

Palm Aire
Communities Council

Newsletter

FALL, 2023



Whitfield Avenue Landscaping Plan

Palm Aire now has palms at its entrance on Whitfield Avenue. Five magnificent Royal Palms now grace the island at the intersection. Once the palms settle in and take root, additional landscaping enhancements will be added. Barbara Robinson, who chairs Palm Aire Community Council's Municipal Service Taxing Unit Committee, is pleased with the committee's progress and interaction with the county and looks forward to additional landscape improvements along the avenue.

The committee has been working with the county for well over three years to develop a comprehensive master landscaping plan. Kimley-Horn Planning and Design Engineering Consultants has designed the plan that will be implemented in phases. New irrigation and electrical components have been installed on the island. New uplighting will be installed to enhance the entrance in the dark.

The plan covers re-landscaping county property all along Whitfield Avenue, from University Parkway to the end of the Palm Aire communities. The first section to be addressed runs from University Parkway to the blinking light at Country Club Way.

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Whitfield Avenue Landscaping Plan

by Dan Reeves

FALL, 2023

Palm Aire Communities Council

The county has approved the association's request to spend MSTU funds on the project. The next step is for the county to approve the proposed master plan.

Years ago, the Palm Aire Community voted to establish a Palm Aire Municipal Service Taxing Unit, which was established in 1991.

MSTUs are special districts that can be set up to serve as funding mechanisms to provide services and projects for specific geographic areas within a county.

The ordinance established that all homeowners pay taxes to maintain the county-owned property, right-of-way, 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 our MSTU, which are included as part of our 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, 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 are collected at a 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.

MSTU Committee Members

Barbara Robinson, Chair
Mike Grubbs
Lesla Hartigan
Susan Romine
Marguerite Puca

The Palm Aire Communities

Avista	Desoto Woods	Lakeside Woods
Broadmoor Pines	Eagle Creek Condos	The Links
Clubsides	Eagle Creek Villas	Misty Oaks
Club Villas I	Fairway Pointe	Pine Trace
Club Villas II	Fox Pointe	Preserves
Condo B	Fairway Six	Rosewood
Conservatory Estates	Gardens at Palm Aire	Timberlake Village
Country Lakes	Golf Pointe	Woodlake Villas
		Woodland Green

The Palm Aire Communities Council Newsletter, Published by PACC, Inc.

www.palmaircommunitycouncil.com

Daniel Reeves, Editor

Online version:

<https://issuu.com/>

danreeves/docs/palm_aire_community_council_fall_2023_newsletter-c

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There Are More Apartments Coming to Our Neighborhood

Chuck Hollis, President, Third Wave Development, recently announced that his firm plans to develop the vacant property on University Parkway adjacent to the Palm Aire Plaza shopping center and TGM Palm Aire Apartments, to the north and east of the property. The entire project includes the current commercial spaces of Palm Aire Plaza and the Seeds of Life Montessori Academy.

Hollis and his planning team have held two informational sessions to explain and illustrate the architectural and landscape design for Palm Aire residents. The first session was held on October 11, 2023, at Rocco's Tacos, and the second was held on November 6 at the Palm Aire Country Club at the invitation of Barbara Robinson. Both meetings were well attended and informative, with questions and concerns voiced by the audience and responded to by the design team.

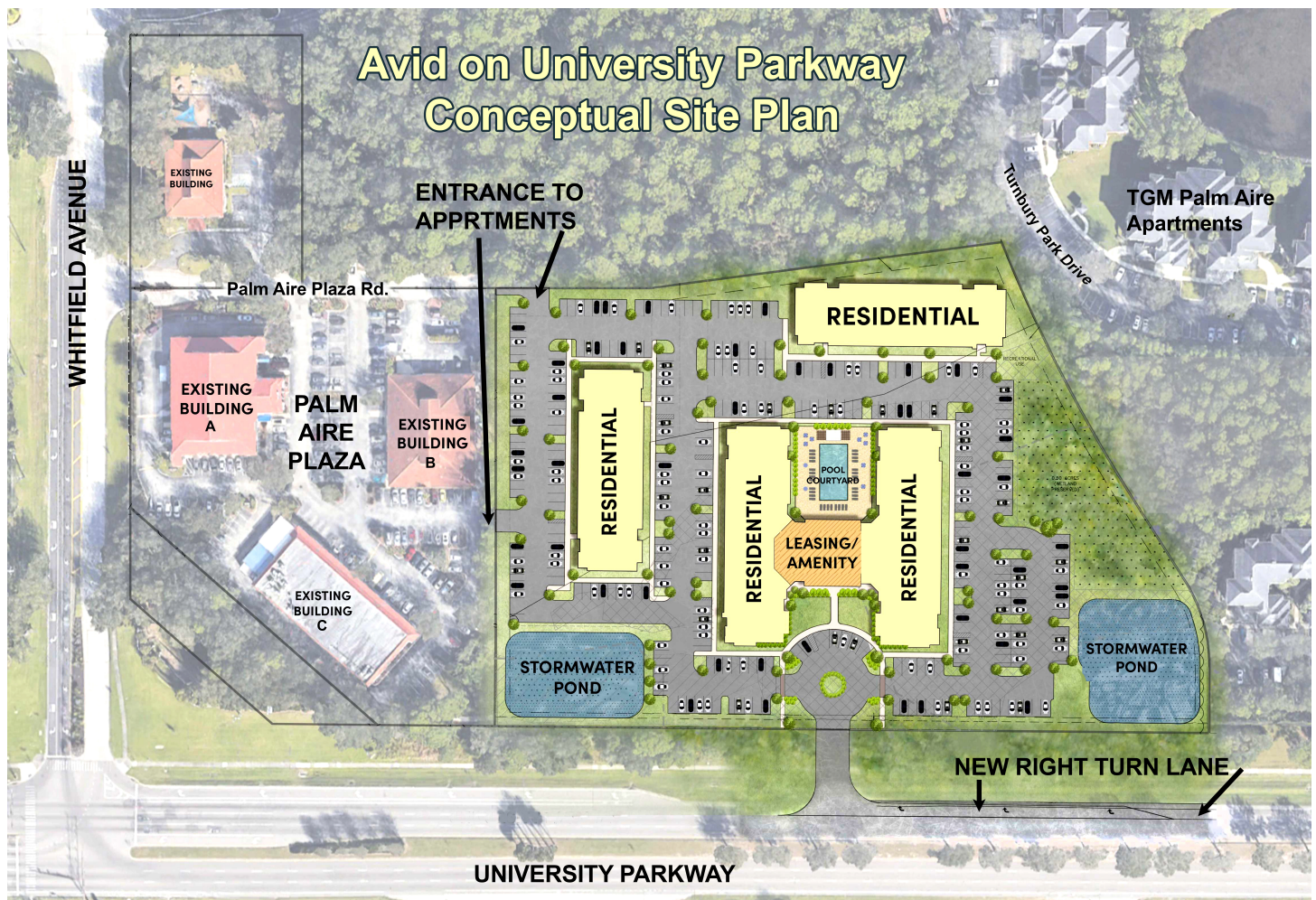
The project, tentatively named "Avid on University," will take a few years to be realized and is only in the initial stages of planning and design. The property is currently zoned as commercial and, as such, can

accommodate approximately 50,000 square feet of leasable space as well as high traffic volume. The developer plans to petition the county to rezone the property to mixed-use so that four buildings containing 210 multifamily units can be built, thus reducing the amount of traffic that would be caused if it were developed for commercial usage.

The developer said that he wants to build "high-end" apartments that will complement the Palm Aire community. The planned parking is 1.5 spaces per unit, with no garages or sheltered parking spaces.

There will be two access points to the residences. Egress from University will be a right turn only, and the exit from the apartments will be a right turn only as well. The entrance on Whitfield at Palm Aire Plaza Road will enable right or left turns, entering and departing the properties.

Palm Aire Plaza Road, running between the Academy and the Plaza will be extended to connect with the northwest residential parking lot. An additional entrance rental property will be



 *Sunday*

10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

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More Apartments Coming to Our Neighborhood

Continued from page 3

located between existing buildings B and C at the rear of Building B. A privacy landscaping barrier is planned to separate the commercial properties from the residential ones. The plan is to also landscape the frontage of University with landscaping to screen the property from the parkway.

The residents in attendance were mostly concerned with increased traffic.

One apprehensive audience member stated that Whitfield is a two-lane road and cannot sustain the increased traffic that was created when Medallion Homes built the 317 apartments at the Crossing at Palm Aire, located north of us at the intersection of Lockwood Ridge and Whitfield. She continued that with 210 additional units in this new project, there is going to be a worse traffic jam at the stop light than exists now.

Another said that the county has no plans to widen the road to accommodate the increased traffic. It was noted that our newsletter has carried several articles about the intersection's traffic and has even carried out its own study about the problem.

The Impact Analysis Traffic Study has not been done. The county requires this analysis to be conducted further along in the process when plans move from the conceptual stage to actual completed plans. The Impact Analysis Study determines how the project impacts the roads and traffic and proposes roadway modifications, if any.

Hollis pointed out that in their plan, the primary access is designed from University Parkway, thus greatly reducing traffic pressure on Whitfield. He also noted that in response to a suggestion by a Palm Aire resident at the initial meeting, "We are currently studying the option to gate either one or both internal access connections leading to Whitfield Ave" as depicted in the Conceptual Site plan.

The project has to be approved by the Manatee County Planning Committee and then by the Board of County Commissioners. Both of these hearings are open to the public; however, according to statutes, the builder is only required to notify individuals within 500 feet of the project about the hearings.

Members of the audience stated that all of Palm Aire is impacted, not just those living within 500 feet. Barbara Robinson noted that our communities council stays in touch with the county, and that because of this, when the council learns of the hearings, all of our communities will be notified by the council.



The entrance on University contains a nicely designed roundabout with attractive landscaping. The buildings are slated to be four stories. A central building will house amenities such as a reception area, meeting rooms, exercise area, and activity rooms. Third Wave Development plans to keep the Palm Aire Community Council informed as progress with Avid develops.



Poolside Amenity

Avid on Parkway
October 6, 2023

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If your Florida body of water is larger than a bathtub...

by Marguerite Puca

It probably has an alligator in it.



Exaggerated, but basically true. When it was classified as “endangered” by the Endangered Species Act in 1973, our local Crocodylian (*Alligator mississippiensis*) was estimated to have a population of about 750,000, down from 2 or 3 million. Since that time, the population has rebounded (helped along by a hunting ban from 1969 to 1988) to an estimated Florida population of 1.3 million. It is now classified as “of least concern.”

How did it manage to rebound so successfully? Given that it is an “apex predator,” its enemies are few, other than human hunting (and current tangles with the Burmese python in the Everglades). It also occupies the same environmental niche that it has been living in for some time; in 2016, a fossilized skull of an alligator was discovered in Marion County, indicating that the species has been in North America for over 8 million years.

Gators live in fresh water, either streams, rivers, lakes, ponds or swamps. Florida is also home to a species of crocodile, but they are salt-water or brackish dwellers, occurring along both coasts as far north as Tampa Bay and the Sebastian Inlet. (You can tell them apart by looking at their closed mouths: crocodiles have bottom jaw teeth that protrude; gators do not.)

Speaking of teeth, alligators share a trait with sharks: they continue to produce teeth throughout their lives, having 80 in use at one time. Lost teeth are replaced; an alligator may go through 2,000–3,000 teeth in a lifetime. The teeth are all incisors—no molars for grinding their food. This means that food is swallowed whole, in chunks, for later digestion.

A female alligator lays about 20 to 50 eggs in a nest, then guards it during the 65-day incubation period. When they are ready to hatch, the nestlings “chirp” to

let the mother know that they are ready to come out. The mother takes each hatchling in her mouth and puts it in nearby water. She then guards the young from predators (which can include adult alligators) for some time until they become large enough to move off the dinner menu.

Like turtles, the gender of the hatchlings is influenced by the temperature within the nest. Extremes of temperature (cool or hot) produce mostly females, while moderate temps produce mostly males.

Like most reptiles, alligators are cold-blooded (ectothermic). This means that they depend on the external environment to regulate their body temperature. (This limits the environment into which they can move and would make the stories of gators living in the New York City sewers highly unlikely.)

When they are born, gators are about 6 to 8 inches long and weigh 1 to 2 ounces. But they grow fast—up to a foot a year! Maturity is reached at about 6 years of age. Eventually, a female will top out at about 9 feet and 200 pounds. Males will get a little larger—10 to 15 feet long and up to 500 pounds in weight.

Human-Alligator Interaction

Given the number of alligators in Florida and our increasing population, encounters are inevitable. Like most animals, alligators try to avoid contact with humans. This response can be short-circuited by people who feed them, thus setting up a “people = food” alligator reaction. It is illegal to feed wild alligators in Florida. Over the last 10 years, there have been an average of 8 unprovoked bites per year that required medical attention.

Alligators can be classified as “nuisance alligators.” These must be at least 4 feet long and be a threat to people, pets, or property. The Fish and Wildlife Commission will send a wildlife trapper to remove such alligators if they are at least 8 feet long. Once they are captured, they are killed; they cannot be relocated to another place (which would probably already have a resident gator), and there is a danger that they would simply try to return to their home.

One of the things that makes capturing an alligator easier for the trapper is the difference in jaw strength between biting down and opening up the mouth. The biting strength has been recorded at up to 2000 pounds per square inch. But once a mouth is closed, trappers can keep it shut with duct tape.

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Mallards in Our Masthead

The Mallard duck is featured on the masthead of this edition of our newsletter. These ducks can be found worldwide, and we have quite a few of them in Palm Aire. Mallards can live in almost any wetland habitat, natural or artificial. Look for them on lakes, ponds, marshes, rivers, and coastal habitats, as well as in city and suburban parks and residential backyards. They've been known to land and swim in swimming pools.

They are "dabbling ducks"—they feed in the water by tipping forward and grazing on underwater plants. They almost never dive. They can be very tame ducks, especially in city ponds, and often group together with other Mallards and other species of dabbling ducks.

Males have a distinct shiny green head, a yellow beak, a thin white collar, a dark gray back, a brownish-white belly, a purply brown breast, and a black lower back. The upper wing is gray with a blue speculum and a white border, while the underwings are whitish.

The female is brown overall with dark brown-edged feathers. The speculum is blue with a white border. The beak is primarily gray with a wash of orange.

Mallard pairs form long before the spring breeding season. Pairing takes place in the fall, but courtship can be seen all winter. Only the female incubates the eggs and takes care of the ducklings.

Mallards are generally monogamous, but paired males pursue females other than their mates. So-called "extra-pair copulations" are common among birds and in many species are consensual, but male Mallards often force these copulations, with several males chasing a single female and then mating with her.

They are strong fliers; migrating flocks of Mallards have been clocked flying at 55 miles per hour.

The standard duck's quack that we all have heard is the sound of a female Mallard. Males don't quack; they make a quieter, rasping sound.

Mallards, like other ducks, shed all their flight feathers at the end of the breeding season and are flightless for 3–4 weeks. They are secretive during this vulnerable time, and their body feathers molt into a concealing "eclipse" plumage that can make them hard to identify.

The oldest known Mallard was a male and at least 27 years and 7 months old when he was shot in Arkansas in 2008. He had been banded in Louisiana in 1981.



4 facts

1. Phoenix Marketing International's report indicated that 5.3% of North Port-Sarasota-Bradenton MSA households have investible assets of at least \$1 million, resulting in around 17,000 millionaires.
2. Golf originated in Florida in 1886, with John Hamilton Gillespie introducing it to Sarasota. Gillespie designed the first 2-hole and 9-hole courses, which

became a favorite among Floridians and the second course in America.

3. Sarasota attracts 4 million tourists annually, showcasing its stunning beaches, entertainment, and fine dining, fostering the city's growth and attracting more visitors to its quaint beachy beauty. The Sarasota community thrives on this

tourism and it helps keep growing as a city.

4. The mid 1920s-built building in Sarasota on the corner of Fruitville Road and US 301 was once an automobile agency then an American Legion Post, and gambling hall before becoming Old Heidelberg Castle, a restaurant with a trampoline, and later became a Walgreen's Drug Store.

Palm Aire Communities Council Board Update

by Susan Romine

FALL, 2023

Palm Aire Communities Council

March

The March meeting is the Annual Meeting. Time to adopt the FY 2023–24 budget. Major expenses are the newsletter and replacing the Holiday lights for the median at University Parkway and Whitfield Avenue.

The MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit) will be credited for the charges for the landscape architect, which were mistakenly charged to the account. Manatee County staff will discuss options to shorten bid processes for the landscape project, which should include the median at University Parkway, the front median at The Gardens, and irrigation at Country Club Way.

The annual certification of member associations was adopted.

The “No Thru Trucks” Ordinance has been adopted, and the signs are installed. A left-turn arrow has been activated on the traffic signal at Whitfield Avenue and Lockwood Ridge Road.

A request to paint the fire hydrants will be researched. The fire department has no plans to paint for years and has no objections to citizens painting the hydrants, but new criteria must be researched.

Officers for FY 2023–24 were elected: President, Barbara Robinson; Vice President, Susan Romine; Secretary, Marguerite Puca; Treasurer, Mike Grubbs.

Barbara Robinson asked for volunteers for two committees: the newsletter and a liaison with the shopping center.

April

A representative from Manatee County advised that, based on the materials for the landscaping project, a construction manager at risk approach should be used. The company will look at all the specifications to obtain a “guaranteed maximum price.” They indicated that our project is considered “small,” so there may be an issue finding contractors, but we should make a decision to begin the process. We agreed that this is how to proceed. No timeline could be determined.

Cathy Allen, webmaster, asked that communities keep their documents up-to-date on the site. A Manatee County representative reiterated that there are no plans to paint fire hydrants in the next several years (no money, no people, etc.). If we were to undertake the painting, the thing to keep in mind is the county-approved color scheme (no more different colored tops based on pressure):

1. If they are on county property, paint them entirely in safety yellow.
2. If they are on private property, paint them entirely in safety red.

Barbara Robinson has, again (she does this almost monthly) contacted Sarasota County about the timing of the traffic signal at University Parkway and Whitfield Avenue on the weekends. She was told that there was a problem with the camera.



J. Thomas Murphy of Woodland Green turned 104 on November 10, 2023.

Everyone from the condo association raises their steins to him.

He enjoys his one beer a day, everyday!

He served the USA as a World War II Veteran.



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Some PACC Contributions to the Community

In 1990, the Palm Aire Community Council, Inc. was formed under the name Palm-Aire Community Action Council, Inc. It was renamed to its current name in 2000. Our neighborhoods have been served by the organization for over 33 years. Our goal is to act as a voice for the preservation and improvement of the standard of living in every Palm Aire community. At its inception, there was no overarching organization to direct the requirements of the communities during Palm Aire's development. All that existed were separate subdivisions, both with and without homeowner organizations. For the benefit of everybody, a few of the HOA presidents made the decision to form an organization with representatives from each neighborhood. Thus, we have made a contribution.

2007: PACC and the county collaborated to create the Whitfield Avenue widening plans, which produced a significantly larger roadway than anticipated with turn lanes and extra-large bike lanes to accommodate golf carts.

Landscaping completed at the Palm Aire Country Club sign, corner of Lockwood Ridge and Whitfield.

New warning signs—"Share the Road" and "Golf Cart"—were installed by the county at the urging of PACC.

2008: PACC facilitated the county's re-engineering of the ditch along Whitfield Road, removing blockages and setting new elevations to ensure proper drainage water flow.

The council successfully maintained Whitfield's speed limit of 30 MPH, despite the county's plan for a four-lane thoroughfare.

2009: Palm Aire Locator Signs have been refurbished and cleaned, and PACC has requested the county to install a left-turn signal at Lockwood Ridge Road and Whitfield.

PACC worked with county officials to plan and design Conservatory Park.

The PACC website is established.

The council collaborates with the county to eradicate dead palms and trees on West Country Club Drive and plant eight royal palms on Palm Aire Drive and three on Tournament Blvd.

PACC resists the plan to install a 15-story cell tower in Palm Aire; the plan is abandoned.

PACC purchases and installs holiday lights at the four entrances to Palm Aire,

Following PACC pressure, the county once again rejected the installation of the cell tower.

2010: PACC requested amendments to land codes for cell tower installations in Palm Aire, which were approved by County Commissioners, further halting the project.

2011: PACC learns that Vertex terminated its plan to erect a cell tower on Palm Aire Country Club property—a success story for Palm Aire communities.

PACC establishes a Palm Aire Entrance Committee to plan for and improve the entrance into Whitfield from University Parkway.

2013: The PACC Landscape Committee is working on enhancing the entrance at University Parkway, and has met with the Country Club to discuss plans for this improvement.

2014: PACC contracts club for major entrance improvement project, removing existing plantings and planting palm trees, annuals, and perennials. Contract includes one-year bed maintenance and revisit after review.

2015: PACC is actively monitoring the front entrance and attempting to influence the selection of plants with the county's contract holder.

2016: Council continues to work with Manatee County's MSTU on behalf of Palm Aire communities.

The Landscape Committee continues to press for more attractive and seasonal-appropriate plantings at the Palm Aire entrance and all along Whitfield.

2017: Frontier Communications, thanks to PACC's efforts, has successfully cleaned and painted the building, fence, and gate enclosing their Whitfield switching facility.

2018: The council restarts printing and mailing of the newsletter.

2019: Barbara Robinson and Susan Romine initiated the Whitfield Beautification Project in winter, marking dead and dying trees for removal by the county using MSTU funds.

2020: The council worked with Medallion Homes to make the proposed apartment complex by Medallion Homes at the intersection of Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge more compatible with our neighborhoods.

2021: The council reported traffic jams at Whitfield and University intersection to Sarasota and Manatee counties, who, after discovering Sarasota County controls traffic lights, sent engineers to adjust timing.

The council's MTSU committee received county approval for a Whitfield Avenue Landscaping Plan, which will be implemented in phases and continues to meet with the county.

2023: The county completed the renovation of the island on Whitfield, including the installation of new Royal Palms and ground cover with MTSU funds.



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A Message from Palm Aire Country Club

by Greg Martzolf, General Manager/COO

Greetings, Palm Aire Community Residents!



Please allow me to introduce myself. I am the “new guy” at Palm Aire Country Club. My family and I have made the move from the East Coast of Florida to the “Best” Coast. It only took us a little over twenty years in Florida to get over to the land of quality golf courses, the great outdoors, white sand beaches, culinary adventure, culture, and history. We are happy to be here!

The weather has certainly taken center stage over the past few months. Research shows the region

has experienced the driest summer in over 100 years. We are not just a few inches of rain below normal, but rather a few feet below normal! The same research shows the region has experienced the warmest average temperatures over the same 100-year span. What a combination—the warmest and driest summer (June through August) in recorded history. We were certainly challenged when it came to maintenance and care of our golf courses.

As you pass through the Palm Aire neighborhoods, you will see our golf courses have responded and recovered nicely in the face of the weather challenges. Our Golf Course Maintenance Team, led by Director of Agronomy Erik Gowdy, has worked tirelessly

to maintain the look you have become accustomed to in your community.

Palm Aire Country Club is growing. We are expanding programming and presenting membership opportunities at every level, from social participation to our full range of amenities, including golf, food and beverage, tennis, pickleball, paddleball, fitness, and aquatic activities. We have something for everyone!

If you have not been to the club lately, you should come by for our wonderful Sunday brunch, which features a fine selection and presentation of mouth-watering treats. We welcome our neighbors to join us. You can call 941-355-9733 to make your reservation.

If you have been thinking about membership at Palm Aire Country Club, now is the perfect time to become part of our family. Suzanne Gile, Marketing and Membership Director, stands ready to show you around the facility, answer any questions, and share our current incentives to become a member at Palm Aire Country Club. She will share her passion for the Club and provide the best path for your membership. She can be contacted at 941-556-0782 or via email at sgile@palmaire.net.

It is great to be with you all!

Greg Martzolf

“GM”

General Manager/COO

Palm Aire Country Club

Crime Prevention Seminar by Susan Romine

On May 23rd, approximately 75 Palm Aire residents hurried into the Lakes Room at the Palm Aire Country Club to hear a presentation by Deputy Tom Kaczmarek from the Manatee County Sheriff's Office, sponsored by Palm-Aire Communities Council, Inc., and SIGPA (Special Interest Group of Palm Aire County Club).

Deputy Kaczmarek talked about CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design), which is a multidisciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior that focuses on changing how places are laid out and how they look and feel.

He gave an example of night robberies with no evidence of break-ins. They finally figured out that the gang was hiding in bushes, and when the owners left, the gang rolled into the garage before the garage door closed. Deputy Kaczmarek advised that with thorny bushes (roses, bougainvillea) and outside lighting, the gang would have nowhere to



hide, and watch your garage door close before you pull away.

Deputy Kaczmarek concluded that although nothing is 100 percent, we can eliminate the opportunity to become victims with simple steps of security.

Anyone interested in an evaluation of your home from a security standpoint may contact Deputy Kaczmarek at 941.747.3011, extension 2586

In recent years, the insurance landscape in Florida has undergone significant turmoil, primarily due to a surge in property claim litigation and an overwhelming influx of frivolous lawsuits related to roof fraud. This challenging scenario has been exacerbated by several billion-dollar global weather events and some of the most severe storms to hit the Florida coast in a century. Together, these factors have created a perfect storm, leading to a highly volatile and uncertain insurance market in the state. As a consequence of these circumstances, numerous top-rated insurance companies have either ceased operations in Florida or opted to exit the state altogether. Those insurers that have chosen to stay are implementing drastic measures to minimize their exposure. This often involves excluding coverage for homes that are deemed riskier or have characteristics that could potentially lead to future issues. Specifically, older homes, those with aging roofs, wood frame construction, and properties located near bodies of water are increasingly challenging to secure coverage for, and when coverage is available, the rates are often unreasonably high. Fortunately, the Florida legislature has recently enacted several new laws aimed at positively impacting the insurance marketplace's future and, consequently, premium pricing. However, it's important to recognize that rectifying and stabilizing the situation will take time, and legislative intervention alone may not completely resolve the overarching problem. Given the state of the market, it is absolutely crucial for both buyers and sellers to be highly attentive to their insurance needs and potential costs. Buyers are advised to proactively request that sellers share their current insurance policies once a

contract is established. This approach allows buyers more time to thoroughly investigate and secure the most favorable rates and coverage options. Waiting until the week before closing to address insurance matters is strongly discouraged. Instead, insurance considerations should be among the first items addressed after a contract is in place. By taking these proactive steps, individuals can navigate the complex Florida insurance market more effectively and ensure they are adequately protected.

Here's a selection of homes that have sold in Palm Aire in the last 90 days. There was a total of 16 properties sold in that time frame.

Single Family Homes

5763 Timber Lake Dr.	520,000
5691 Country Lakes Dr.	605,000
8019 Conservatory Dr.	710,000

Condos

5719 Gardens Dr.	205,000
6999 W. Country Club Dr. N.	320,000
5574 Golf Pointe Dr. Unit C-1	385,000



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DeSoto Palms

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Respite Services

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- Transportation to Doctor's Appointments
- Excellent Activity Program
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DeSoto Palms Assisted Living Community
5601 N. Honore Ave. | Sarasota, Florida 34243
941-355-0303 | DeSotoPalms.com

Assisted Living Facility #11835

Palm Aire
Communities Council

Newsletter

FALL, 2023

Palm Aire Communities Council, Inc.
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