

Palm Aire
Communities Council

Newsletter

December, 2018



PACC allocates funds to purchase lights for the median at the corner of Whitfield and University.



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If you live in our neighborhood or are just passing by, you noticed the new seasonal lighting installed at our busy intersection thanks to the decision of the PACC Board to provide funds to light up the holiday spirit.

At our November meeting the idea came up and received an unanimous vote. Julie Jacques volunteered to head up the decorating committee. She sought volunteer

help from throughout the Palm Aire, and we're glad that Kathy Quattrini, Delores Espiscopo and Susan Romine joined Julie in the median decoration project one early morning.



I can't believe that we are in December 2018! As a kid, I, like many kids, was always wishing it was next week or next month. I just couldn't wait for the next event happening. I remember that my Mom, whenever I would say that I wished it was next week, month, etc., would tell me that I should not be wishing time away. She said that I would reach the point in my life when time passed so fast I'd wonder where it went. Well I've reached that point. The weeks and months seem to fly by.

Following up on the issue of the right turn lane at Whitfield Avenue and University Parkway, Sarasota County, did review the timing of the light at this intersection. Since the main objective is to keep the traffic moving on University Parkway, the result of the study was that the timing will not be changed. We have requested that extension of the right turn lane be added to the five year plan for Manatee County.

In October, the PACCI Board and MSTU Committee met with representatives of Manatee County from the county Field Maintenance Division of Public Works and Financial Management Division to discuss what we needed to do to get our landscape enhancement project(s) underway. I'm pleased to report that it was a positive meeting and with apparent support from the county people. The county representatives will begin to gather the necessary information on approval process and provide a list of possible landscape design companies. The MSTU committee will contact and meet with companies to begin the design possibilities for Whitfield Avenue.

Construction around Palm-Aire seems to be never ending, more housing on Lockwood Ridge Road and just across University Parkway from us the church is adding a school to its property. When I moved here twenty-nine years ago, there wasn't anything East of Palm-Aire.

My best wishes to all for a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year.



Barbara Robinson, President

Palm Aire Municipal Service Taxing Unit

Thirty-seven years ago the Palm-Aire Community voted to establish a Palm Aire Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU). MSTUs are established by counties under the authority of state statutes. They are special districts that can be set up to serve as funding mechanisms to provide certain types of services and projects for specific geographic areas within a county. The legislature's reasoning is that some districts require services for which the entire county should not be charged. The County currently has only one **special** purpose MSTU known as the Palm Aire MSTU.

The ordinance established that all home owners pay taxes to maintain the county owned property, right-of-ways, islands, etc., within the Palm-Aire community. This was done to provide more landscape maintenance services than Manatee County was prepared to provide.

The monies collected under Palm Aire's MSTU, which is included as part of property taxes, may only be used for landscape maintenance and enhancement. Specifically, Section 7 states "The services and facilities to be provided within the MSTU shall consist of the maintenance and upkeep of existing landscape, and the replacement and enhancement of landscaping, along and located within the County right-of-way within the boundaries of the MSTU." In the county budget, the funds are listed as the "Palm Aire Landscape MSTU Fund and is collected at the rate of .2546 mills. This means if your home has a taxable assessed value of \$300,000, you will pay \$75.38 to this fund.

The Palm Aire Communities

Avista
Broadmoor Pines
Club Villas I
Club Villas II
Clubside
Condo B
Condo C (Fairway Point)
Condo D

Conservatory Estates
Desoto Woods
Eagle Creek
Eagle Creek Villas
Fox Pointe
Fairway Lakes
Fairway Six
Gardens
Golf Pointe

Highlands
Lakeside Woods
The Links
Misty Oaks
Pine Trace
Rosewood
Timberlake Village
Woodlake Villas
Woodland Green

Neighborhood Spotlight

Woodland Green Condominium

Woodland Green of Palm-Aire Country Club is a condominium complex comprised of 72 units; 36 condos in three (A, B and C) two-story buildings, as well as 36 villas. It was developed in 1986 along the 5th fairway and green of the Lakes Course at the corner of Timberlake Drive and Misty Oaks Boulevard. In addition to the 72 units we have a beautifully maintained pool and clubhouse area which hosts our social activities.

Our community continues to evolve and our social committee has done a superb job reinvigorating our group activities and social gatherings. We have many functions throughout the calendar year which are well attended. Woodland Green residents continue to dedicate their time and expertise in maintaining and enhancing the beautification and functionality of our community.



Fox Pointe

The Fox Pointe is located at the end of Golf Pointe Drive and nestled behind another yet separate Golf Pointe at Palm Aire subdivision. Fox Pointe is the smallest neighborhood within the Palm Aire communities.

Developed by two Grand Rapids natives who first discovered Palm Aire in 1980, Tom and Mickey Fox initially bought a home in Fairway Bend where they spent their "seasons" for seven years keeping warm while away from Tom's jewelry business in Michigan.

Then in 1987, they discovered a new Development known as Golf Pointe. They liked what they saw and were the first to move into the new Golf Pointe subdivision.

the Palm Aire Country Club, was available. They loved the view of the Golf Course and the water pond separating the Golf Course from the Property and decided to have some fun in developing Fox Pointe. Tom Duthler, a friend also from Grand Rapids, joined in as a partner in the project.

Together, they hired an engineer to lay out the property into 13 individual lots on which 11 homes were eventually built. In early planning stages, Tom and Mickey Fox ironically observed foxes roaming the property quite frequently. *That did it!* It was only natural to name the new development, *Fox Pointe*.

The construction began in 1991 with three model homes. At the same time, the Foxes built a two Story home with two lots. Partners Tom and Mary Duthler built a two-story home next door. The remaining homes were built and sold over the next 14 years with the most recent home completed in 2005.

Tom Fox proudly says, "Putting Fox Pointe together was a lot of hard work; however, I am very proud of how it turned out. If anybody asks me about it, I can honestly say I think I was much better at the Jewelry Business than as a Developer." Fox Pointe is a beautiful development with friendly people. Its residents are convinced of its allure as each home has water views along the entire 15th Green and Fairway of the Champs course of Palm Aire.

They say real estate is all about location.

IT IS!

But since you live in Palm Aire, let's say you have that covered.

CURB APPEAL also counts. Whether you are selling your home or simply want to enjoy one—you can enhance yours with a little landscaping.

As a relative newcomer to the Sarasota area and someone who enjoys the fragrance and color of flowers, I have found one 110-page publication Florida-Friendly Landscaping Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design. to be particularly helpful in acquainting me with some 'knowledge' as it relates to flowers, plants, and shrubs that grow around here. And it's FREE.

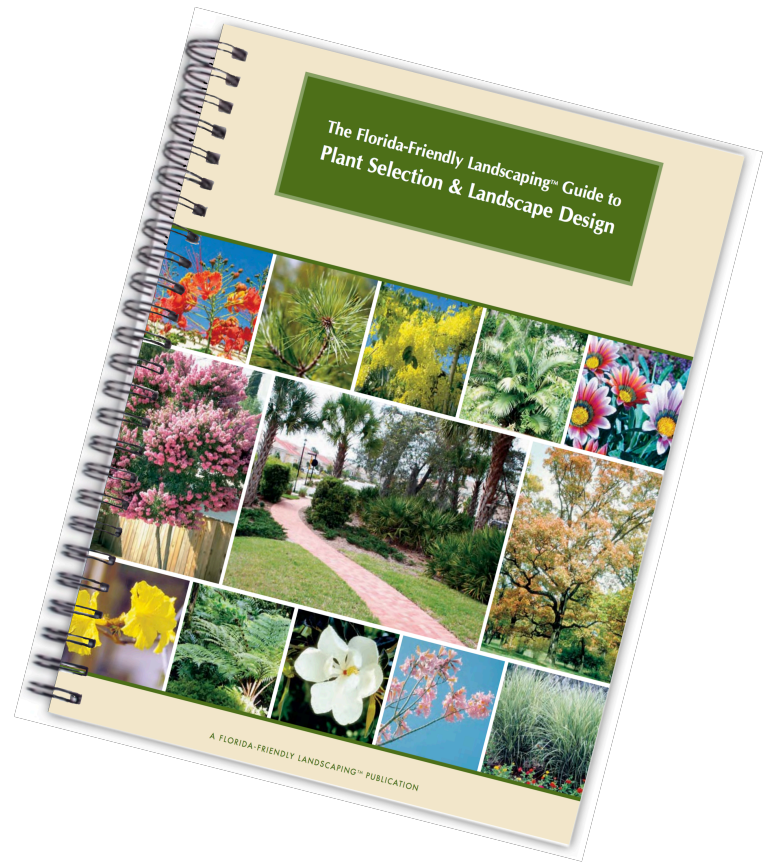
Some longtime residents may even appreciate its range and depth of information

So I thought I would share it with you. It's terrific!

1. Go to this website: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/publications/type/all>

2. On left hand side of screen where the contents are labeled by the heading View By Subject, click on Florida-Friendly Landscaping.

3. Go down the list of publications until you see the Florida-Friendly Landscaping Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design booklet. The 110-page guide includes information on what to plant, tips on how to solve landscape design problems as well as an illustrated Florida-friendly plant list.



4. If you want a hard copy of this exceptional publication click on Add to cart.

5. Fill out your address and mailing information and they will ship you a copy for free.

I hope you enjoy this publication and your Summer on the Sun Coast!

If you have any difficulty making this connection, email me and I will follow-up and see that you get a copy.

Blake Jones is a Broker Associate with Coldwell Banker and a resident of Palm Aire, blakejones888@gmail.com

4 facts

1. In 1955 when developers started Palm Aire, the closest neighborhood was DeSoto Lakes, a block from Lockwood Ridge & County Line Road (Now University Parkway) and no shopping.

2. What is the daily average number of swipes, taps, touches, pinches or pokes to personal phones made by Americans? The answer: according to research firm Discout Inc. is an unbelievable 2,617.

3. Ringling Boulevard was not named for John Ringling but for his brother, Charles who helped develop that section of the city with his Court House subdivision and the Sarasota Terrace Hotel.

4. Guess it is not all communion: the number one wine drinking country per capita in the world is the Vatican. Residents of this City State consume more than 74 liters per person annually.

A Note from Manatee County Commissioner Vanessa Baugh



About 12,000 vehicles a day travel the Ft. Hamer Bridge which opened in October, 2017.

Now Open: The Ft. Hamer Bridge

Though 2017 will be remembered for Hurricane Irma and our community's response to that storm, many will also recall it as the year Manatee County completed some significant improvements to our local roads network!

Most significantly in 2017, Manatee County opened the long-awaited Fort Hamer Bridge. For such a long time we've needed a faster route for emergency responders in East Manatee and a new evacuation route for residents when storms approach. After a two-year construction, the bridge opened in October, 2017 connecting the two fastest growing areas of the County in Lakewood Ranch and Parrish.

Also last year, we extended 44th Avenue to connect 19th Street across U.S. 301 to 45th Street East. In 2018 we enter the final stages on the road

by acquiring land and obtaining permits for the Braden River crossing. Construction could begin on that segment in 2019. By adding an east-west artery to connect Lakewood Ranch to Anna Maria Island, we will complete a significant chapter in the history of Manatee County's roadway network.

These were all construction projects to keep pace with a fast-growing community. If we continue the current population boom, we'll need to make even more significant decisions about the future of Manatee County. I want you to have a voice in what those decisions are!

This summer the County is hosting several visioning workshops titled, "Back to the Future" that highlights what the County looked like 30 years ago, how we have progressed to what we have in 2018, and predicts

the future of the County in 2038. Each session will give visitors a glimpse of future community needs, along with a chance to prioritize them.

I invite you to give your feedback on the future of Manatee County during one of our "Back to the Future Meetings" listed on page 7 of this newsletter.

If you're not able to attend a meeting, you can provide feedback on our website or invite County staff to Palm Aire to give a presentation.

Just call our friendly Neighborhood Services staff at 749-3029, ext. 3482 to learn more!

You can contact commissioner Vanessa Baugh at:

vanessa.baugh@mymanatee.org

Why Palms Turn Yellow by Peggy Dessaint

December, 2018
PACC: Palm Aire Communities Council

Do the lower fronds on your palms turn prematurely yellow, orange or brown? Other than normal aging or the presence of a disease or insect problem, the most common causes are potassium and magnesium deficiencies.

Usually palms get enough nitrogen from shrub fertilizers, including ones that are labeled for palms. Often, though, they don't get enough potassium (K, third number on a fertilizer bag) and magnesium (Mg, fine print on the back label).

Potassium (K) deficiency is the most widespread and serious nutrient deficiency. It's caused by the low amounts of potassium in local soils in relation to the needs of palms that we use for beautification.



K deficiency first appears in the oldest fronds at the bottom of the canopy and then spreads upward. It begins with yellow flecking on leaflets and soon entire fronds develop a yellow, orange/brown, scorched appearance. All palms grown in Florida are affected, and it's fatal if not diagnosed and treated in time.

Magnesium (Mg) deficiency also first appears in the oldest fronds at the bottom, and then works its way upward through the canopy. Eventually bright yellow bands form along the edges of older fronds. This deficiency is especially common in all

Phoenix species. It's rarely fatal but sure looks ugly.

Treatments Years ago I'd buy huge bags of potassium sulfate (potash) and magnesium sulfate (same as Epsom salts), and then spread them under the palms at the label rate. I'd apply the same amount of both products to keep the nutrients in



balance, usually three times a year at the same time as a palm fertilizer. They were in a water soluble form, and during heavy rains they'd quickly leach through the sandy soil. Depending on the amount of rainfall, I'd have to apply them another

two or three times to keep the canopies green. All of this got to be a nuisance.

Slow-release fertilizers are the answer to nutrient leaching in sandy soil. Although they're more expensive than quick release products, they're convenient and contain everything palms need to stay green. The one I use now is a slow-release blend Florikan 8-2-12 with magnesium and micronutrients. The nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and magnesium are all in a slow-release form. I apply it two or three times a year depending on the weather and how the palms are doing. I aim for February, late May and early October, but your palms may be okay with a spring and fall application. It's pricey (costs more than a tank of gas!) and you need a place to store the 50 pound bag. For more information and pictures of palms with these and other nutrient deficiencies, see edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep266, 269 and 273.

Questions? You can reach Peggy Dessaint at peggyd365@gmail.com



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Spaghettini and Meatballs An all beef meatball with our house made pomodoro sauce

Flat Iron Marsala 5 oz grilled Flat Iron with a mushroom marsala sauce and chef vegetables

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Buon Appetito!

Realtor Corner

by Julie Jacques

Buyer or Seller Market

Recently a question was asked at our monthly PACC meeting regarding what real estate market are we in and are prices dropping? Well, to answer that I went to my Trendgraphics tool and ran the numbers.

I broke it down into two categories. Single Family Homes and Condo-villa-townhomes. The information reflects comparisons to September 2017-2018.

Single family homes shows homes selling are selling for more though list price to sold price is less, if that makes any sense. Sold price show an increase of 5.5%. List prices show an increase of 1% and price per sq. ft. is up 2.4%. But list price to sold price is down. Last year homes sold for 95% of the list price while this year they are selling at 93% of the list price. So even though there is a 2% drop homes are still selling for more. According to Trendgraphics there is a 4.6 month inventory in Palm Aire for single family homes. This indicates a sellers' market were 6 months of inventory is considered a balanced market.

Condo-Villas-Townhomes show properties are selling per sq. ft. slightly by 1.5%. Sold prices are down 5.8% and list price is slightly lower by .04%. These properties sold unchanged at 94% of the list price. According to Trendgraphics there is 1.8 months of inventory for condos-villa-townhomes in Palm Aire making it a sellers' market.

Another question was, are non-updated properties affecting the prices of those properties that are updated/renovated? What comes into question is how the property is priced. Your realtor must be able to distinguish the property for what it is and price it accordingly. The comparables used to price the property should be same for same. If a property in the same neighborhood is not updated and you are pricing for a home that is you must adjust the comps to accurately price that property and provide fair market value.

A breakdown of the last month's activity in Palm Aire verses a year ago.

Here are properties sold in Palm Aire in the last three months, randomly selected.

Single Family Homes:

7326 Fairlinks Ct., \$250,000
5509 83rd Ter. E., \$275,000
4808 Palm Aire Dr., \$319,000
8009 Desoto Woods Dr, \$390,000
5383 Creekside Tr., \$420,000
7720 Broadmoore Pines, \$420,000
7404 Links CT, \$450,000
7227 Treymore Ct., \$510,000

Condos-Villas-Townhomes:

6222 Country Club Way, \$239,000
7263 Golf Pointe Way, \$300,000
7710 Palm Aire Lane, \$315,000
7746 Palm Aire Ln., \$220,000
6103 Clubside Dr., \$219,900
7751 Pine Trace Dr., \$208,250
7081 Fairway Bend Cir., \$205,000
7617 Preserves Ct., \$200,000
5574 Golf Pointe Dr., \$199,900

Julie Jacques, Realtor, GRI
Michael Saunders and Company
61 S. Blvd. of Presidents
Sarasota, FL 34236
941.323-.800
juliejacques@michaelsaunders.com

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Avista community. For the past three years, we've seen an uptick in the number of trespassers in our pool and spa. In several instances, the interlopers turned out to be renters from other Palm-Aire communities and who, when confronted, have said that they were told that they could use any Palm-Aire community facilities. We have gone to the expense of installing a new fence with locking gates, but I appreciate the opportunity to let all Palm-Aire residents know that each community's facilities are solely for the use of that community. Thank you!

—Cathy Allen
Avista of Palm Aire

Dear Cathy,

Thank you for bringing this issue to our attention. Many of our residents are unaware of this situation, and I'm sure other communities will benefit from your concerns and advice.

Dear Editor:

Palm Aire is a great place to live and I marvel at the beauty every day. From drinking my coffee in the morning, enjoying the vista across the pond, to walking or driving around the neighborhoods, I enjoy the wonderful place that we now call our home; however, driving north on Whitfield Avenue toward Lockwood Ridge, the approach to that area on the right never ceases to cause an instantaneous tension in my stomach.

The area has transformed, from a rich and heavily wooded parcel—to a clear-cut area that looked like a tornado hit it—to an ugly patched field sustaining a few cows searching for clumps of grass. Are we supposed to thank the owner of Medallion Homes for being an activist for the well being of cows?

I read that a spokesperson for Medallion Homes said the area "...is used for cattle grazing...the property was

cleared to create additional pasture...Medallion Homes is reviewing debris removal alternatives." The fact that a great tax break is involved is, of course, inconsequential.

Some builders seem to be able to do anything they want to, at any one else's expense, sleazy, but legal. Time for a change!

—Pam Myrose
Fox Pointe

Dear Pam,

The PACC Board has long been concerned with the parcel at the northeast corner of Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge Roads. We're concerned with its appearance as an "eyesore" in our neighborhoods, and have discussed it on numerous occasions—Ed.

Dear Editor:

We awaited the replanting of the entrance of the Palm Aire Country Club Clubhouse. What we got would be nice if we lived in New Mexico or Arizona. I expect to see tumble weeds and a cow skull in what appears to be a tableau of southwest America, not subtropical Florida. It is not very appealing to our image. Yes, it is low maintenance, but it is also low appeal.

—Anonymous
Palm Aire Resident

Direct your letters to PalmAireNewsletter@gmail.com

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Scams by John Parks

Many of us here in Palm Aire communities are retired and have moved to paradise, forgetting that there might be a few snakes in the grass. I refer here not to the many squiggly ones that share our properties, but the "snakes" that prey upon us for our money—the numerous scams that seek to trick us into some investment or purchase.

There are the scams that come to us via our phones, usually a robot voice telling us about a "free" trip to someplace wonderful, or a cruise. These should be easy to spot and to ignore.

There are scams that such organizations as AARP and AAA warn us about. Door-to-door salesmen for various fix-ups and so on. Come-ons like "Call now for your free . . . ". I would hope that we can all spot those and avoid them.

But some scams are more subtle. They may not even look suspicious or unreasonable. At the risk of seeming to be cynical about a lot of "commerce" in our community, it does seem to me that many of us may be vulnerable to various appeals to our credulity when one of our service providers offers us something we did not think we needed. Some service providers—I will not name names!—who are maintaining one of our appliances, for instance say, our air conditioner, may say we need a new part even though the one we have is still working. Do we say to go ahead with the installation or wait it out? Is this another way for our service providers to get more out of us? Just asking.

I was getting my car serviced a few years ago at the dealer I bought it from. I was sitting in the customer lounge when in comes a mechanic carrying a tire that had a screw in it. I was told that they could not fix it and that I need to buy a new tire. And so I did. But it has occurred to me that maybe I was scammed with the "screw in the tire" trick—show the customer something wrong and he

will go for it. Maybe my real tire was just fine and they showed me one that had a screw in it. I have read about some doctors who ask for a test that we really do not need to make the charges higher, or perform various procedures in order to charge our insurance company more. How can we protect ourselves from that?



There is a lot of competition here among service providers for our business. And that is often a good thing for keeping prices reasonable. Even so, I am skeptical about many of the programs offered by providers. Many offer service contracts for which we pay upfront, but when the service is performed the tech always manages to find something we did not think we needed but that will be great for us to have. Hard to resist.

The old adage is still pertinent: caveat emptor. We can also help one another by sharing our experiences with various providers so that we can feel more confident and secure about our hires. Good reputations are earned, not bought.



Eagles in Conservatory Park
Photo by Julie Jacques

Where to Report Scams

First, file a report with Manatee County Sheriff's Department.

Common scams and fraud.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) also for counterfeit checks, lottery or sweepstakes scams.

Financial fraud including credit, loans, and mortgages.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Identity theft or data breaches.

File report at IdentityTheft.gov. This service can also help you develop a recovery plan.

Internet fraud. Internet Crime Complaint Center (www.ic3gov).

Investment fraud.

Securities and Exchange Commission.

IRS and other government imposter scams.

Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) or by calling 1-800-366-4484.

Mail fraud.

U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Medicaid fraud.

File complaints with Florida's Medicaid program office, and the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Inspector General.

Social Security fraud.

Social Security Administration's Inspector General.

Telephone scams.

Federal Communications Commission about mysterious charges on your bill (cramming), an illegal switch of your service (slamming), or other unwanted calls including telemarketing.

Florida Rent-a-Cow Comes to Palm Aire

by Dan Reeves

December, 2018

PACC: Palm Aire Communities Council

When it comes to real estate taxes in Florida, land use is everything. Guess that's why you've seen cattle grazing on the property on the corner of Lockwood Ridge Road and Whitfield Avenue. According to county records, the 32 acre parcel located at 4831 Whitfield Avenue has been zoned agricultural and classified in the Manatee County Tax Collector's Office as "improved pasture" land.

Thanks to Florida's 1959 Green Belt Law, farm land is not valued as much as developed land or land planned for development for housing, industrial



parcs or business locations, and it is taxed at a significantly lower rate. For example, 2007 prior to the rezoning, county records show the property tax paid on 4831 Whitfield was \$10,548.91. This year, 2018, the tax is a mere \$287.12, a \$10,261.79 difference and about a 93% reduction in property taxes.

How was it improved? The former wooded wetland was cleared by bulldozers and backhoes a couple of years ago to expand the grazing area. But, piles of unsightly broken limbs and debris sat for months forming the perfect un-aesthetic eyesore. In theory, it's been improved. In fact, it was and continues to be a blight that for each of us who live in the Palm Aire Communities questioned and came to despise each day as we drove past the property.

The property in question is controlled by a Revocable Trust, The Parkway Land Trust #1, which is connected to Medallion Homes through a trustee, Carlos Beruff owner of Medallion and Margo Holeman another trustee.

According to state statutes, once land is zoned as farmland it must be used as farmland; however, the property was fallow for years with the exception of a few beehives occasionally stored on the property. When code enforcement officers checked the land to verify its use late in 2017, that's when heavy equipment suddenly appeared and started pushing trees and shrubs into huge piles.

The scattered pieces of waste and remains of piles of uprooted trees and dead shrubs were a haven for some—the rats, opossums, raccoons and disease-causing mosquitoes, even bobcats have been seen prowling the area. Residents kept hoping the acreage soon would be cleaned up, but it wasn't. Months went by and nothing happened. Rumors were that the land was cleared to provide grazing land for cattle, but cattle were not seen until months later, after a controlled burn of some but not all of the debris. Then on October 12, 2017, Medallion Homes was issued a county code violation for what Manatee County alleges was an improper tree clearing operation.

But wait: Carlos Beruff and Margo Holeman aren't farmers or cattle ranchers. So, how and why are the cows there? Well, maybe because of a peculiar tax loophole in the Florida Green Belt Law permitting landowners to save millions in taxes by "renting cattle." Landowners get a tax break for converting land to agricultural use. To qualify, simply file a four-page application and convince the county tax appraiser that the land is for "bona fide" agricultural purposes. You don't even have to make an actual income from your farming to lower the valuation on property.

But, what if you're not really a farmer? What if you're a developer, with idle land just sitting there that you'll eventually build upon, and you want to pay less taxes? No problem—just plop down a few cows on what's left of the grass, and start saving. Some landowners let ranchers graze their cattle for free. But the tax breaks are so big that some landowners actually pay the ranchers to graze their cattle, that's how Florida's "Rent-a-Cow" nickname got started.



Rent-a-Cow continued.

Inquires were made to the owner-trustee Margo Holeman about the parcel of land. She did not offer any insight as to Medallion's plans other than to say it is being used as grazing land and that there were no plans at this time to do anything with the land.

According to the Bradenton Herald, the "County says Medallion Home cleared trees for a commercial project, not for cows." In a letter dated

Sept. 27, 2017, from Assistant County Attorney Katharine Zamboni to county commissioners, "Holeman had told code enforcement that the property was cleared for cattle food. Pete Logan, Medallion Home president, also had said the land was cleared under the agricultural exemption, according to the letter. Zamboni wrote on that "Holeman failed to address how maintaining the piles of vegetative debris is an activity related to cattle grazing."

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cjskinandbody@gmail.com
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Wildlife of Palm Aire: American Alligator

by John Grey

December, 2018

PACC: Palm Aire Communities Council

We are blessed with an abundance of wildlife where we live and play, this month we'll take another look at our gators. Hurricane Irma caused damage throughout Sarasota and in our Palm Aire area. Gators were in the news because the storm drove some from their normal habitat areas. Newspapers had photos of gators in the streets and on or near homes. Farms that raise gators talked about what they would do to keep their gators safe etc. The question remains, what of the 1.25 million gators in the wild and how they survive hurricanes like Irma. We'll redo an overview of gators and then finish with survival.

Almost every guest I talk to want to see a gator as do new members. We can observe many gators in our lakes almost year long. It's a good idea to look but stay away from them, gators move very quickly in short bursts. They are shy and stay away from humans as a rule, we just need to respect their habitats and everything should be fine. Alligators can live up to 50 years, over 65 years in captivity. Females average size is 8-9 feet while males average is 11-12 feet long. Males can weigh 1,000 lbs.



Alligators are carnivorous with jaws strong enough to crack a turtle shell, using their jaw pressure of 5,000 lbs./square inch. Smaller prey is swallowed whole while larger prey is shaken apart. Fish are their main food, catfish, blowfish and mud fish being their favorites. Alligators have 74-80 teeth, and as they wear out or break they are replaced, growing new teeth. It is estimated they may grow up to 2,000 - 3,000 new teeth over a lifetime. The larger 4th tooth on the lower jaw fits into a socket in the upper jaw.

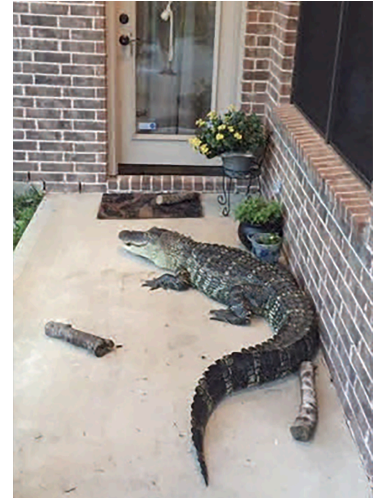
During cold weather dormancy, alligators stay in a "gator" hole or in their tunnels, which can be up to 65 feet in length. The 5 toes on their front legs are used for digging, more on tunnels as a survival tool later. Their rear legs only have 4 toes on them. Most male

alligators move during the rut, which runs late April thru May. Otherwise, females stay in a small area while male's territory is within a 2-square mile area. They become very territorial as they age.

Sexual maturity is reached when 6 feet in length, typically 10-12 years of age. The nest is made by the female and holds 25-50 eggs which she lays for 65 days of incubation. The eggs emit a high pitch sound indicating to the female that the eggs are ready to hatch. She removes the nesting material and the baby alligators exit their cracked shell. The babies are 6-8 inches long, with a yellow stripe down their back. Young gators stay with the mother for up to 2 years. Sex is determined at time of hatching: 86 degree temps produce females, temps around 93 degrees produce males.

1987 - The alligator became the official reptile of Florida. We have the largest population of 1.25 million of the 5 million in the USA. The critter's range is from Texas to North Carolina. Remember all gators are protected by law, for their wellbeing and the safety of all of us.

Gators are affected by changes barometric pressures as are all wildlife. Mary Beth and I were in Cancun in 1989 where Hurricane Gilbert had hit in September 1988. We were eating at an outdoor restaurant that had tigers which had been tied to huge concrete pillars with chains around their necks as the storm had approached. They had clawed at the concrete,



Message from Palm Aire Country Club

by Joe Rasset, General Manager

The Palm Aire Country Club Team has worked very hard over these last three years working to complete many projects, both major and transitional.

One of our transitional projects is to reintroduce Palm Aire Country Club to our Community Residents. Our amenities include golf, tennis, pickle ball, aerobics and a fitness facility, along with a robust social offering. Our Clubhouse is a central destination that focuses on social activities and friendships. Palm Aire has a rich history filled with Clubs and Associations that meet on a regular basis. Our social group known as SIGPA, which stands for "Special Interest Groups of Palm Aire", is a dynamic group reaching out and organizing off campus social events such as trips to the Audubon Society, Bowling Nights and organized Walking Groups, just to name a few.

Whether your interests are sports, leisure or social, we have something for everyone. If you have not visited or seen us in a while, we invite you to do so at our Sunday Brunch, which is open to our Community Residents every Sunday with exception of Easter and Mother's Day. Take a tour, walk around, and see all of the happenings that are going on at the club. We just might have something that sparks your interest and who knows... you might want to become more than just a resident, a member of our wonderful Country Club!

If the "Club" life interests you, now is the perfect time to join Palm Aire Country Club, we have an incredible membership drive happening right now, act fast, this offer expires soon! Contact our Membership Director, Suzanne Gile for all the details.

American Alligator, continued.

showing how nervous they were said the restaurant and animal's owner. He told us they would run away because they could feel the storm coming. In Florida, the news articles told us how the gators in farms were kept in safe secure places so they couldn't escape.

A few photos showed gators swimming in streets and laying on doorsteps and porches, places the normally stay away from. Most of these instances were exceptions to what most gators did during Irma. According to National Geographic all gators that could hunkered down in their dens or tunnels, coming back to the water surface every two hours or so for air. They added: No place like home.

Alligators do have a homing instinct that works close to 60 miles from where they live, then that instinct starts breaking down. During a hurricane in 2006 a tagged gator was found over 300 miles from its tagged location, apparently it was washed out to sea and ended up in Louisiana. Hurricane Mathew in 2016 left a dead gator crushed by a tree that fell on it during the height of the storm on Wassaw National Wildlife Refuge.

As always, enjoy viewing our wildlife in and around Palm Aire. Gators are protected by law for ours and their safety. They are a "living fossil" according to National Geographic. Gators have been around for 200 million years, Did you know a group of gators are called a congregation of gators.

Sources:

Alligator Fact Sheet, National Zoo.
National Geographic
defenders.org
wikipedia.org/ American Gator
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Comm.
Living Science.

Photos in this article taken by John Grey



Roseate Spoonbills Love our Palm Aire Lakes

by Dan Reeves

December, 2018

PACC: Palm Aire Communities Council

This edition of the newsletter features the Roseate Spoonbill as the image in our masthead. This gregarious wading bird can be found throughout the lakes in Palm Aire. These birds display a beautiful white and pink plumage with a deep red patch which fades to pink on the leading edge their wings. They have a white neck and a partially feathered yellowish head with red eyes.

Spoonbills pink coloration comes from the foods they eat. Crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates contain pigments called carotenoids that help turn their feathers pink.

Their long bills that are flattened into a spoon shape at the end protrudes from their small head. Their bills are adapted to "spoon-up" the mud and water and to sift from the water the insects, larvae, crayfish and other small fish which they eat. They swing their head from side to side with their bill underwater feeling for prey.

They fly with their long necks outstretched and often rest with their necks curled into an S-shape. They are larger than a White Ibis and a little smaller than a Great Blue Heron, and they live 10 to 15 years. Their average height is over 32 inches, and their wingspan is typically 50 inches.



Ironically, spoonbills share a trait with humans: baldness. As it turns out, they lose their feathers from the tops of their heads as they grow older.

Spoonbills in Florida have looks that kill. That is, their feathers are so beautiful and so prized that the fashion industry of the 19th and early 20th century nearly slaughtered them to near extinction.

Hunters would routinely wipe out entire nests and send the feathers to millineries in New York, Chicago and San Francisco to become parts of women's hats and fans.

By the turn of the 20th century there were only a few dozen Spoonbills left in Florida; however, due to the efforts of the Audubon Society and legisla-

tion of hunting laws they have made a comeback. They received legal protection from the Federal Government in the 1940s.

An ironic feature of the birds incredible feathers that was unknown to the milliners and the people who bought the feathered items is that with time the feather colors fade and become not so beautiful anymore. This is due to the fact that the live birds continue to replenish the pigment in their feathers by eating small crustaceans that provide the source of the vivid pink color.

Dan's World View Cartoon



Your advertisement will reach more than 2600 residents in the Palm Aire area through direct mail delivery. Our press run is 2800 copies and available at local businesses and the Palm Aire Country Club.

Full page, \$275
Half Page, \$200
Quarter Page, 125
Business Card, \$75

Prices are for two editions!

A Couple of Notes about the Palm Aire Communities Council from the President and Secretary

The Palm Aire Communities Council, Incorporated, (PACC) is a formal organization which represents the communities belonging to the council in matters that affect the well being of all residents of Palm-Aire. It is setup as a not-for-profit corporation under the Statutes of Florida Articles of Incorporation.

PACC has a voting Board of Directors, Officers and Committees. The Directors, in addition to promoting and maintaining the rights and interest of the residents, recruit and elect the officers. The President, with Board approval, appoints needed committees.

Barbara Robinson, President

The associations the Council pay dues of \$4 per unit, per year. The purpose of the organization, according to the Articles of Incorporation, is a centralized management vehicle for the area.

PACC meets monthly from September to June on the third Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. The meetings are held at the Palm Aire Country Club.

Residents of member communities are welcome at any meeting.

Each member association selects a representative to PACC Board of Directors who represents your interests. The Annual Meeting is held in March, which is

when the election of officers is held. The Nominating Committee to appoint the slate of officers is appointed in January.

Minutes of the meetings are posted to the website, along with the list of member associations, the latest Newsletter – which is back, and much more information.

If you have questions, ask your PACC representative, or visit the website (search for PACC1) where we have a “Contact Us” link.

Thank you for being a member of PACC!

Susan Romine, Secretary

NOVEMBER PACC MEETING

At the November PACC meeting the representatives were updated on the meeting with Manatee County representatives regarding the MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit). The MSTU Committee received a list of County-approved landscape vendors. Interviews will be planned with these companies as to enhancements/beautification efforts for Whitfield Avenue.

There was also approval to purchase lights to decorate the landscaped median at Whitfield Avenue and University Parkway for the holiday. Julie Jacques will chair that effort, so look for the call to help decorate.

The Palm Aire Communities Council Newsletter

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Palm Aire
Communities Council

Newsletter

December, 2018

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