

Palm Aire Communities Council Newsletter

Fall, 2024



Palm Aire Battered by Hurricane Milton

On October ninth and tenth, amidst the calm of Palm Aire, Hurricane Milton emerged as a formidable force of nature, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake in Palm Aire, showcasing the resilience of its residents in the face of adversity.

The aftermath of Milton left some areas of Palm Aire looking like a scene from a disaster movie. Numerous trees were downed, debris was scattered everywhere, power lines were out, and many pool cages were in shambles. The Fox Pointe Community, for example, received damage to all but three pool cages, while four cages were destroyed.

The Palm Aire Country Club lost over 225 trees, and with debris scattered over the fairways and greens, the courses had to be closed.

Trees were downed all over Whitfield Avenue, and one section was completely blocked. Many drivers drove around the blockage onto the brim, destroying the grass and causing many ruts. Every Palm Aire neighborhood sustained damage, downed trees, destroyed shrubs, and piles of broken limbs in the streets.

Sarasota officials said there were more than 100 structures destroyed, major damage to 878 structures, affecting 4,700 structures with an estimated \$375 million in damages. Manatee County reported more than \$250 million in damages. Both counties have battled the clean-up effort long after the storm gave us a direct hit.

National Weather Service meteorologists confirmed that Hurricane Milton produced at least 41 tornadoes, but that number could go even higher once all damage surveys are completed.

For over a week, meteorologists from three different weather service regions in Florida have been in the field, assessing the damage caused by the numerous powerful tornadoes. These tornadoes have ripped off roofs, flipped mobile homes, and even thrown boats and cars around. Sadly, one tornado in St. Lucie County resulted in the tragic loss of six lives.

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Palm Aire Battered by Hurricane Milton

by Dan Reeves

Fall, 2024
Palm Aire Communities Council



ry. As of now, Milton is expected to rank 13th for the most tornadoes produced by a hurricane in the U.S. since 1995, but these numbers are not final yet.

The tornado count from Hurricane Milton is impressive, the storm initially hit Siesta Key on October 9th. A storm surge of six to eight feet flooded homes, knocked boats off boat lifts, and damaged buildings—some residents found their swimming pools filled with sand. According to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Milton has shaped up to be one of the most tornado-producing storms in recent histo-



The Palm Aire Communities

Avista
Broadmoor Pines
Clubside
Club Villas I
Club Villas II
Condo B
Conservatory Estates
Country Lakes

Desoto Woods
Eagle Creek Condos
Eagle Creek Villas
Fox Pointe
Fairway Six
Gardens at Palm Aire
Golf Pointe
Lakeside Woods

The Links
Misty Oaks
Pine Trace
Preserves
Rosewood
Timberlake Village
Woodlake Villas
Woodland Green

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Daniel Reeves, Editor

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You can contact the newsletter at
PalmAireNewsletter@gmail.com

Officers, 2024-2025

Lesa Hartigan, President
David Brand, Vice President
Mike Grubbs, Treasurer

Palm Aire Communities Council Board Update

by Lesa Hartigan

FEBRUARY 2024. MSTU Irrigation for Whitfield Avenue selected a vendor. Meeting in March with all appropriate county personnel. They were looking for volunteers to feature a community. Eagle Creek declined to participate. PACCI website was confirmed up-to-date and technical issues were being addressed. A nominating committee was formed for the March Officer election.

AVID Apartment development at University and Whitfield received unanimous approval at the Planning Board meeting in February. Traffic studies were completed for volumes in May 2023. Retail space in the plaza will increase to 70,000 from 40,000.

Signs prohibiting commercial truck traffic were reinstalled. Reports that the bike path edges were crumbling. Feedback was sent to Public Works.

MARCH 2024. Holiday lighting for the entrance was submitted to Manatee County for reimbursement. The budget for 2024-2025 Season was sent to PACCI member representatives.

Trees removed along Whitfield Avenue for the right turn lane will not be replaced since there is not enough width in the county right-of-way. Funds will be put towards other landscape designs. The vendor contracts for mowing ended July 31, 2024. The county will post for bids.

Please keep us updated on PACCI representatives if they change so that the website will be up-to-date. PACCI members were certified as per the guidelines of the Council.

The AVID apartment project was approved by 4-3 by Manatee County Commissioners.

Golf carts on Whitfield need to use the roadway, not the bike path. The path is not designed for carts and is not wide enough. Palm-Aire is a golf course designated community marked with yellow signs with golf carts on them.

New OFFICERS for 2024-2025 are as follows:
President – Lesa Hartigan, The Links
Vice President – David Brand, Lakeside Woods
Secretary – Cathe Snyder, The Gardens
Treasurer – Mike Grubbs, Country Lakes

APRIL 2024. Association dues went out for payment. Some curb painting was done at the University/Whitfield intersection. The Gardens island landscape plan was presented and is being reviewed with the vendor.

Ideas for newsletter articles were suggested, Palm-Aire women's club, scholarships and fundraisers. Dis-

cussions on newsletter distribution and the total count of newsletters sent out.

Manatee County has decided to paint the fire hydrants in residential communities yellow.

Commissioner Mike Rahn was invited to attend a future meeting of PACCI.

MAY 2024. The island at Whitfield is to be completed this month and the Gardens over the summer. Colorful annuals will be added as well. Maintenance and litter control at the entrance island was discussed along with asking for help from the country club.

Commissioner Mike Rahn attended the meeting and discussed the bike lane and golf cart traffic. "Share the Road" signs will be added along Whitfield Avenue. The 30 MPH speed limit will remain since this is a golf course community. MSTU funds are now over \$700K. These funds will be used to beautify Whitfield Avenue. Once the project is complete, the MSTU-Palm-Aire special taxing unit will be reassessed.

Solar-powered, LED, blinking stop lights will be installed at the 4-way stop at Whitfield and Country Club Way. Reminder for golf carts to adhere to traffic regulations, same as motor vehicles.

Recommendation to add sidewalk between Clubside and Lakeside Woods. The country club lets pedestrians use the cart path where there is no sidewalk.

JUNE 2024. Reminders for participating associations to pay their dues. The Gardens project was completed with a palm tree replaced and Florida friendly landscape. Quotes for the irrigation wells are underway. An additional 300 plants were added to the entrance island by Manatee County.

The yellow golf cart signs were added to Whitfield and "cyclists" were painted in the bike lane. County to clean up the area around Frontier Station.

PACCI recessed for the summer.

SEPTEMBER 2024. Phase I well to be dug late Fall near the lift station along Whitfield. Irrigation should be completed by February 2025. Plantings to start in April/May 2025. Palm tree supports are to be removed after hurricane season. The Whitfield corridor was surveyed and the sidewalk project to begin in early 2025.

We need "letters to the editor" from the community. Also, looking for human interest articles and advertisers to reduce the newsletter cost. Electronic option for newsletter was discussed. Concept was not well received. Welcome Fairway Lakes to the PACCI group. Fairway Bend, Fairway Point and the Hollows are not PACCI members. Efforts will continue to have

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Great Blue Herons

by Marguerite Puca

Fall, 2024
Palm Aire Communities Council

Have you ever watched a Great Blue Heron fishing?

First, they stand motionless, their long yellow legs looking like reeds in the water. When an unwitting fish comes close enough, the long neck “snakes” out to catch it, aided by an unusual vertebral arrangement that lets the neck act like a hinge.



The caught fish, which can be as large as a foot long, is lifted out of the water. The heron tosses it and repositions the body so that the head is swallowed first, causing the fish's fins to be folded against its body as it is swallowed.

Once the fish is consumed, the heron has a drink or two of water to help the body slide down into its gullet for digestion.

Second question: why is it called a “Great Blue Heron” when it is so clearly a light gray with darker grey edges to its feathers and a white head? Answer: the name “grey heron” was already taken. A similar species to the Great Blue, the Grey Heron is native throughout Europe and Asia. It resembles Great Blue, although its neck is white and its legs are pink.

The largest of our wading birds, standing about four feet tall with a six-foot wingspan, these birds are a common sight in wetlands throughout the United States. The species has become habituated to human interaction and can be seen standing close to fishermen cleaning their catches, hoping to snatch a meal. Although they appear to have

some heft, they are mostly feather fluff, weighing between four and eight pounds.

These herons are carnivores in diet, eating any animal that they can in or near their waterfront environment. Both fresh and saltwater locations make suitable hunting grounds. The usual food is fish, any species that comes near enough to be stabbed or bitten. They also eat frogs, salamanders, snakes, insects, small mammals, and shore birds.

A male Great Blue Heron selects a nesting site in the early spring, often in a rookery, especially those protected by a water location to deter predation. There may be hundreds of nests, often including other species of herons and egrets, in a colony. Once he has enticed a female to join him, after some nest-building courtship routines, three to five eggs are laid and hatch out in about 25 to 30 days. The young are ready to fly after about 60 days. One nest predator is the Great Horned Owl, which finds young heron chicks a perfect size for seizing. The heron sitting in the nest uses screeching to chase the owl away since owls are very sensitive to noise.

Once the eggs have hatched, both parents take turns feeding the young. When a parent returns to the nest after a hunting expedition, they point their long bill down. The young gather around and tug on the bill, which causes the adult to regurgitate the caught fish. Once the young have eaten their fill, the adult then eats the fish.

The Great Blue Heron is doing pretty well in terms of conservation. The species is classified as “least concern” since its population is increasing. Since the trade in bird plumage on hats disappeared at the beginning of the 20th century, the birds have not faced threats from hunting. Today, the threat to their survival is the loss of habitat, something common to many species but less so to this one because of their adaptability in nesting requirements.

There are a number of ways to see Great Blue Herons online. The Chesapeake Conservancy in Annapolis puts up a video cam in the spring that is focused on the nesting behavior of several heron pairs. YouTube has videos of a Great Blue Heron pair from Cornell's Lab of Ornithology that were videoed in 2012.

The Great Blue Heron is featured in flight on our masthead.

Sunday BRUNCH

NEW - Chilled Shrimp Display
Fresh Seasonal Fruit
Variety of Homemade Salads
Warm Muffins, Croissants, Danish & Pastries
Warm Fruit Cobbler & Sweets

Carving & Egg Station

Freshly Prepared Omelets and Made-to-Order Eggs Made
with Egg Whites, Egg Beaters or Farm Fresh Large Eggs
Housed Cured
Smoked Ham Carved to Order

Hot Entrees

NEW - Chef Selection Special Entrees
Applewood Smoked Bacon
Sausage
Breakfast Potatoes
Eggs Benedict
Buttermilk Biscuits & Sausage Gravy
Cheese Blintzes with Raspberry Sauce
French Toast

Member Price: \$22++ | Non-Member Price: \$28++
Children 5-11 Half Price, 4 & Under Complimentary
10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Call (941) 355-9733 for Reservations



BUFFET MENU

A Message from Palm Aire Country Club

Greetings, Palm Aire Residents.

Exciting times at the Country Club!

Soon to come: a renovation/rebuild of the Lakes Golf Course.

By vote this past September, club membership has given support and direction to begin the project in the Spring of 2025, with completion by the end of the year 2025.

Attention to the Lakes Golf Course continues the club philosophy and plans to evolve the facility, upgrading and updating products and services. Surrounding communities will benefit from these efforts. As the Club presents a more desirable environment, experience, and destination, the entire community will gain favorable attention.

Is this a great time to become a Palm Aire Country Club member? The timing would appear to be perfect. Is there availability with a variety of programs?—Check. Value pricing?—Check. Already improved, along with improving products, securing the Club in a competitive marketplace?—Check

If you have not been by the Club lately (We are open to the public for Sunday Brunch), maybe it is time to stop by to discover the opportunities. We have something for just about everyone. We are here to welcome you to your neighborhood Club.

Suzanne Gile, Membership and Marketing Director (sgile@palmaire.net), would be happy to show you around and find the best avenue for you to experience Palm Aire Country Club.

We are excited about “happenings” at the Club.

Greg

Greg Martzolf
General Manager/COO
Palm Aire Country Club

4 facts

1. Sarasota, Florida, boasts 76 golf courses within a 15-mile radius, offering a mix of public and private options. With 57 18-hole courses and 19 nine-hole courses, there's something for everyone, whether you are a seasoned pro or a beginner.
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. Palm-Aire's Champions Course once hosted the television program "All-Star Golf," which later became known as "Shell's Wonderful World of Golf."
4. A number of golf courses were created for resorts along the railroad lines built by Henry Flagler on the east coast, and on the west coast by Henry Plant. The construction of Florida's early golf courses and resorts continued through the "golden age" of golf course architecture that lasted from the 1900s through the 1930s.

Bats in My Belfry and Bees in My Bonnet

Cathy Allen

Fall, 2024

Palm Aire Communities Council

The list of protected species in Florida is long; my exposure to them has been minimal to non-existent. I hadn't given the list a lot of thought until I forced to.

When I was on the Board of our Association, residents complained that bats had infested their buildings. I called the pest control company and



was shocked to learn that the residents would have to cohabit with the bats for a while as it was pupping season. As a seasonal resident from 'up North', my response was "Wait. What?"

That episode was my introduction to protected species in Florida. No matter how one personally feels about bats, the fact is that there are laws in place for their protection.

According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, it is illegal to kill bats. If bats have set up housekeeping in your house or garage, it is also illegal to install exclusion devices (which allow bats to exit an area but not to re-enter it) between April 16th and August 14th, without a permit.

Why the protections? That's easy – bats are great pollinators! Bananas, avocados, dates and figs depend on bats for pollination. The next time you slice a banana over your cereal, thank a bat!

Fun Facts:

- Bats are the only mammals that truly fly.
- Of more than 1,000 species of bats worldwide, only three feed on blood. None of those live in Florida.
- 70% of all bats are insectivores. One bat can eat up to 3,000 insects in a single night!
- Our community solved its bat problem by erecting three bat houses. The houses are full of bats and the bats are full of mosquitoes! Win-win!

My Florida "protected species" education continued this spring with a bee infestation in our building. The pest control company determined that the colony was composed of honey bees; therefore, a specialist would have to be called to move the colony.

How does one move bees? It turns out that, in theory, it's a relatively straightforward process. Find and place the queen in an empty hive box. The worker bees will follow. So why try to move a colony rather than simply eradicate it? It's because of the importance of the honey bees to agriculture.

The USDA estimates that honey bees pollinate about \$15 billion worth of crops across the US every year. In Florida, those crops include almonds, strawberries and citrus.

Honey bees are not native to Florida--they were imported from Europe to produce honey and to help with crop pollination. Bumblebees and solitary bees are native to Florida; they are better adapted to the local environment and pollinate native plants. The population of both types of bees in Florida is decreasing, resulting in less honey (thus higher honey prices), and less crop pollination, resulting in higher prices for fruits, vegetables and nuts.



It surprised me to learn that the protections for honey bees are much less stringent than those for bats. For both, the declining populations are a re-

sult of exposure to pesticides, habitat loss, disease and climate change, but it is not illegal to kill honey bees if the colony poses a hazard to public safety. (A colony of bees is established, generally in a cavity, and has a comb.) As a result, the bees in a colony may be aggressive in defending their nest.

A swarm of bees is a temporary bunch of bees, found hanging from a tree branch or massed on the side of a building. They're generally docile, as they aren't defending their nest. Left alone, they'll leave on their own.

Fun Facts:

- Bees have five eyes.
- Bees are insects, so they have six legs.
- Male bees in the hive are called drones; female bees in the hive (except for the queen) are called worker bees.
- Bees fly about 20 MPH.

Palm Aire Updates

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them join. Fall Social with snacks and cocktails was suggested for November.

OCTOBER 2025: HURRICANE! The MSTU maintenance mowing/trimming vendor was dismissed and a new bid will go out to find a new vendor. In the interim, the county will be working weekends to support the maintenance until a new vendor is found.

The county did a good job in clearing two very large trees the morning after the storm that were blocking Whitfield Avenue. The Palm-Aire sign at Fairway Six was reinstalled.

Debris was gathered and piled up for FEMA pickup, and tree trimming will follow. West Country Club Drive will be included in future beautification and maintenance.

Thirty new stop signs have been installed by the country club along golf cart paths. Kelly Arnold will present information in November about how to obtain landscape and lighting grants for community improvement.



FPL provided osprey with new nests near the intersection of Whitfield and Lockwood Ridge, a First for the company.



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Hurricanes Impact on Local Real Estate

by Julie Jacques

Fall, 2024
Palm Aire Communities Council

Hurricanes are known for their devastating effects on communities, infrastructure, and local economies. Manatee and Sarasota counties in Florida, both popular destinations for residents and investors alike, have felt the impacts of Hurricanes Helene and Milton in various ways. This article explores the consequences of these hurricanes on the real estate markets in these regions.

Immediate Aftermath: Damage and Displacement

Hurricanes Helene and Milton brought high winds and heavy rainfall, leading to widespread property damage across Manatee and Sarasota counties. Many homes, particularly those in low-lying areas and near the coast, suffered from flooding, wind damage, and fallen trees. As a result, homeowners faced significant repair costs, and some were displaced from their residences.

In the immediate aftermath, the real estate market saw a surge in demand for rental properties. Many displaced families turned to short-term rentals or long-term leases, creating a competitive rental market. Property owners who were able to offer rentals capitalized on this demand, while others faced challenges as they navigated repairs and insurance claims.

Insurance Claims and Market Dynamics

The hurricanes prompted a wave of insurance claims as homeowners sought to recover losses. This process often slowed down market activity, as many properties were in limbo awaiting repairs or insurance settlements. Real estate transactions typically dropped during this period, with buyers hesitant to commit to properties that might require extensive repairs or could still be affected by ongoing recovery efforts.

However, the influx of insurance funds also meant that some homeowners were in a position to reinvest in their properties or seek new homes. This reinvestment could lead to an eventual uptick in renovations and new listings, potentially stimulating the market in the long run.

Changes in Buyer Preferences

In the wake of the hurricanes, buyer preferences in Manatee and Sarasota Counties began to shift. Many prospective homeowners became more cautious about purchasing properties in flood-prone areas. There was a noticeable increase in demand for homes with higher elevations or those located farther inland, as buyers sought to mitigate their risks against future storms.

Additionally, buyers started to prioritize properties with hurricane-resistant features, such as impact windows, reinforced roofs, and elevated founda-

tions. This shift not only reflects a growing awareness of climate risks but also indicates a trend towards sustainable and resilient building practices.

Long-Term Recovery and Market Outlook

As Manatee and Sarasota counties continue to recover from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, the real estate market is gradually stabilizing. Local governments and community organizations are working together to provide support for affected residents, including financial assistance and resources for rebuilding.

In the long term, the real estate market may benefit from increased investment in infrastructure and community resilience initiatives. As new building codes and regulations are enacted to enhance storm preparedness, the appeal of the region may grow among buyers looking for safer and more resilient properties.

Conclusion

The impacts of hurricanes Helene and Milton on the real estate markets in Manatee and Sarasota Counties have been significant, affecting everything from property values to buyer preferences. As the communities recover and adapt to these challenges, the real estate market is likely to evolve, driven by a focus on resilience and sustainability. For potential buyers and investors, understanding these shifts will be crucial in navigating the future landscape of Florida's real estate market.

Here's a sample of recent sales in Palm Aire over the past three months:

Single family homes:

8122 Timber Lake Lane	475,000
5224 Creekside Trail.	565,000
6952 Country Lakes Circle	580,000
7908 Broadmoor Pines Blvd.	1,275,000

Condos:

5755 Gardens Dr.	200,000
7091 Fairway Bend Circle	265,000
7890 Eagle Creek Dr.	265,000
5803 Merion Way	415,000

Properties listed here were taken from the MLS and sold by various Realtors and Real Estate Agents



Julie Jacques Realtor® GRI
Coldwell Banker Realty
St. Armands Circle
423 St. Armand's Circle
Sarasota, FL 34236
941-323-1800
941-388-3966
Julie.jacques@cbrealty.com
Juliejacques.cbintouch.com



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Palm Aire
Communities Council

Newsletter

Fall, 2024

Palm Aire Communities Council
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