and moved to Fort Myers two years ago, I really didn't know anything about the game of Mah Jongg. New to the area and seeking some recreational activities in the community, I accepted Bee Horner's invitation to join the BTP players. It was sink or swim when I played my first game, but with the help of Bee's expertise I was soon able to hold my own and even won one game. "Beginner's luck" they call that.

Since that time I've enjoyed playing on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Clubhouse. The game involves skill, strategy, and calculation as well as luck. Besides the social opportunity, Mah Jongg is a great way to keep your brain stimulated. If I can learn it, so can you. Why not consider joining our group? We're always looking for new members.

If Mah Jongg might be of interest to you, please contact Trudy Conner at 432-9365 or Bee Horner at 267-5544. We would be happy to have you attend our group, which is open to all adults and high school students. □



JOYCE LINDABURY

Bell Tower Park Mah Jongg Players: Marjorie Bruno, Vicky Barnes, Joy Porter, Linda Lund

## DID YOU WANT TO KNOW?

By Jim Stewart



Q. How did golf get its name?

A. The popular idea that “golf” is an acronym for “Gentlemen Only, Ladies Forbidden” is heartily denied by the official website called “Scottish Golf History.” This site traces the term—and the game—back into the 1400s, and associates it with a word for “club” (the stick, not the association) found in Medieval German and Dutch, where the middle consonant and vowel were reversed: “Der Kolben” and “kolven.” According to some arcane rule of phonetics (“Grimm’s Law”), the letters got reversed somewhere before a Scottish king in 1457 decreed that “golf” and “futbawe” were both forbidden! I guess that decree didn’t outlast the kings of Scotland.

Speaking of golf, the Bell Tower Golf Summer League finished the year with a banquet at The Tilted Kilt to present trophies to the good golfers. No trophies were presented. The League will start up again around next April 1<sup>st</sup>. If you are a golfer, plan to join us.

Q. Why has it taken so long for the mulch to be put down?

A. Luke Brothers placed their order a long time ago and production of mulch throughout south Florida was behind schedule. It is possible the mulch will be down before we get this newsletter out. In the mulch there will be a general insecticide to help control bugs. In addition, the mulch will have a “millipede specific insecticide.” Luke Brothers report that in other communities where they have used this millipede protection, the millipedes did not come back. (See also the story about millipedes elsewhere in this issue.)

Q. What’s the deal with the houses that have been tented?

A. Well, the circus is not in town. Several homes on Bently Circle have found drywood termites in their units. Many homes in Bell Tower Park have already been inspected for termites and many other homes are going to be scheduled. If termites are found, the residents have to move out while specialized tarps are placed over the entire structure and joined together at rolled seams using heavy-duty clamps. The tarps are weighted at the bottom to create a seal and hold in the fumigant. Fumigant is dispersed, penetrating all wood timbers, trim, finished wood and furniture, as well as hard-to-treat wall studs, thereby eliminating drywood termites. The procedure itself poses some risk during tenting while fumigant is being contained. After the tarps are removed, however, the home is aired out and cleared, and no residue is left behind. You can safely return to the home in 2-3 days, if you have to have this procedure.

Q. What’s the status of the development being constructed behind Home Depot?

A. It will be called Springs at Six Mile Cypress Apartments in Fort Myers. Here is what their website is saying: Coming Soon! Springs at Six Mile Cypress Apartments in Fort Myers is a brand new gated community opening to residents in early 2016. Community and apartment amenities, as well as the location, will make Springs at Six Mile Cypress a great place to call home. The apartments will have many elegant finishes including wood laminate flooring in the kitchen, living room and bathrooms, black appliances, curved shower rods and 2” faux wood blinds. Every home will have a townhouse-style, private entry and many will have balconies or patios.

They also claim that they will have great community amenities, such as a resort-style pool, 24-hour fitness center, a leash-free dog park, pet spa area and car-care center. Their clubhouse is to have a free coffee bar and Wi-Fi. They will also accept packages and plan great community events “so you can get to know your neighbors.” No rent figures were mentioned in their pitch for Utopia. □



**SUZANNE FERGUSON,  
EDITOR**

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**EDITOR'S NOTE**

As the winter "season" comes into full swing, many of us become reflective and begin to count our blessings. I, for one, feel blessed to live in such a beautiful and tranquil corner of the U.S., and in such a vibrant, friendly community.

Bell Tower Park has been fortunate over the past several years to have had a stable and dedicated President, Dave Barnes. Although he is now moving on (I think of Yogi Berra—"When you see a fork in the road, take it."), we are in good shape to keep a positive forward momentum with interim President Don Boreman.

Although our super wet summer made work difficult for our new landscapers, at least we didn't have a hurricane. Although the Clubhouse pool was out of use about twice as long as promised, it turned out looking beautiful in the end. Although sometimes upgrades seem to take too long, we keep improving as a community. Still in progress: landscaping at the small pool and residential landscaping improvements.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of *Bell Tower Notes*. Although Joyce Lindabury's wonderful photographs will surely steal the most attention, there are numerous stories and features that will also, we hope, interest and entertain you.

From all the (totally volunteer, totally neighbor) staff of *Bell Tower Notes*, we wish you the very best for the Holidays and a prosperous 2016! ☐

*Suzanne Ferguson, Editor*

**REMEMBER: WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
WWW.BELLTOWERPARKCOMMUNITY.COM**

**OUR LAKES IN SEPTEMBER– FOR THE SNOWBIRDS WHO NEVER GET TO SEE THEM FULL.....**



JOYCE LINDABURY



JOYCE LINDABURY