



Bell Tower Property Owner Association's

BELL TOWER NOTES

ENVERA SECURITY UPGRADES COMING

By John Davenport, POA Board Member and Chairman of the Security Committee

Special Points of Interest:

- Holiday Adopt-A-Family, P.3
- FAQs on New Access System, PP.5-6
- New Landscape Manager, P.7
- New Pool Company, P.8
- Cook-off Winner, P. 9
- AED/CPR Training, P.10
- Christmas Party Pictures, P.11

Inside this Edition:

- Carriage Home Notes 2
- Winter Social Events 2
- Board Annual Meetings 2
- 2017 BTP Pickleball Tournament 6
- Smoke Alarm Warning ! 8
- Q & A 13

As most of our residents have observed, Envera, our security company, has been working in Bell Tower Park throughout the month of January. Our overall security system has been getting a makeover with some exciting new upgrades to our current system that will make Bell Tower Park a safer place to live. Last fall, the POA Board engaged in an in-depth research process to determine how best to improve our system, exploring upgrades Envera has to offer beyond what we had in our original contract five years ago. We needed to address perennial problems with gate entry (especially at Andrea Lane) and the ability to identify miscreants using our facilities. We came up with a comprehensive package of upgrades that should last for many years to come. A quick synopsis of these upgrades includes:

- > New high-definition security cameras to replace the current older analog-type cameras. This will allow for greater clarity and sharpness in the event they are needed to identify intruders, vehicles or incidents that need attention;
- > Envera will be taking over the monitoring of the "resident only" entry gate off of Andrea Lane. Currently they only monitor the main gate, while Cypress Access, our gate maintenance vendor, has had its cameras monitoring the resident gate. The new Envera system allows for faster and easier monitoring of the cameras. Under the Cypress Access system, it was a laborious, time-consuming task to review the recordings in order to find a particular incident. The new system also allows for better continuity and consistency by having one vendor monitoring both gates.
- > The main visitor/resident entrance live but remote-monitored kiosk is being replaced with a new, updated and secure kiosk. Residents will still have to list all guests and vendors in their Envera access list, but the visitor will not have to wait for a live agent to respond, check the list, and release the gate. Instead, visitors will initially have to insert their driver's licenses into an Envera card reader similar to an ATM machine. The information from the front, including the photo, will be entered into the Envera database (the reader does not read the magnetic strip on the back). Each time after that initial entry, when visitors arrive at the kiosk, they will again insert their driver's licenses and the system will automatically find the data originally entered, check to make sure the visitor is on the resident's visitor list, and provide immediate entry, all in approximately 10-15 seconds. Envera promises that entry under this system is not only more secure for BTP, but will allow for much quicker service. If there is any problem, there will still be the ability to contact a live representative through the kiosk. (A similar process will be followed by vendors, taxis, etc., who will speak to the representative as they now do.)



RICHARD ROUX

New Envera Visitor Kiosk

CONTINUED ON P.5 ➤

CARRIAGE HOMES NOTES



By Robert H. Garland, President

We hope everyone had a blessed Holiday and send New Year's greetings from Bell Tower Park's largest sub-association, Carriage Homes. Our Board would like to welcome back all our seasonal residents. Based on current weather reports, we're sure that you're glad to return to the warmth of southwest Florida – both the warmth of the sun and our community!

The Carriage Homes will hold our annual meeting on March 21, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Annex Building of the Bell Tower Park Clubhouse. The primary purpose of the meeting is to elect two directors. The Carriage Homes has three directors who serve staggered 2-year terms. All three of the current directors have served for a number of years. We would welcome some new perspectives and energy. If you would like to run for one of the open positions, please submit a "Notice of Intent to be a Candidate for the Board" to Cardinal Management Group on or before February 8, 2017.

The required Notice of Intent form was included with your initial meeting notification. Candidates are also encouraged to submit a one-page Information Sheet that summarizes their qualifications and/or reasons for wanting to serve as a Board member. If you need another copy of the form or have any questions, please see Gina Krause, our Community Manager, at the Bell Tower Park Clubhouse Office.

March madness is just around the corner! I hope your college team does well – just not as well as Kentucky – go Cats!

ANNUAL MEETINGS OF ALL THE ASSOCIATIONS SCHEDULED

- Courtyard Homes II, 2 p.m., February 21
- Property Owners Association (POA), 7 p.m., March 20
- Carriage Homes, 7 p.m., March 21
- Courtyard Homes I, 7 p.m., March 27

If you have not received the initial meeting announcement package for both The POA and your sub-association's annual meetings, please contact our Administrative Assistant, Cait Condon, in the CAM Office. Packets were sent out 60 days prior to each scheduled meeting, either by mail or email. Every association has open Board positions needing to be filled. The meeting packets contain information on how to run for the Board, including the deadlines for submitting your application materials.

A second annual meeting announcement package will be sent out 14 days before each meeting. It will contain proxies and ballots, if you are having an election. (Remember that if the number of candidates is the same as the number of vacancies, no election takes place.) Please fill out the proxies and return, whether or not you are planning to attend your meeting. And consider actually attending, to thank those who volunteer to serve on the Boards, as they represent your welfare and assist in maintaining your property values

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY-APRIL

Mark Your Calendars!

- Saturday evening, February 11: Valentine party with karaoke, 6-9 p.m.
- Saturday afternoon, March 25: Annual Tiki Party at the Clubhouse pool
- Saturday afternoon, April 22: Fashion Show and Ladies Tea

Look for posters and Website announcements for these popular events!

Coffee and breakfast treats are served at the Clubhouse every 3rd Sunday of the month 9:30-11:30.

If anyone has any suggestions for new activities, drop them at the CAM office for pickup. The Committee would welcome new members with fresh ideas and a willingness to work on events with other fun people. Contact Ronnie Vaccarino at 239-989-7403 or Kathy Gambino at 239-288-6958, or just show up at one of our meetings, the first Tuesday evening of each month. (Check the BTP Website to verify time.)

HOLIDAY SALVATION ARMY ADOPT-A-FAMILY A BIG SUCCESS

By Jane Kearns

This is a special note to thank the entire community for the overwhelming support and participation in what we intend to be the First Annual Bell Tower Park Adopt-a-Family program!

With Jane Kearns as coordinator, the Activities Committee of Bell Tower Park approached the local Salvation Army to participate in their program that allows families in need to receive a complete Christmas celebration, from food to gifts and even decorations.

The family that we were assigned consisted of four children ages 8 to 12 who are being raised by their grandparents. We were asked to provide an outfit of clothing for each child and a few items from their suggested "dream" list. Each gift was to be wrapped and the recipient's name affixed to the package. It was also requested that we provide food or gift certificates to a local grocery store to allow for purchasing the food needed for a complete Christmas dinner.

At the BTP Coffee Hour held on the third Sunday of November, Jane presented the Activities Committee's plan to the attendees, and notices were posted on the BTP Website. The response was immediate and overwhelming! We were all happily surprised.

Right away, the responders got in line to select the items that they wanted to purchase. Before long we could see that the family that we were assigned to were to have all that they desired and more! Not only did every child receive two outfits, but they also received PJ's, slipper socks, and ornaments for their tree, plus movie tickets and gift certificates to Barnes and Noble. The toys were originally planned to be one or two for each child, but we were able to double that to four each! Not to leave the grandparents out, they also received an outfit each. A gift certificate for several hundred dollars was presented for their dinner needs.

The Activities Committee set up a festive-looking box in the Annex where residents dropped their beautifully wrapped and labeled items. Gina and Cait were extremely helpful in letting Jane know who had dropped what off and keeping any money safe for her to pick up. They, too, generously contributed to the collection.

Delivery day was a festive event. All wearing stocking caps, the participating committee members caravanned in two cars to deliver Bell Tower Park's gifts. As planned, the grandmother was there to meet us. She was very appreciative and even asked to hug everyone participating!

The Salvation Army's letter of appreciation is shown below. We definitely look forward to next year and hope that we can again have a fabulous response that will continue to make us all proud to be members of this generous community.

THANK YOU, BELL TOWER PARK RESIDENTS!

-The Activities Committee



Adopt-a-Family: Jane Kearns, Ronnie Vaccarino and Dorothea McLaughlin ready to help Santa

The Salvation Army
10291 McGregor Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33919



January 9, 2017

Jane Kearns
Belltower Park
5571 Berkshire Ave #102
Fort Myers, FL 33912

Dear Jane and Friends at Belltower Park:

Thank you so much for your participation this year in the Salvation Army Adopt a Family program that is a part of the Salvation Army Angel Tree Program. As you know, this branch of Angel Tree targets a number of the neediest families in our overall program, many with extraordinary medical issues, issues of domestic violence, or even homelessness.

Because of the help of you gave in purchasing gifts, together we were able to provide the Tello Family a very bright Christmas. Since you personally delivered to this family and saw for yourselves the gratitude and love that they experienced from your visit, I'm sure that this was very meaningful to you! Hopefully they were able to physically thank you for all you did for them.

We would love to work together again next Christmas! (Applications start in mid-October!)

Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts!

VINCE VACCARINO

ORIENTATION MEETINGS FOR NEW ENVERA SYSTEM

By Jane Kraus and Suzanne Ferguson

Two open meetings were held in January at the Clubhouse Annex to present information from a representative of Envera Security Systems about the upgrades to the BTP security system. As noted in the main article in this edition of *Bell Tower Notes*, the upgraded system will include scanners for headlight decals on owners' and renters' cars; high definition video cameras strategically placed at the community entrances, in the Clubhouse and at pools and sport courts; and driver's license readers for the admission of visitors and vendors.

The first meeting, on the evening of January 17, drew around 200 residents. It overflowed the Annex and had to be moved to the pool deck (luckily it was a pleasant evening!). Technician Gerry Berrios introduced Envera as a company and showed slides demonstrating the headlight scan codes and use of the high definition cameras at a swimming pool. Although it became dark, there were vigorous questions and discussion for nearly an hour. The next afternoon, about 135 residents came to hear the presentation and raise their questions and concerns. The Envera Rep and Board members who were present did their best to respond and clarify all of the issues raised. (A summary of Frequently Asked Questions appears in a sidebar.)

The target date for the system rollout was announced as January 31. Residents will receive emails from our CAM regarding the dates they may come by the Office to purchase the electronic decals (\$15 for owners and \$30 for renters), which will be attached by the CAM or Admin. Asst. to the passenger side front headlight. Registration forms may be picked up at the Clubhouse if you did not receive one at a meeting.

This upgrade was approved by the POA Board last fall to address several major issues: the fact that the original cameras, installed over five years ago, did not show clear enough pictures to identify people shown misbehaving, including running through or breaking the gate pole; the gate entry for visitors has been cumbersome and not very secure, as it was by name only; and there was no ability to turn off clickers once a party had moved away. It is hoped that once the system is operational, residents will be pleased with the results. □



RICHARD ROUX

Envera Orientation at the Clubhouse

SECURITY UPGRADES (continued from page 1)

> Finally, the old "clicker system" that our residents currently use to gain access will no longer be operational at the gates, although your clicker will still be needed to open your garage doors. Here again, a new, more secure system is being installed. Each resident will need to purchase a coded sticker strip (\$15 for owners, \$30 for renters per registered vehicle) that will be installed on the headlight of their vehicle(s) by our office staff. This coded strip will be unique to each vehicle and each owner. The vehicle will then be recognized by an invisible field scanner installed at each entry gate and the gate will open. This system is much more secure than the clicker, as the coded strip will contain the information on each vehicle, including make, model, plate number and owner's name and address. Under our current clicker system, not only do we not have any of this pertinent information, but clickers are being used by vendors and others who should not have clickers, including former residents. Owners/renters who do not wish to participate in the sticker system may opt out: however, entry into BTP will then have to be made at the main gate kiosk with the owner's/renter's driver's license information, as explained earlier.

There may be concerns by some residents about the new system, but overall it will make Bell Tower Park more secure, which is our number one goal: keeping our residents and visitors safe. Hopefully the system will go live the first week of February. There were two meetings scheduled by Envera to go over the entire upgrade package and answer any questions and concerns our residents have. (See the separate article on the meetings, and also the list of Frequently Asked Questions.) The Board and the Manager will be keeping close watch to ensure that the system is working as advertised. □

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE NEW ENVERA ACCESS SYSTEM

Compiled by David Shaw and Suzanne Ferguson

When will the new Envera system become operative?

The new system will be operational February 14.

Will there be an overlap of the old entry system with the new system?

There will be a 7-day overlap period, starting on Feb. 14, when both the new system and the old clicker system will both work.

How many other communities utilize this new system?

Envera is currently upgrading in many of its over 200 communities in Florida. Exact numbers were not given. When we first joined Envera in 2011, they had about 30 communities, now expanded to nearly 250. They are committed to providing the best technologies available.

Where and when can I obtain a sticker for my auto headlight?

The CAM will issue a schedule by e-mail for residents to obtain their headlight stickers. You must fill out the information form (distributed at the meetings or from the Office) and make your payment.

Will residents have to purchase the headlight sticker?

The sticker will cost \$15.00 for unit owners and \$30.00 for those renting a unit.

Will a discount be available for those who are required to change a leased vehicle?

No.

Where will the sticker be placed on my car?

The sticker must be placed on the passenger side headlight.

Will the sticker wash off as a result of inclement weather or carwashes?

Previous experience has shown that the sticker will not wash or rub off, nor will its efficacy be impaired by dirt.

How many stickers can I obtain?

One sticker per registered vehicle.

Can I use one sticker for two cars?

No, once a sticker is removed from the headlight the embedded chip becomes inactive.

How will the sticker be tracked if I sell or trade my vehicle?

Once the CAM is notified of the sell or trade, the chip will be de-activated and a new sticker must be purchased and applied.

What happens when someone moves out?

The CAM deactivates the sticker. Owners are responsible for making sure the Office knows when ownership changes and when renters have left. Ordinarily, the sticker will be operational only for the period of a lease; if the lease is renewed, the Office must be notified.

Are there other options to using the Envera-provided headlight sticker?

No, the system provided by Envera is the only authorized system and must be utilized.

Will my clicker become obsolete?

Only for the gates. You will still need your clicker for your garage.

How will emergency vehicles and vendors have access?

The current process by which emergency vehicles enter the community will not change, nor will that for vendors, who will have to use voice communication with the Envera agent through the kiosk.

ENVERA ACCESS Q&As (continued from page 5)

What gates must individuals using rental cars utilize?

All persons driving rental cars must use the U.S. 41 gate.

What gates will guests utilize?

All guests must use the U.S. 41 gate just as in the past. The only difference is that they will insert their driver's license into the scanner and, upon its being approved, the gate will automatically rise for them.

What about the lurkers who wait and drive in ahead of the guest when the gate goes up?

Two things: the new cameras will photograph the violator, so that they can be identified and dealt with, and the guest will contact Envera through the voice communication to report the violation and gain access.

Will there always be an interactive voice at the U.S. 41 gate to respond to queries from those persons wishing to enter the community?

Yes, there will be a live communication and camera at the U.S. 41 kiosk.

How will taxi drivers, Uber, etc, have access to enter the community?

They will insert their license and make voice contact with Envera. When a **resident** enters in a cab, they can have their driver scan their license for automatic entry.

Will all vendors have to insert their driver's license or photo identification each time they enter the community?

Yes.

Will the video camera capture photos of vehicles driving through and breaking the bar?

Yes, the high definition video photograph will be used to obtain the repair charges from the offender.

What happens when the power goes out?

There is a backup "gate guard" system required by Florida law which will open the gate and leave it open until the power is restored.

How will the implementation of the new system enhance the overall security of the community?

Please read the accompanying article in this issue of *Bell Tower Notes*. □

SECOND ANNUAL BTP PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT SET FOR FEBRUARY 25

By Nancy Sanders

The Pickleball regulars are again set to battle it out in a round-robin tournament scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, February 25. Warmups begin at 8 a.m. on the Sports Court. We already have a full roster of competitors signed up.

Spectators are welcome. They probably need to bring their own chairs for best viewing, although there are two benches nearby. Lunch at the pool will follow the conclusion of the tournament. □

NEW LANDSCAPE MANAGER FROM LUKES' LANDSCAPING: AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL HOLMES

By Suzanne Ferguson

Our new Branch Manager for Lukes' Landscaping (formerly Luke Brothers Landscaping) started work at Bell Tower Park almost a month ago and has definitely hit the ground running. Paul Holmes is a South Florida native, raised in Ft. Myers. He holds a business degree from Edison Community College (now Florida Southwestern). He did live in upstate New York for about 10 years, which gives him additional perspective on the unique beauties and challenges of our sub-tropical landscape. Paul is new with Lukes' Landscaping, but was previously Senior Vice President at a smaller firm, Turf Titans, for five years. As a Branch Manager for Lukes', he currently oversees seven properties. We got together to chat on January 26.

You have a business degree. How did you get started in landscape work?

I've been into plants and gardening since I was a kid. I used to help my grandmother, out in Alva, with her yard work. She taught me all the names of the plants, their growth habits, pests and diseases. She gave me my green thumb.

Do you have special areas of expertise in this field?

Besides my extensive knowledge and experience with south Florida native plants, I know quite a bit about community landscape plants and turf, landscape design, landscape chemicals and how to use them.

Have you formed any ideas about our biggest assets here at Bell Tower Park, and our biggest challenges?

I see as a big asset that you have residents who are really interested and care about the landscape. I look forward to working with your Landscape Committee. We will be able to bounce ideas off each other. Living here, they will be able to see things we might otherwise miss, and bring them to my attention.

The biggest challenge continues to be the ongoing breakdowns in the irrigation system. Some parts of it are over 13 years old. You've replaced a number of the pumps and timers over the past year, but the pipes themselves are beginning to fail underground, sometimes because the glue originally applied is not holding up. The big mains are buried 4-5 feet deep, so it's not immediately apparent when something is happening. The landscape crews have found four major breaks in the last month and we've repaired them. This will be an ongoing effort.

A second challenge is the poor soil quality (some might say "non-existent" soil). I have taken soil samples this week and should get the test results back within two weeks. Then we can begin to address the problems.

Do you have some goals for your first hundred days here?

I want to build a good relationship with the Community. The Landscape Committee will be a big help with that. When I come into a new community, I like to check everything out, make sure I know what's working and what isn't, so I can prioritize our work schedule and get ahead of any foreseeable problems. As far as irrigation is concerned, our work is cut out for us: we just have to keep plugging away at it.

Thank you, Paul, and good luck. I'll check back with you this summer. ☐



Paul Holmes, Lukes'
Landscaping Manager

JOYCE LINDABURY

POOL MANAGEMENT CHANGES

Neptune Pool Services Is Our New Vendor

By Richard Roux, Buildings & Amenities Liaison

As of January 1, Neptune Pool Services (NPS) of Cape Coral became our pool maintenance company. The change was necessitated by a decline in service from our previous company. NPS was selected by competitive bidding from a number of area pool maintainers.

Neptune has been in business under the same ownership for 30 years. They are headquartered in Cape Coral, where they have a showroom. They have 27 employees, and they service approximately 200 commercial and 600 residential accounts. Among their long-term commercial accounts are 17 pools at South Seas Plantation on Captiva.

NPS is a full-service company that has three staffed repair vans and offers full pool restoration services as well as regular maintenance contracts. The selection team was impressed with NPS management's approach to their work. They do not over-schedule their pool technicians; they will be vacuuming three times per week (rather than just two), and they keep the pool clean the old fashioned way: with elbow grease, not chemicals. So far that's been a great approach. □

SMOKE ALARM WARNING

A False Sense of Security?

By Richard Roux

Every 6 months I have been changing the battery in each of my smoke alarms/detectors, thinking that all was well. Recently, however, I came across a safety article saying that smoke alarm detector elements have a finite life. When the detector element's life ends, the unit sits there giving the appearance that all's well. But, in truth, it can no longer detect fire/smoke. Worse yet, it even tests "ok" if you press the test button.

My Courtyard Home unit has 7 Kidde 1275e fire/smoke alarms which are hardwired with battery back-up. I called Kidde's Technical Support. They confirmed that the detector life is 10 years, and my 12-year-old detectors most likely were not really working. They provided me with the nomenclature for newer, replacement units (Models i12040 and i12080), a link to their Kidde Factory Store's Website and a code for our owners to use (kiddecs4) for a 25% discount and free ground shipping. Using that site, my 7 i12040 replacement units priced out at a total of \$111.25, including tax. I was assured that the replacement unit would simply plug in to the same hardwired connector used by the developer-provided, and now expired, unit.

When my units arrived, I started their installation by unscrewing the old detector part from the mounting collar attached to the ceiling drywall just as I would have done to replace the unit's battery. The labeling showed that my units were manufactured in July 2005. The new unit came with the same two pieces, detector and mounting collar. I chose to leave the old collar in place, just plugging the AC power plug into the new detector and attaching the new detector to the old collar. Finally, I pulled the tab provided for the back-up battery that came installed in the detector. Everything seems to be working fine.

Prior to placing my order, I looked at Home Depot as an alternate source. They offered a somewhat less expensive Kidde hardwire/battery back-up unit that had a different nomenclature. Personally, I chose to place my order directly with Kidde to avoid getting into any unknowns with the Home Depot units.

Whatever route you choose to maintain your fire safety, please be advised that smoke detectors older than 10 years are probably no longer capable of alarming. □



THE GREAT CHILI/SOUP COOK-OFF OF 2017

By Jane Kraus

There were 38 judges at the BTP Clubhouse on Saturday evening, January 21, to select the best of twelve different chefs' recipes. The judges had a very difficult time selecting favorites, because each pot of chili or soup was more delicious than the previous one.

However, when the votes were finally tallied, the first place award of a \$10 Bonefish Grill gift card went to Peg Moe of Bently Circle for her Mulligatawny soup. This East Indian pepper broth, which became popular with the British during Colonial times, made its way to the U.S. and got its reputation here after an episode of the TV sitcom, Seinfeld. See the recipe below.

Runner ups were Sue and Del Pieper of Cambridge Drive for their white bean and pork chili. Sue confessed that it was her daughter's recipe but that she fiddled with the ingredients a bit.

The Activities Committee decided to provide all twelve recipes in a BTP cookbook which will be printed and available at the Clubhouse in the near future.

It was a great night of fun meeting new neighbors and socializing with old friends while filling our bellies and making the hard choices. □



Chili/Soup Cook-off Winners: Peg Moe (Mulligatawny) with Sue and Del Pieper (White Bean and Pork Chili)

PEGGY MOE'S FIRST PLACE SOUP RECIPE-- MULLIGATAWNY SOUP

2-3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 onion, diced

Saute in large kettle in butter

Add 2 finely diced raw carrots, 3 heaping Tbs. curry powder and 3 heaping Tbs. flour

Stir constantly over heat for 2-3 minutes (Will be very dry, this eliminates flour taste)

Add chicken stock-- 2 quarts or more, and the cut up meat and carcass from entire rotisserie chicken,

Reserving breast meat at this point

Add 1 or 2 potatoes, diced, and 3 diced celery stalks

Bring to a boil-- simmer for 20-25 minutes

Remove carcass and any bones

Add diced-up chicken breast

Add 1 lg. skinned/cored apple, diced

Salt and pepper to taste

Simmer 15 minutes more

Thicken with corn starch mixed in water to desired thickness if necessary

Add 1/2 cup cream at end

CPR/AED TRAINING AT THE CLUBHOUSE SUCCESSFUL

By: Richard Roux

On January 16th, Christie Knudsen of the South Trail Fire Department presented on-site CPR/AED training to ten BTP residents. This is the fourth time that Christie, the Public Education Specialist for South Trail, has presented at BTP. As always, the session was interesting, informative and eye-opening. The presentation included hands-on manikin CPR and AED activities. Refresher training on choking accidents was also discussed. During the class the operation of BTP's own AED was demonstrated. This AED is located in the exercise equipment room of the Clubhouse.

The benefit of being able to provide immediate help is significant. Each one-minute delay in the start of appropriate first aid decreases a victim's survival rate by 10%. Even with our close proximity to the South Trail fire station via Andrea Lane, it could take 6 or 7 minutes for their crews to get to a BTP emergency.

The importance of group activities such as our water aerobics, tennis classes and pickleball having plans in place to handle an emergency was discussed. A standard plan to simultaneously call 911, go for the BTP AED (bringing fob for AED cabinet access), and start CPR could be a real lifesaver for someone on the pool or clubhouse premises or at the sports courts.

Hats off to our residents who took time off from their daily routine to attend this lifesaving training, and a big thanks to Christie for her excellent teaching. □



CPR Session at BTP Clubhouse

AND A MERRY CHRISTMAS WAS ENJOYED BY ALL

By Jane Kraus

On December 9, 2016, about 54 people gathered for our annual celebration of the holidays with a dinner dance at the BTP Clubhouse. The room had been transformed into a winter wonderland by the elves of the Activities Committee, and the band, "Dusk," once again provided musical entertainment with songs from the 1960s, 70s and 80s for everyone's listening and dancing pleasure. Our enthusiastic version of the "electric slide" would have qualified us for a spot on Dancing with the Stars if anyone had thought to capture it for YouTube.

The door prize of a \$20 Bahama Breeze gift card was won by Bee Horner of Kensington Loop. At the end of the evening there was a special hilarious sendoff with the distribution of Santa hats and Rudolph noses (see below). By that time we could happily say, "To all a good night!"

Once again we want to thank all those who helped make this party special—from those who sold the tickets beforehand to the ones who set up the room and cleaned up after the event was over. What a great group of people we have here at Bell Tower Park! □



JANE KRAUS; COLLAGE BY JOYCE LINDABURY

Holiday Party

EARLY MUSIC CHAMBER CONCERT PRESENTED AT THE CLUBHOUSE

By Suzanne Ferguson

Sing-along Christmas Carols by the audience were featured in an early music concert Saturday afternoon, December 3, at the Bell Tower Park Clubhouse. In the shadow of our community Christmas Tree, the viola da gamba consort, Green Flash, which previously played here in the spring of 2014, returned with carols and other early music written from the 1400s through the early 1600s, plus a 21st-century arrangement of the beautiful and popular Gustav Holst setting of Christina Rossetti's "In the Bleak Mid-winter." Showcasing mezzo-soprano Marie Ridolfo of Delray Beach in the Holst and a moving part-song by William Byrd (1543-1623) on the theme of Herod's "Massacre of the Innocents," the concert was attended by about 40 residents and guests.

Green Flash is composed of four local players who rehearse weekly, supplemented by several additional players from southeast Florida. As an outreach function of the Viola da Gamba Society of America to promote this engaging and sociable instrument, an internationally famous teacher receives travel funds to coach the group and give lessons four times during the year. This year's teacher, Joanna Blendulf, gave commentary on the concert pieces and played two engaging (and virtuosic) Swedish folk song arrangements to demonstrate the treble viola da gamba, the second-highest member of the viol family.

Coffee, tea, and cookies were enjoyed by the audience as they listened to sometimes unfamiliar and sometimes well-known carols, several of which were presented in multiple arrangements. The audience's singing was enthusiastic and gratifyingly musical!

Members of the Activities Committee, which sponsored the event, did the set-up and takedown and provided refreshments. On Friday, our Administrative Assistant, Cait Condon, brought over extra chairs from the Annex. Thanks to all who helped make this event a success. □



JOYCE LINDABURY

Clubhouse Christmas Concert

DID YOU WANT TO KNOW?



By Jim Stewart

Q. What is all of that construction about one mile southwest on Gladiolus, just past Lakes Park?

A. It is a resort style senior living community called Avida. There will be 272 individual condo units, 125 assisted living units and 35 memory care units. The campus will be on 32 acres of ground and there will be 488,000 sq. ft. in the buildings. No prices are available at this time.

Q. Why does men's clothing have buttons on the right while women's clothes have buttons on the left?

A. When buttons were invented, they were very expensive and worn primarily by the rich. Because wealthy women were dressed by maids, dressmakers put the buttons on the maid's right! Since most people are right-handed, it is easier to push buttons on the right through holes on the left. And that's where women's buttons have remained since.

Q. How do people get nicknames?

A. Well, there was a man who was a grandson of slaves. He was born in a poor neighborhood of New Orleans known as the "Back of Town." His father abandoned the family when the child was an infant. His mother became a prostitute and the boy and his sister had to live with their grandmother. Early in life he proved to be gifted in music, and with three other kids he sang in the streets of New Orleans.

A Jewish family named Karnofsky, who had emigrated from Lithuania to the USA, had pity for the 7-year-old-boy and brought him into their home, initially giving him chores around the house in exchange for food. He remained there and slept in this Jewish family's home, where for the first time in his life he was treated with kindness and tenderness. When he went to bed, Mrs. Karnofsky sang him a Russian Lullaby that he soon learned sing with her. Later, he learned to sing and play other Russian and Jewish songs. Over time, this boy became the adopted son of this family. The Karnofskys gave him money to buy his first musical instrument, a trumpet, as was the custom in the Jewish families. They sincerely admired his musical talent.

Later, when he became a professional musician and composer, he used the Jewish melodies in compositions such as "St. James Infirmary" and his version of the spiritual, "Go Down Moses." The little black boy grew up and wrote a book about this Jewish family who adopted him in 1907. In memory of this family and until the end of his life, he wore a Star of David and said that in this family, he had learned "how to live real life and determination." You might recognize his name, because this little boy was called Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong. Louis Armstrong proudly spoke fluent Yiddish! And unless you are fluent in Yiddish yourself, I bet you didn't know that "Satchmo" is Yiddish for "Big Cheeks"!

Q. Where did the saying "it will cost you an arm and a leg" come from?

A. In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back while others showed both legs and both arms.

Prices charged by painters were not based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are 'limbs'; therefore, painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression, "Okay, but it will cost you an arm and a leg". (Artists know hands and arms are more difficult to paint than torsos.)

EDITOR'S NOTE



As I have watched the news come in for this issue, I have been struck once again with the range of talent and commitment to the community shown here in Bell Tower Park. And, obviously, I see only a small slice of our residents' achievements. We have our dedicated resident volunteers involved in the decisions for improving safety at our gates and around our pools and Clubhouse, residents working to move forward improvements to our landscaping and amenities. We have a very hardworking and imaginative Activities Committee engaged in creating varied and stimulating social occasions. Ten people recently went through CPR training at the Clubhouse so they will be ready should an emergency occur. We have enough skilled pickleball players to populate a tournament! And we are charitable, when we get organized for a project. We have our elected association boards with their officers, all volunteers, working daily to see that BTP maintains its property values and a congenial community life.

Your Communication Committee would welcome news of other resident-promoted projects. We urge you to let us know when you or some of our neighbors participate in community-building activities. You could inspire others to lend a hand. Good deeds multiply, and having them known helps us all appreciate the ability of individuals to make a better world, one day, one community, at a time.

Suzanne Ferguson, Editor

BELL TOWER NOTES

Contributors:

*John Davenport
Suzanne Ferguson
Robert Garland
Jane Kraus
Jane Kearns
Richard Roux
Nancy Sanders*

Columnist:

Jim Stewart

Photography:

*Joyce Lindabury (Photo Editor)
Jane Kraus
Richard Roux
Nancy Sanders
Vince Vaccarino*

Layout:

Richard Roux

Proofreading:

Dee Isakson

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

LAW OF PHYSICS: SOUND CARRIES ACROSS WATER BETTER THAN LAND

Are you sharing your private conversations with your neighbors?

By Suzanne Ferguson

This is more of a public service announcement than an article! I've heard quite a few stories from people here at Bell Tower Park about their being forced to listen to both business and private conversations from other residents' talking loudly into their cell phones while on the lanais. Obviously, this is more of an issue with Carriage Homes, where the lanais often face each other across our lakes. Sometimes language as well as information that would ordinarily remain private gets "broadcast" over a much larger area than people anticipate.

Once again, we are reminded that condominium living means shared space: air space as well as grounds and amenities. Loud music is not the only kind of sound that reaches the ears of others across the lakes; for some reason people think it's necessary to speak loudly when they talk on their cell phones, and consequently "share" more information about themselves than they realize with people they don't even know. Next time you are talking on your lanai (or smoking, which is also something that gets shared, though only with your nearest neighbors), you may want to pause to think who may be your audience . . . □