

BEAR ISLAND E-NEWS

JUNE, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Hi, my name is Diana Kaufman. I am the newest member of your Board of Directors and leading its communications committee. I want to both introduce myself and the Community's newsletter. It is intended to serve two functions: 1. to distribute information, and 2. to establish a vehicle for dialogue.

There will be an "E-Letters to the Editor" section where all residents could, if they choose, comment on issues and give their opinions about things transpiring in the neighborhood or the newsletter. Please note that people can disagree, but we cannot become disagreeable. Please keep letters civil and proper. Send your responses to BWelch@miamimanagement.com and he will forward them to me.

We hope that Bear Island can become a more cohesive and friendly community for our residents by using the e-mailed newsletter and creating an exchange of ideas between the Board of Directors and Bear Island residents so that all can live in a safe, desirable Bear Island community.

Also regarding communication, The Board through MMI has established the "One Call Now" system. This is a phone call placed to all residents when an important or emergency message such as evacuations, natural disasters, water shut off, power outages, and etc., are necessary. Just recently all residents should have received a call relating to lawn watering and drought conditions, as well as, the postponing of shrubbery and tree planting because of the dry conditions. If you did not receive this call please contact MMI and give them your most recent phone number and e-mail address.

Because of the high cost of mailing all future newsletters will only be available via the e-mail blast. We encourage all Bear Island residents to forward their e-mail addresses to Bryan at MMI so that we can send you the next newsletter, most likely in October or November. Please remember that our Board of Directors, Association's committee members and myself, as editor, are serving voluntarily. Your patience in recognizing our limited available time and any inadvertent professional slip is appreciated.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer!

In this issue:

- 📧 Bear Island President's Report
- 📧 Treasurer's Report
- 📧 Secretary's Report
- 📧 MMI/Bryan Welch Property Managers Report
- 📧 Community Reminders
- 📧 Villages of Palm Beach Lakes President's Report

President's Report by Howard Berman

Welcome to our first quarterly newsletter. I would like to thank our newest Board member, Diana Kaufman for this undertaking.

I would also like to welcome all the new homeowners to Bear Island since the last newsletter. We look forward to getting to know you and assist your move in any way.

Even though our community is 23 years old, your Board and management company make every effort to keep Bear Island a great place to live. Bear Island is as good as the homeowners make it. It is your community. We welcome any input and suggestions. Our monthly Board meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at the Faircloth Park meeting room. All homeowners are welcome.

We begin working on the budget for next year in August. The economy is still trying to recover. We currently have approximately 5 homes in foreclosure resulting in over \$50,000.00 in uncollected quarterly maintenance fees, along with many homeowners delinquent in their fees. Despite this, we are making every attempt to be as fiscally responsible as possible.

Again, if any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our property manager Bryan Welch at MMI. In addition, we are working on updating our website.

Enjoy the summer!

Treasurer's Report by Gail Saunders

Landscaping Services

Effective May 1, 2011, we changed our landscaping services from O'Hara Landscaping to Florida Image Landscaping and we've received wonderful comments about the improved look to our community. This change also represents a significant cost savings to us. We reduced our landscaping annual fee from \$187,560 down to \$171,012 a \$16,548 decrease to our budget. Additionally, we engaged Florida Image Landscaping to perform our monthly irrigation wet check which O'Hara was performing for a cost of \$850/month and is now being done for \$500/month, an annual savings of \$4,200. Total savings to the community for these changes is \$20,748/yr.

Reserve Study

As many of our original owners know, we are a 23 year old community. With the aging of this community there are many assets that need or will need to be replaced or upgraded soon. We have engaged Four Jays Consulting, Inc. to conduct a reserve study on our roads, lights, water lines, irrigation system, gate house, etc.,-- all of our assets. Four Jays was the original consulting group to perform a reserve study when Burg/Divosta turned the community over to the Homeowners Association many years ago. Because they had the original documents and plans for the community they were able to submit a bid that was close to \$1,000 less than any other company bidding on the work. The study should be

completed by the end of June at a total cost not to exceed \$3,000. This study will allow us to properly budget for the replacement of our assets as necessary.

Blue W's

Have you noticed the Blue W's painted on the curbs throughout the community? Those blue W's indicate where the water shutoff valves are located. Each box contains the shutoff valves for two houses. Please make a point to look for the box that contains the shutoff for your house. In addition to these water shutoffs you have a shutoff valve on your house near your garage door if you are a side entry garage, and near the side door to your garage if you are a front entry garage. Please make sure that you periodically turn the valve on your house on and off in order to prevent the valve from locking up. Many residents have experienced water heater leaks and were unable to turn the house valve off and, also, unable to locate the street valve. We have made this much easier for you by having the blue W's painted on the curbs.

Secretary's Report by Steve Seftenberg

My primary responsibility as Secretary is to take the minutes at each Board and Members' meeting, accurately. My drafts are circulated promptly to all other Board members and to the Property Manager. At a subsequent Board meeting, the minutes, with any changes approved by the Board, along with attachments such as the monthly Property Manager's Report and the monthly financial report, are approved and placed on our web-site www.bearisland.us.

One big result of the recent amendment and restatement of our Declaration (of which I was the draftsman) was authority to set up a system of fines. A minority of our Owners have become "scofflaws," violating our Governing Documents and daring the Association to sue them in court, with all the attendant expenses and uncertainty. The system authorized by the State Legislature provides procedural "due process." It has been difficult to recruit Owners for this committee. If an Owner is interested in being named to our Fines Committee, please contact our Property Manager. We are looking for people who can be both fair and firm and who are willing to put up with "heat" from unhappy Owners.

Property Manager's Report

Much has been accomplished by your Board of Directors. It is a pleasure to work for such a knowledgeable, energetic and dedicated Board of Directors.

1. Exterior Modifications:

Remember ANY exterior modification to your home requires the prior written approvals of the ACC. Forms are available at Bwelch@miamimanagement.com or www.bearisland.us or at the gate house.

2. Selling or Leasing your Home?

There is a new form to fill out should you desire to sell or lease your home. It grants specific permission to your real estate agent when showing or managing your home. The form is available at Bwelch@miamimanagement.com or www.bearisland.us or at the Gate House. Also, the owner is responsible for the cost of a background check when renting.

3. Entry Transponders

Transponders are not transferable between vehicles, therefore, owners purchasing a new vehicle and new homeowners need to apply for a new transponder and advise MMI of the old transponder that needs to be deactivated. New transponders are available at \$35.00. For those vehicles with metallic windshields, (600 series Mercedes and 700 series BMW's to name a few) a front remote license plate transponder is available for purchase at \$75.00. Forms are available at www.bearisland.us or at the Gate House. If you wish to order a transponder over the phone, please contact my Administrative Assistant, Shelly Martelli, at 561-686-7818 ext 209.

4. Gate Information Updates:

Please keep the entry gate informed of changes to your information. You should add or remove vendors, permanent guests, and add, remove or change home phone numbers. Forms are available at Bwelch@miamimanagement.com or www.bearisland.us or at the Gate House.

5. Gate House

AlliedBarton Security Services have now been handling our entrance for over three years. Reports from home owners are nearly unanimous in agreement with this company's professional and courteous service towards Bear Island's owners, their guests, visitors and contractors. Lately, there have been several crimes of opportunity at Bear Island. A few vehicles had items taken from within. Further investigation reveals all of the vehicles were unlocked. Please lock your vehicles and do not leave items of value in plain site. Remember, crime knows no address!

6. Vendor and Parking Rules:

Just a reminder: vendors or people working on your home may begin work at 8:00 am and must be off the property by 5:00 pm, (Rules are stated in the Gate House Post Orders approved in 2007.) unless it is an emergency. An emergency is defined as not having air conditioning when the temperature is above 70 degrees, having no heat when the temperature drops below 65 degrees, if you have no electricity or if you have a leak in your plumbing.

Community Reminders:

Garbage & Recycling

Please remember that trash goes out on **Wednesday and Sunday evenings after 6 p.m.** Putting trash receptacles out prior to 6 p.m. could result in a fine.

Yard Debris

Understanding that many people work on their yards over the weekends and accumulate yard debris please remember that yard debris is only picked up by the City of West Palm Beach on Thursday. Leaving yard debris by the road side all week is unsightly and a violation of the rules and regulations. **Please leave your yard debris**

in your backyard until Wednesday evening.

Pets

The City of West Palm Beach and our community rules require that all pets be on leashes and under the control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pets. We have many children playing in the common areas and the area should be free of pet waste. Thank you.

Signage

Remember no signs should be placed in windows on doors or in yards that are visible from the road.

Water

We are currently in a severe drought, therefore, no plantings will be done during this quarter. Additionally, it is unlawful to water your plants and yards on non designated days.

Hurricane Season Starts June 1st

We are in the process of receiving bids to start the tree trimming process for this season. You may want to think about preparations for your home. In the event of an impending storm, all loose and small items should be removed from your yard.

Call Alert System

Everyone in the community should have received a call notification from Bryan Welch of MMI on Monday, May 23rd regarding the quarterly replacement of plants. If you did not receive a phone message please contact MMI and check to be sure your correct phone number and email address are registered with them.

New Landscape Company

Our new landscaping company is **Florida Image Landscaping**. There workers wear a grey, long sleeve tee shirt with logo and wording on the back.

SUNDAY RESTRICTIONS:

NO moving in or out of Bear Island is allowed.
Deliveries, work, and commercial vehicles are NOT allowed.

VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS:

Motor homes and recreational vehicles are not allowed in Bear Island.
The Residents' gate will only be opened by a transponder affixed to the windshield; the gate attendant will not open this side of the drive for you.
Vans, trucks, boats and motorcycles must be garaged at all times.
Commercial vehicles performing services cannot enter Bear Island before 8:00am and must leave by 5:00pm. **(Please see emergency situations in #6 previous page.)**
Guests with vans or trucks must leave Bear Island by 10:30pm or the vehicle MUST be put in your garage.
Disabled or damaged vehicles will be considered nuisances and will not be

permitted on property

SECURITY:

Please remember to lock your cars!

**Villages Of Palm Beach Lakes,
President's Report
Landscaping.**

Because of the drought conditions we are doing our best to maintain the landscaping as green as possible. We have postponed any new Summer plantings until the climate improves. I am very pleased with our crew who is successfully maintaining the Villages under the circumstances. Signs (Mattresses for Sale, Yard Sale, Realtor, etc.) are prohibited on all property owned by the Property Owners Association. Could you do us all a favor and when you see them, if it is not in a dangerous area, please stop and remove them? Not all of us appreciate their aesthetic addition to our property.

Police and Crime:

I have been working very closely with the City Attorney, Sam Thomas, on executing an agreement with the City for the Police Department to maintain jurisdiction on all of our private roads throughout the Villages. **We all will soon notice greater patrols during all shifts, as well as enforcement of speeding, stop sign, and parking regulations. Remember, vehicles parked on the street must be parked facing the direction of traffic. Something that we often do not think about, however it is the law.**

I have also been strongly working on my own pet peeve of vigorously enforcing the speeding regulations on "Alternate I 95"OOPS, Sorry, I meant Village Blvd. Hopefully in the next coming months I will have some positive report.

"I really appreciate any resident input on any subject pertaining to Bear Island and The Villages. Your e-mails are most welcome at any time.

Ron Warnecke

President, Villages Of Palm Beach Lakes.

RonWarnecke@aol.com

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO BECOME AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF YOUR COMMUNITY BY VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME ON A COMMITTEE. Please let us know if you are interested in joining any of the current committees or have a suggestion for forming a new committee that you feel would benefit all residents of Bear Island.