



Bell Tower Property Owner Association's

# BELL TOWER NOTES

## LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE WORKS TO MAINTAIN OUR PARK-LIKE SETTING

By Alicia Shaw, Chair, Landscape Committee

Did you know that Bell Tower Park has over 1000 trees and palms, hundreds of landscape plant species, two wetland preserves, almost two dozen small dry-land preserves, eight interconnected lakes, and about 700,000 square feet of grassy areas in the approximately 132 acres of a park-like setting we call home? Neither did the Landscape Committee when we began our work seven months ago! The size and complexity of all this area make its maintenance a daunting task. The Landscape Committee has been working diligently with our Management and Landscaping company, Luke Brothers, to improve the ambience, crispness and quality of the Bell Tower Park landscape that may have attracted many of us here and that we have enjoyed over the years. The richness and variety of our grounds are among the greatest assets of living here.

Committee members Paul Niss, Paula Castallo Eberhardt, Keith Miller, and myself, Alicia Shaw, have been meeting bi-weekly to get a handle on our mission and, with our Board Liaison, Roger Brownell, begin to redeem aspects of the landscaping that had fallen into distress by late last winter. One of our first critical projects was to determine why

our irrigation system was not functioning properly. This continues to be our top and *ongoing* priority, especially as we enter the dry season again. "Before and after" pictures included with this article are examples of the difference a functioning irrigation system makes.

Another project the Landscape Committee instigated was the removal of the collapsed split rail fences around the wetland preserves. The replacement of the fences piecemeal was not feasible because there was difficulty accessing parts, and the replacement of the entire fence would have been exorbitantly expensive (as well as an on-going expense over time), so the committee recommended that it all be removed. With the Board's approval, the fence was taken out in the summer. With the eyesore of the broken-down fence removed, we hope the beauty of the preserves will be much easier to appreciate. We achieved considerable long-term cost savings by not replacing the fences. (Photocollage on p. 6)



JOYCE LINDABURY

Trimmed Palms at Avon Park Pool

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## CAM LOOKS FORWARD TO THE SEASON

By Suzanne Ferguson

Our Community Association Manager (CAM) Gina Krause has been with Bell Tower Park for about nine months. This has not been an easy time: when she signed on, we had seen two managers come and go within a year, along with turnover among Administrative Assistants. Records were in a shambles, procedures were disorganized at best, and just getting a handle on running the “shop” amidst the clamor of voices wanting their interests met was a real challenge. Over the next few months, Gina’s mantra of “patience, persistence and communication” was seriously tested.

Just recently, with the hiring of a new and energetic Administrative Assistant (Caitlin Condon, see profile on p. 4) and the addressing of some continuing uncertainties in lines of responsibility, Gina has begun to see some light at the end of the tunnel. I sat down with her in late October to get her take on where we are now and where we are going over the next few months.

**BTN: So—what have the recent changes in administration meant for you?**

**GK:** Bringing on Caitlin has given me much-needed help on two main fronts: I’m able to rely on her to get some order into our filing system, and because of that I can get out onto the property more to inspect things and work with the vendors to correct what’s wrong.

First, when I came the records were a hodge-podge of paper and electronic records, filed in idiosyncratic ways. It was difficult to find out what had happened, what had been decided, and sometimes what had been paid or not paid. I seemed to spend my time re-inventing the wheel; with Cait getting the files converted to electronic format and systematized so that we can find what we want when we want it; and developing templates for letters we frequently send out to remind residents of our rules and regulations, as well as fielding daily requests from walk-ins and routing the written and web-based CAM Action Requests, I am able to attend better to the needs of the Boards and Committees, and to liaison with Cardinal on a more rational basis.

Now, too, I am able to get out on the property more and get ahead with inspections, to be proactive rather than playing catch-up all the time. I can take the vendors to the trouble spots and explore the issues with them rather than just sending them off with a note. I can do research on issues, get deeper into the topics—whether they be legal, building-related, landscape-related, or whatever—so that I can give more direction. Bell Tower Park has a number of very gifted, informed and dedicated volunteers on the Boards and committees; now I feel more able to attend to their concerns and move forward with their help.

**BTN: The recent budget process was your first at BTP; how has it made a difference for you to be in on it from the start rather than inheriting a budget?**

**GK:** It has already made a difference. It was hard, trying to put all the pieces together from the different sources, but next year will be much, much easier. Getting procedures and records “right and tight” will provide a foundation for trust so that we can build a partnership between the Associations and Management.

**BTN: What is your outlook for the next year?**

**GK:** I am excited and happy to be able to build on the relationships we have begun to forge. We are overdue to reap the benefits of people’s hard work. I look forward to 2017.

**BTN: Thank you, and good luck, Gina!** ☐



JOYCE LINDABURY

CAM Gina Krause consults with Patrick Miles of Luke Brothers

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Roger Brownell, President, Bell Tower Park POA

Dear Friends,

The success of our community depends on the contributions of many individuals. We are fortunate to have a CAM who is experienced and understands the issues which affect Bell Tower Park. After consideration, Gina Krause made the decision to stay on as our CAM, which will benefit us immensely as we move forward. For the past month we have had a new Administrative Assistant, Cait Condon, who has already made a significant difference in the organization of the office and relationships throughout the organization.

The role of the five directors of the POA is not an easy one. The actions of the directors are constrained by the legal requirements for such a board, the financial constraints of the community and the growing needs of the BTP buildings and grounds, which are now about 13 years old. These factors mean the board has to make hard choices which will affect our community for years to come.

The 2017 budget is a reflection of these hard choices. The new enhanced security system will provide tighter gate security and much better cameras to observe the areas throughout the physical plant. We have planned for the necessary landscaping and irrigation equipment to maintain and improve the appearance of the community. We will not have a budget overrun, something which has plagued the POA for the last several years.

The various committees made up of your neighbors have worked hard to provide good and informed advice to the board; they have organized events for the community and helped maintain and repair many items throughout BTP. Without this selfless participation, we would not be able to achieve what we as residents have expected for our community. One committee which has really made a difference this year is the Landscape Committee. It has not only been instrumental in completing a number of important projects this year, e.g. removing the fence around the preserves and major trimming and height-reduction of the ficus hedge, but it has established a base for accountability of our contractor and requirements for landscaping in the future.

Please thank your neighbors who serve on the Board or a committee. Then consider running for the Board or volunteering on a committee yourself. We need active participation from more residents to accomplish the tasks in front of us. Help us all look forward to a wonderful 2017.

With best wishes, *Roger*



## ENHANCEMENTS TO SECURITY SYSTEM ON THE WAY

By John Davenport, Security Liaison to the POA Board

There are some exciting changes coming to our security system very soon. In October, the POA Board approved a number of enhancements to our Envera security package. These upgrades include the following:

- A new kiosk will be installed at the main gate that will require guests to place their driver's license into an ATM type machine where basic public information—name, address, photo—will be entered into the Envera database so that entry in the future will be much quicker, not to mention safer, by again swiping your driver's license. This feature will be explained in much more detail as we get closer to implementation.
- Envera will be taking over the monitoring of the resident gate on the Andrea Lane side of the property. (To date, it has been the responsibility of office staff to review video when something has happened.) The company will be installing new high-resolution cameras as well as striker sensors on the bar, which will give us immediate access to anyone who knocks down the bar.
- All of the cameras on the property will be upgraded to new HD technology that will greatly enhance clarity and will be embedded with analytics that will allow for better searching capability in the event we have an incident.
- Finally, one of the major enhancements we will see is a new entry system for our residents. The old clicker system will be a thing of the past. Under the new entry system, each vehicle that a resident owns will have a coded strip placed on the headlight. There will be a reader system similar to the "Sun Pass" system you see at toll booths that will read the coded strip, recognize the vehicle as a resident of BTP and open the gate.

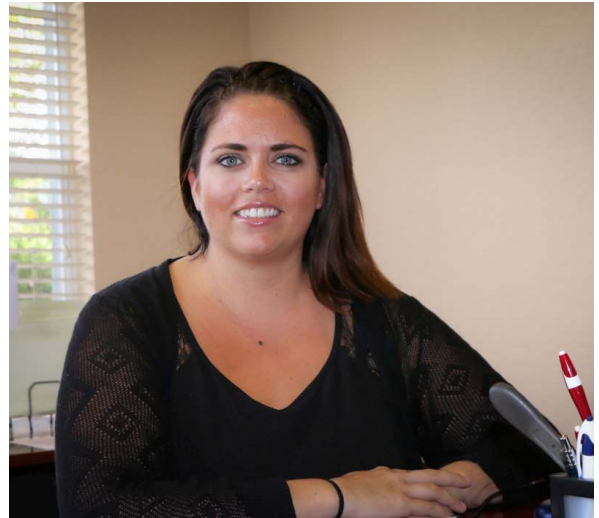
Envera is currently working on the installation schedule of all these enhancements, and we will hopefully have them in place in January 2017. There will be much more information forthcoming on the process and the implementation of the new system. □

# NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT GETS THE MANAGEMENT OFFICE ORGANIZED

By Suzanne Ferguson

As of September 26, we have a new Administrative Assistant in the CAM Office: Caitlin Condon. In addition to being the “face” of our Office, the first person you meet when you walk in the door, she is charged with:

- Attending to the paperwork of the Association, including applications for sales, rentals and leasing, giving out the Welcome Packets and security fobs to new owners and reviewing with them important Association policies;
- Data-entry and filing of all Association information and records into the new and improved electronic file system;
- Receiving all the electronic and paper Community Association Requests (called CAM Requests on the Website) and routing them to the proper recipient—the CAM, the Board, Committee Chairs, vendors;
- Creating and keeping track of the form “reminder” letters pertaining to rules violations, parking, and the like, in order to streamline processing; issuing parking permits; logging in and scheduling action on ARC forms—Architectural Reconstruction and Changes—used for requests for architectural and landscape variances;
- Liaison with our vendors, such as security, landscape, trash pickup, roofing, general maintenance;
- Accounting—dealing with invoices and payments for all bills other than member accounts (those handled at Cardinal in Naples).



Joyce Lindabury

Caitlin Condon, our new  
Administrative Assistant

In addition, Cait (pronounced “Kate”) works with the four Association Boards and with committees on agendas, minutes, and the like.

Prior to last February, the Administrative Assistant position was part time; it has taken some time to work out the responsibilities and organization of the full-time job, but with Cait’s appointment this fall, both the CAM and the Board are feeling confident that many things that were out of control will be addressed.

Cait was raised in Abington, a small town near Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and received a Tourism and Hospitality degree from Temple University in Philadelphia. She has worked as a Bar and Restaurant Manager for Hawks Cay Island Resort in the Florida Keys and for chains such as P.F. Chang and Buffalo Wild Wings. She was the opening manager for the Ford’s Garage franchise in Estero.

She is looking forward to building her new career in administration. Already she says she likes the “open door” atmosphere of the Office, where she gets to meet the residents and build relationships with them over time, trying to understand and solve their problems. She likes “being nice to people” and helping keep the Manager free to manage rather than be occupied with “the small stuff.”

When Cait is not working she is an avid softball player in the YMCA softball league at Hammond Stadium. She also volunteers with the Rayma C. Page Elementary PTA and (going back to her professional roots) cooking for families at the Ronald McDonald House at Health Park on Bass Road. □

## LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE (continued from page 1)

The Committee also recommended hiring an independent horticulturist in July, 2016, to assess the overall condition of our landscape. Our choice was Bob Cook, a certified horticulturist and consultant to landscaping companies, with special expertise in soil quality issues and what types of nutrients to use. Some of his recommendations included removing dead palm trees as soon as they are noticed because they are a safety issue, which we did. He noted that our soil here is a very poor quality, especially around the electrical "boxes," where there are many bare spots throughout the community. Before we put in any new sod or plants, he said, we should/must add topsoil in almost all areas of BTP, but especially around those boxes. He praised Luke Brothers for their good job in cutting our lawns at the right length, but recommended a fertilizer with more trace elements.

The annual palm tree pruning has just been completed (Photo on p.1). In the future, the palms will continue to be pruned once a year, but twice a year around the pools and entrances to our community, to keep those public areas neat and free from debris.

Our plans for the future are varied. They will be prioritized dependent on budget constraints. To mention a few, the Landscape Committee has proposed the removal of all dead shrubbery prior to placing new mulch by the end of this year. We agree with the concept that "No plant is better than a dead plant" in the landscape. Mulch will be placed in the fronts and sides of all residences and all the end units. As a cost-saving measure, it will not be placed between Courtyard Homes or in the back of any residences during the current application. We are also working on plans to alleviate flooding and high-maintenance landscaping issues between Courtyard Homes, and developing and implementing landscape designs for Carriage Homes to address several persistent problems specifically around the driveways.

We welcome community input into our efforts. You can attend any of our meetings, which usually take place on alternate Fridays at 1 p.m. in the Annex. They are always posted in the kiosks and on the Website. If you have a general suggestion or concern but cannot attend a meeting, we invite you to send an e-mail addressed to the Committee via our CAM, Gina Krause. For specific landscape problems, please use the "CAM Request Form" on the Bell Tower Park Community Website; that will create a record of your issue and our CAM will pass along your request to our landscapers as needed. A paper CAR (Community Action Request) is also available in the Manager's Office. □



Alicia Shaw

Bently lawn, Before



Joyce Lindabury

Bently lawn, After

## FAREWELL TO THE FENCES



ALICIA SHAW & JOYCE LINDABURY

## UPDATE ON THE MILLIPEDE INFESTATION

By Suzanne Ferguson

Recently people have complained that the millipedes are again becoming plentiful. Some products that have been recommended by residents of BTP are Spectracide Triazicide; Lesco's Crosscheck, Loveland's Bisect, and Talstar. Used as directed, these products will kill the millipedes as they emerge from the ground or around the foundations. They will not eliminate all the millipedes, just kill them before they begin climbing your walls. Their effectiveness may wear off over time. (An application of Triazicide made in June is still killing them in my courtyard.) □

## NEW POA BUDGET ADDRESSES ISSUES OF MAINTENANCE, ADMINISTRATION

By Donald Boreman, Treasurer of the POA, with Suzanne Ferguson

The annual POA Budget Meeting was held October 12 at the Clubhouse Annex, with about 45 members attending. The discussion was vigorous, as owners tried to understand variations from year to year on some items, and the reasons for overruns in the current year's budgeting. The latter boils down to one major issue: unforeseen breakdowns in our aging irrigation system last winter and spring. This year's budget attempts to correct the deficiency and proactively address the continuing need for renewal.

The entire 2017 budget as passed at the meeting is available on the BTP Community Website, along with previous years' budgets (each member received a copy prior to the budget meeting, either by mail or electronically). This article addresses some of the major year-to-year differences, and may best be read side by side with the budget:

- The increase, in February, of additional hours for the Administrative Assistant, bringing the position to full-time from part-time, results in an overrun to 2016 and a budget rise in 2017. Administrative issues are described in the profile of our new Assistant, Cait Condon, and the interview with CAM Gina Krause in this edition of *BTV*. On the initiative of President Roger Brownell, in consultation with Cardinal Management, the position was upgraded in February, and the Board, after discussion, agreed in a mixed vote to let it stand. The sub-Associations also agreed to the increase, in which they share. Note that the actual dollars more than double, as full-time comes with benefits.
- Security enhancements (see article by John Davenport, p.3): this is an increase of \$23,000 that is planned to decrease again in three years, when we finish paying off the new, high-definition cameras that will be monitored by Envera for both street entry gates (instead of just the front gate). The Board thought that financing the purchase and spreading out the increase was preferable to taking the hit all at once.
- Landscape issues: Once again we will be mulching; note that revised plans for the distribution of mulch may result in a lowering of the estimate in the budget. Pruning was done on the hardwood trees this past spring; as it is done only every third year, that cost goes away in 2017. Irrigation renovation: We have replaced several of our irrigation "clocks," but are budgeting to replace the two remaining ones in 2017, along with approximately 12 "decoders" for the system each month of the year. (*Ed. note: since this article was submitted, an additional clock was found to be defective.*)
- Electricity charges will rise as a result of adding additional bubblers to our lakes #2 and #3 (between the two arms of Bently and between Bently and Avon Park) to maintain water quality, as well as the transfer of pool heating to electric from propane (that item has gone to zero). It was determined that propane is much more costly than electricity for heating the water, so a substantial savings is being realized.
- It was decided that "contingency" funds should be raised from \$1,000 to \$10,000 to cover unanticipated items as our systems continue to age. Any amount not spent will carry over to 2018. □

## FALL SOCIAL CALENDAR

From The BTP Activities Committee

There are three events remaining in our Bell Tower Park Activities Committee Calendar for 2016:

- November 18, 6 p.m., the Annual Chili Cook-Off. Enter your best chili recipe for eight people and warm up your friends at the clubhouse. No reservations necessary. \$5.00 at the door for those not bringing chili. Set-ups and accompaniments supplied by the Activities Committee. BYOB. For info, call Ronnie Vaccarino at 239-989-7403. Here ALL the voting choices will be good ones!
- December 3, 3 p.m., Green Flash Consort of Viols will perform Renaissance Christmas Music and other early music with viols, recorders, a vocal soloist and carol sing-along at the clubhouse! Free. Kick off your Christmas Season in the Olde Style. (You'll be invited to try these engaging early bowed instruments at the end of the program. Light refreshments will be served.)
- December 9, 6 p.m., Annual Christmas Buffet Dinner Party at the holiday-decorated clubhouse, with dancing to the music of *Dusk*. Price TBA: watch the website and the sandwich boards for info. Don't miss this gala event!
- And remember the Sunday Coffee Hours, Sundays, November 20 and December 18 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. □

## NEW CONDOMINIUM MANAGEMENT ISSUE: THE “AIRBNB PHENOMENON”

By Richard Roux

Recent Southwest Florida Legal Blogs have alerted Condominium Associations that a new management issue known as the "Airbnb Phenomenon" is appearing in this area. This issue involves unit owners' using any of a number of Internet sites to rent rooms in their homes in areas like Ft. Myers that are attractive to tourists. Such "Bed & Breakfast" (BnB) type rentals are usually short duration and result in hotel-like lodging transactions.

Associations have been advised to remind their owners of their community's restrictions against such transactions. Bell Tower Park's Declaration of Covenants clearly does not allow such arrangements. Para. 11.2 of our Declaration states that only entire units (not rooms) can be leased, and the minimum leasing period is 30 days. Additionally, any proposed leasing arrangement needs to be submitted to the Association for review and approval.

Since we received this legal notice, violations have been found ongoing within Bell Tower Park. One Unit Owner claimed almost 30 rentals. Such improper arrangements can lead to potential security and nuisance problems in the use of our common area grounds and amenities for the violating unit owner's customer-attraction and personal profit.

Bell Tower Park's existing rules in this area are clearly written. Corrective actions for violations include fining and the Unit Owner's loss of privileges (e.g., long-term loss of access to all amenities). These corrective actions can be taken both for placing the internet ad and actually hosting BnB guests.

This is yet another issue which requires management resources and complicates the management of our property. Violator identification can be accomplished by our property manager's spending time on-line researching BnB sites and/or by using paid investigative services, both of which incur a cost to the Association. BnB Internet sites are being notified to not accept notices from any BTP owner for rentals shorter than 30 days because of our use restrictions. □

## AED/CPR TRAINING SCHEDULED

### On-Site Training Available to Residents

By Richard Roux

It's been three years since the POA purchased an AED device for our Clubhouse and sponsored initial on-site CPR/AED training for approximately 40 of our residents. This training, from South Trail Fire Department personnel, was repeated in 2014 for a smaller-sized group as resident interest dwindled. Last year the on-site training class wasn't held at all. First responders and others required to have CPR/AED training must recertify every one to two years, as it is assumed that previous training has gotten "fuzzy," especially if it has not had to be used. If one gets certification from Lee County Emergency Services or the Red Cross or American Heart Association at their facilities, the fee can be anything from \$30 to \$70. Thus, the course offered at our Clubhouse is a terrific bargain.

The significance of this training cannot be overstated. Rapid application of CPR is critical to life saving. Each minute a victim requiring CPR goes without help decreases their survival rate by 10%. Even with our close proximity to the local South Trail Fire Station, response times of 5-9 minutes can be expected. Our AED is located in the exercise area of the Clubhouse. Participants in any of our exercise programs, including swimming, should know exactly where it is located and obtain training on how to use it.

South Trail will return to our Clubhouse for a AED/CPR training session on Thursday, January 19, 1:30-3:30 p.m. The cost per person is \$5 for supplies. Attendees will receive a certificate of completion, but not a certification card. Class size is limited to 10 individuals and will be filled on a "first come, first serve" basis. Reservations should be made with Cait, our new Administrative Assistant, at the CAM Office. Additional classes could be scheduled depending on resident interest. □

# HALLOWEEN COMES TO BELL TOWER

By Joyce Berrian-Ferrari

The Mad Hatter and the Queen of Hearts, Colonel Sanders and a Giant Chicken, mummies, the Hulk, and Raggedy Ann and Andy were among the fifty-six fantastic creatures attending this year's Bell Tower Halloween bash.

Party-goers danced to the beat of Soli and Andre from 6-9 p.m. on Saturday, October 29th, and enjoyed snacks, pies, ice cream and coffee provided by the Activities Committee. A gift certificate to Bahama Breeze was given for best costumes to Ralph Causarano and Linda Kaufman, who dressed as cave people. Seven hand-painted pumpkins were given as door prizes to end this enjoyable evening gathering. See additional photos on our Website under "Photo Albums." □



PHOTOS BY: JOYCE BERRIAN FERRARI & NANCY SANDERS

Halloween Party Collage: From the top, clockwise, Jane and Tom Kearns; Nancy and Ted Sanders; Barb and Jim Edmonds; Linda Kaufman and Ralph Causarano. (Collage by Joyce Lindabury)

## SEPTEMBER 24 POOL PARTY

By Jane Kraus

To paraphrase the postal workers' motto: Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these party-goers from the swift completion of their appointed good time.

A little rainy day didn't stop 50+ folks from having fun with old and new friends at the Bell Tower Park Clubhouse Pool. Burgers and hot dogs, provided by the Activities Committee, were grilled to perfection by chefs Bill Johnson and Dorothea McLaughlin, with John Davenport serving as runner from grill to table. There was a variety of delicious salads and scrumptious desserts supplied by the party-goers.

A big tip-of-the-hat goes to the Activities Committee for the hard work of organizing the event and all the folks who helped with setup and cleanup. Great job, everyone -- the Party was a blast! □

## BTP SUMMER GOLF LEAGUE ENDS

By Jim Stewart

The BTP summer golf league ended on Thursday, October 27, and will start up again next spring. There have been an average of 8 to 12 players every week at The Hideaway Golf Club. The course is one of the finest around, and it was fun to play. Neighbors were met and friendships were formed. Now, some of the adjectives that were used to describe some golf shots will need to be shelved until next season. We will publish info about next summer in our spring issue. □

## TENNIS CLINICS AGAIN OFFERED

By Richard Roux

For the fourth 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 participate in on-court drills and get exercise. Clinics will be scheduled with the participants so as not to interfere with early morning regular play. Last year 14 residents participated.

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 early January. Interested residents can contact Richard Roux at [Richard.roux@ymail.com](mailto:Richard.roux@ymail.com). □



JOYCE LINDABURY

Last year's tennis class.

## LAKES PARK OFFERS SEASONAL ATTRACTIONS FOR GROWNUPS, GRANDCHILDREN

By Suzanne Ferguson with Nancy Sanders

The popular Lakes Park Farmer's Market has moved from Friday morning to Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you haven't tried it, this is the time! There seem to be many more food trucks with items from shish kebabs to pastries joining the fruit and vegetable vendors, flower and plant sellers, fishmongers and artisans. One of my favorites is the tropical fruit vendor, who sells such exotic items as dragonfruit and lychees, "chocolate pudding" fruit and guanabanas in their season along with the more common melons, pineapples, and mangos. The market is a great place to find Florida Christmas gifts as well as a fun walk-around lunch. (But note that dogs are not allowed—though hand-made dog treats and toys are sold!)

We've written in earlier issues about the amazing return at nightfall of great flocks of wading birds—white and glossy ibis, American and snowy egrets, little and great blue herons, tri-colored herons, among others. A couple of times I've even seen a few roseate spoonbills. Go an hour before sunset and stand on the bridge . . .

For multigenerational fun, try the paddleboats or the pedal-carriages that can be rented in two locations. Kids can use the water parks and climbing toys as well as swings and slides in the playground. And for a special treat, make a visit to the train museum and then take a 20-minute ride on the miniature train. The areas along the tracks will be decorated for Christmas, as they were for Halloween, with figures for the season.

The 7th annual "Scarecrow in the Park" festival ran from October 21 to 30. There were bounce houses, hayrides, a pumpkin patch, face painting, concessions and the Halloween Express train ride. The Children's Discovery Garden benefited from the \$3 donations.

Several BTP residents--the Sanderses, the Johnsons and the Vaccarinos--have rented garden plots in the Park's community garden, where they grow their own fresh vegetables and flowers. There are about 80 beds altogether, and currently they are all rented out for the season. If you want to get on the waiting list for next August, write to [lakespark.communitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:lakespark.communitygarden@gmail.com).

For general information about the many special events and offerings in the park, go to the website: <http://lakesparkenrichmentfoundation.org>, where you will learn about many recreational opportunities (birding walks, botanical garden walks, etc.) and features of this great amenity less than a mile from our gates. □



SUSAN MOHORCIC

Scarecrow in the Lakes Park Community Garden

## In The Spirit.....



SUSAN MOHORCIC

Happy Halloween on Avon Park

## ARE YOU READY FOR SOME PICKLEBALL?

By Nancy Sanders

Pickleball has become a very popular activity here at Bell Tower Park. Over three years ago, lines were drawn on the old basketball court to form the two pickleball courts. Even then, the courts had not been updated since the community opened and were in dire need of resurfacing. There were numerous cracks and uneven areas that were causing a safety hazard to pickleball and basketball players alike. The courts are over 12 years old, and resurfacing the court was something that was already included in the budget and schedule for 2016.

Mor-Sports was hired to work on the courts. The process began in late October and took over a week to complete. A fiberglass membrane was approved by the board to reduce the chance of any surface cracks reoccurring, at least for a few years. The courts were resurfaced a beautiful even green, then re-lined for basketball and pickleball.

While the courts were closed, the resourceful pickleball players would car pool over to the courts by Page Field. Our courts were finally completed on October 30<sup>th</sup> and the players were excited to play on our own courts once more. In addition to resurfacing the courts, protruding bushes on the sideline between the tennis courts and pickleball/basketball courts were removed and replaced with sod along the fence. This was also a measure to insure the safety of all athletes.

Although carpooling to Page Field was an adventure and fun, the pickleball players are very happy to be on their own courts again. There's no place like home! ☐



JOYCE LINDABURY

Pickleball/Basketball Court, before and after. Note sod replaces original bushes next to the fence.

## WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS!

During the summer several of our trees were hit by lightning. A spectacular blast knocked a big hole in a courtyard wall on Bently. □



JOYCE LINDABURY

## TIPS FROM THE BTP WEBMASTER

### A Request to Utilize our E-form system

By Richard Roux

Our BTP Website, which has just celebrated its fifth anniversary, contains a considerable volume of current and archived information relating to many aspects of life at Bell Tower Park. Available online at [www.belltowerparkcommunity.com](http://www.belltowerparkcommunity.com), the site provides resident users a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week source of community news, whether they are in residence or far away.

A comprehensive rundown of many of the features of the Website was previously given in BTN Volume 5.1, September 2015, that's essential reading for all new Website users. That article is archived on the Website under "Newsletters."

The site includes a "forms" section containing separate forms for obtaining on-line help from the CAM (CAM Action Requests) and the Webmaster. These forms allow you to request help electronically from the comfort of your unit or a remote location. Not only do they provide the recipient with a record of your request, but they also provide you with a record copy of all submitted forms. This record is kept under a tab in your user profile. The user's profile is also the place where users can add their own digital photo to their home page.

As Webmaster, I am available to help residents who need assistance. Many commonly occurring questions are already answered on the site. Corrections to posted material and suggestions for improvement are always gratefully received ([Richard.roux@ymail.com](mailto:Richard.roux@ymail.com)) □



## WATER COLOR PAINTING CLASSES AT BTP

This winter season, BTP will again host Water Color painting classes at our Clubhouse under the direction of a professional artist.

Schedule: Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30 p.m.,  
starting December 6, 2016.

New participants should contact BTP  
Resident Brenda Bula  
([brendab@cfront.net](mailto:brendab@cfront.net)) to express interest  
and obtain additional information. Spaces  
are limited.



## Come Celebrate The Holidays

### SAVE THE DATE

December 9th, 2016  
6 to 9 PM

Bell Tower Park Clubhouse

Annual Buffet Dinner Dance

Details to be Announced Shortly





## DID YOU WANT TO KNOW?

By Jim Stewart

**Q.** Did you want to know where the Midwest is?

**A.** I am from Indiana and always thought I lived in the Midwest. However, when watching some weather programs, I heard I lived in several different parts of the country. The Midwestern United States, also referred to as the American Midwest or simply the Midwest, is one of the four geographic regions defined by the US Census Bureau. Though the region is traditionally defined in a number of ways, the Census Bureau's definition consists of 12 states in the north central U.S.: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Now I learn the Census Bureau has divided the Midwest into two divisions. The East North Central Division includes Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin, all of which are also part of the Great Lakes region. The West North Central Division includes Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska and South Dakota, all of which, except for Iowa, Missouri and Minnesota, are also located, at least partly, within the Great Plains region of the country.

So now when I listen to a weather forecaster refer to the Midwest, or North Central states, the East North Central states, or the Great Lakes region, or the West North Central states or the Great Plains states, I will remember that our government was involved in telling me where the tornadoes will land.

**Q.** Want to get a pothole fixed?

**A.** One of our newsletter contributors, Dee Isakson, informed me that if you see a pothole on a public road (and there have been plenty on Andrea Lane and the service road to Bahama Breeze) and want to make sure it's filled, you can call the Department of Transportation at 533-9400. When the call is answered, just tell them you want to report a pothole. They will transfer you to the proper office. When describing the location, be as exact as you can with directions, such as the street name, which side of the street, any cross street (if applicable), or any business or landmark nearby. They will ask for your name and address and phone number, and they will call you back if they need further clarification of the location. Dee has already called in twice and the potholes were fixed within a day or two. A thumbs-up for the Fort Myers Department of Transportation.

**Q.** How many passengers use the Fort Myers airport each year?

**A.** The Southwest Florida International Airport averages 217 daily flights and 23,000 daily passengers. In 2015, nearly 8.4 million passengers passed through RSW. The runway is 12,000 X 150 feet and can accommodate wide-body international aircraft such as the Boeing 747 and Airbus A330. A 9,100-foot parallel runway is planned for the future. The airport ranks among the top 50 airports for passenger traffic in the U.S. The terminal has three passenger concourses with 28 gates and is expandable to 65 gates with the ability to serve more than 16 million passengers annually. The city planners had great foresight when buying land to add a runway. Additionally, there is Skyplex, a site located north of the runway that offers more than 1,100 acres for commercial development, including 75 acres of prime ramp access.

**Q.** What is happening on that big field just east of Sun Harvest Citrus (aka The Orange Juice Factory) at the southeast corner of Six Mile Cypress and Metro?

**A.** The folks at Sun Harvest tell me it is just what we need! Another Race Trac gas station. And now we learn that the golf driving range on Daniels just west of Six Mile Cypress has been sold to Whole Foods. At least that is what the newspaper reported. The boys at the driving range informed me on 10-7-16 that the papers have not been signed as yet. Stay tuned.

**Q.** Why does the word "corn" mean so many different grains?

**A.** Because "corn" originally meant any small particle—even sand or salt. That is why beef preserved by the use of salt is called "corned beef." When "corn" finally came to mean a certain type of grain it was used to refer to the grain that was the leading crop of the locality. In England, therefore, "corn" is wheat; in Scotland and Ireland, "corn" is oats, and in the United States, it's maize.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

With this issue, we begin our sixth year of publishing *Bell Tower Notes*, your community newsletter. Where our website ([www.belltowerparkcommunity.com](http://www.belltowerparkcommunity.com)) keeps us up to date with timely announcements and reams of easily accessible historical information—our condominium documents, past minutes of Boards and Committees, descriptions of the Boards and committees, safety and security advice, newsletter archive, and the like—our newsletter highlights major current events, season by season. We hope we give insights and depth that the website isn't designed to provide, and with our wonderful photos by Photography Editor Joyce Lindabury and other community picture-takers, provide a record of the special, memorable moments of our community life and nearby attractions such as Lakes Park.

The Committee hopes you understand the website and the newsletter are partners in providing information and recognition for members of the community. As we begin the new year, again the staff invites more of you to write for us; anyone with desktop publishing skills would also be especially welcome to assist with the set-up. If you would like to discuss it, please write me at [scf@case.edu](mailto:scf@case.edu), or call 239-481-4871.

I look forward to hearing from you!

*Suzanne Ferguson, Editor*

### BELL TOWER NOTES

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

## GATE PROTOCOL REMINDER

By Richard Roux

Each summer weeks go by without any problems at our gates. Then suddenly when traffic increases in our winter season, gate problems start occurring. Many of the previous long-term gate-strike problems will be corrected by the new Envera gate access and control system that will be in place this winter. In the meanwhile, your adherence to the following guidelines is greatly appreciated, as it will minimize the repetitive arm damage that has plagued us in the past. The following is a reminder of the informal protocol for our gates.

- All residents should be using the Andrea Lane entrance gate as much as possible in order to free up the U.S. 41 entrance guardhouse area for visitors.
- Residents should anticipate that their guest and delivery vehicles may be misdirected to the Andrea Lane gate by GPS-based navigation systems. This is a continuing problem that the POA has not been able to correct. Visitors should be alerted beforehand to use the U.S. 41 gate.
- When entering the property, know who is in control of the gate arm. Wait until the car in front of you has entered (and the arm has started down) before you activate your clicker. Then you'll know that you are in control of the arm for your entry.
- Never provide access to other vehicles. All visitor access should be done via the Envera security system.
- Finally, if an accidental hit does occur please immediately notify the CAM Office (use the 24/7 phone number if the office is closed) so that other residents are not inconvenienced and campus security is quickly re-established. □