

STEEPLECHASE NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020

Returning to Naples

Everyone who is returning to Naples this season is coming from areas with diverse Covid restrictions. Please make sure you check the Florida, Collier County, and Naples restrictions before you venture out into the community. Only one thing is clear – the rules here will be different than from wherever you are coming. Do what is most important – Be safe and ENJOY!



From the President – *Toni Rosenbaum*

It is October and we are noticing the changing color of the cypress trees around the lake. Also, the temperatures are moderating from the low 90s to the mid-80s. Our recent morning walk around Kings Lake felt more comfortable.

Our morning walks continue to remind us of the pandemic, unprecedented in our lifetimes. All summer we walked mask-less around Kings Lake. With a few more people on the path now we decided to alter our face masks so we could dangle them around our necks. Now we can easily pull them up when passing people. Despite the confusing guidelines in Florida communities, and the governor's recent decision to "open up completely," most people continue to wear masks at Publix, Costco, the Post Office, and Walmart. Not so much downtown! Here at Steeplechase we were virus-free until last month when one resident tested positive for COVID.

No social events occurred during this past summer due to the pandemic. We year-round residents surely missed our restaurant dinners. We were able to continue to use the pool with most people respecting social distancing. We urge returning residents to do the same.

During the summer we realized that our gutters required cleaning a third time this year. A couple heavy downpours revealed waterfalls at a few locations. During that process several needed repairs were identified, an unplanned expense. Other projects are explained in the Building and Maintenance Committee report.

The only three members of the Landscape Committee on property during the summer spent Monday mornings trimming overgrown plants. Thanks to Sandy Lasch, Chair, Linda Reed, and Don Lasch for their toil, dedication, and volunteer commitment to keeping us looking good. Please read Sandy's report in this newsletter. Many good things happened in recent months.

In October, the Board will meet with Guardian Property Management to develop our budget for 2021. We continue to have some spending constraints due to increased costs of contracts, like pool maintenance. The Treasurer's Report in this newsletter has more financial information.

In February, two seats on the Board will expire. Jon Foerster, our Treasurer, has agreed to run for a second two-year term. Glenda Childs is stepping down. Please consider running for a seat on the Board.

I have already heard from several seasonal neighbors and renters who are not returning to Steeplechase this winter. We will miss you, but health and safety first! Others are about to return to Steeplechase beginning this month. As you travel, be safe and take all recommended precautions.

Toni Rosenbaum, President, Board of Directors, amr9@cornell.edu, 239-234-6017

From the Treasurer – Jon Foerster

At risk of sounding like a broken record, I think it is important for Association members to expect an increase in quarterly fees for the 2021 budget year. The maintenance needs of our aging community infrastructure are requiring significant interventions that are growing faster than the budget. Through August, we are already \$6,000 over budget for the entire year in building maintenance. In addition to the things we can plan for each year, such as pressure washing and gutter cleaning, we need to be putting aside more funds for the unexpected emergencies. This year alone we've had leaking roofs, sewer line problems, gutter repairs and more. The maintenance of our buildings should remain our highest priority as we protect the value of our property.

The bright spot in our budget has been the incredible diligence of the Landscape Committee and the members' work to keep our community beautiful while staying on a tight budget. I know it has been difficult for all the folks who care deeply about our community aesthetic, but I feel like we've turned a corner in balancing needs and funds. Kudos to that team.

The pool team has also done well in keeping expenses controlled. That is an area where unexpected expenses can get out of control quickly, and they have stayed on top of things! In all other aspects of our budget we are doing well. So far, our utilities and insurance are slightly below our expected costs and our administrative fees are on budget.

On the revenue side, thankfully we've not seen any delinquencies for the first time since I've been Treasurer. All unit owners are paying maintenance fees on time and in full. This is greatly appreciated, especially during a time of economic uncertainty because of the COVID pandemic.

Board members

Toni Rosenbaum (President),
Glenda Childs (Secretary & Director), Bo Duplinsky (Director), Jon Foerster
(Director & Treasurer), Dee Hook (Vice President & Director)

Board meetings

Our first Board meeting using the Zoom conference application was held on September 25. This proved to be an efficient and safe way for all residents to participate. The meeting minutes are posted on our Website.



Meetings for the remainder of 2020 are posted on the bulletin board and the Website. Everyone is encouraged to attend the meetings. The upcoming meetings are:

October 27, 2020

November 24, 2020 (Budget Adoption)

December 15, 2020

January 26, 2021

February 23, 2021 (Annual Meeting)

Until further notice, because of Covid-19, the meetings will be held via Zoom rather than in person.

Also: October 30, 2020 (Budget workshop with Guardian)

New Residents



Please welcome new owners Martha and Joe Duffy, I-101, and Richard Atkin, J-102. We hope we did not miss anyone!

Building and Maintenance Committee

Under the Board's direction, focus was on categories: safety, asset preservation, and cleanliness.

Safety

Tripping Hazards

In the 4th quarter, walkways and driveways on the property will be surveyed for possible tripping hazards, and those areas ground to acceptable standards or the concrete replaced. This past season large areas of concrete were replaced, including 2 driveways, which significantly exceeded budget.

As routine maintenance, all sidewalks and driveways will be power washed using a chlorine solution to remove any mold that could cause slipping or respiratory concerns.

Dryer Vent Cleaning

Dryer vent cleaning was completed as part of our two-year cycle.

Maintenance of High-Risk Components

It is strongly recommended that all owners periodically review our documents on this subject found under Forms, on the Steeplechase Website. Some smoke detectors and water heaters that are over 10 years old should be replaced. These items affect the safety of all of us. If an owner cannot identify the replacement dates, have a qualified service person assist or notify a Building & Maintenance Committee member.

Asset Preservation

Sewer Lines

Sewer lines were videoed and hydro-jetted in December 2014. At that time, there were no breaks or root obstructions, but the video showed many lines had bellies (due to earth movement) that could be traps for blockage. Hydro-jetting was done on all lines at that time.

In May 2020, a contractor was hired to video all lines and found 8 lines had organic build-up; these were hydro jetted to prevent blockage. Four areas were found to have line breakage and required digging and repairing. Blockage due to bellies will require routine maintenance (hydro-jetting) that needs to be in the budget.

Roof gutter cleaning

Gutters and downspouts were cleaned three times this past year due to an exceptional year for leaves and pine needles. Several areas required repair to both downspouts and gutters.

Garage doors & entrance doors

As part of the Steeplechase painting project by EBG, 24 garage doors were recommended to have major repairs at \$450 each, which was declined. A survey of all garage doors for damage was done by the Maintenance Committee, which found a total of 49 doors that should be replaced/repared which will be addressed by the Board in the Fall. Doors are the owner's responsibility. Likewise, 9 entrance doors are in need of repair/replacement.

Screen Replacement

A survey was done in April to list all window screens and lanai screens that are worn or damaged. The Board will notify owners to have them replaced at owner's expense.

Cleanliness

Each year rust stains are identified on buildings and the fence and we contract to have areas cleaned. Rust builds up over time from irrigation system overspray, which is heavy in iron. Cleaning needs to be done annually to keep property in pristine condition.

The painting project last winter included cleaning the metal roof and applying Roof-A-Cide, which made the appearance look new. It was recommended that we have this chemical applied every two years to eliminate the need for soft cleaning. It costs approximately \$20,000.

This past year, the committee lost 3 of our 5 members. If you would like to help out, please contact Rick or Len.

*Submitted by Len Hook
Len Hook and Rick Elnes
Building and Maintenance Committee members and Co-chairs*



Landscape News

The Landscape Committee had a busy summer! We hope seasonal residents will see the results when you return to Naples.

Once the rain started, we refreshed plantings at our front entrance, along the Kings Lake Blvd. fence line and at the mailbox. We also added extra sprinkler heads at the front entrance to help ensure that the new plantings thrive! You should notice extra color from new crotons along the fence line and front entrance, and the hibiscus tree at the mailbox. When we do our winter planting at the front entrance, we plan to choose more colorful annuals.

One of our biggest summer accomplishments was the installation of new landscaping in two courtyards in Buildings C and E, designed with guidance from Greenscapes. These courtyards are part of our long-term plan to refresh our landscape with a more consistent design, more drought and disease resistant plants, and enhanced irrigation. The sprinkler system in these courtyards was replaced with drip irrigation to ensure that all plants receive water as they mature and fill in. These courtyards are “tests” and we welcome feedback from all of you.

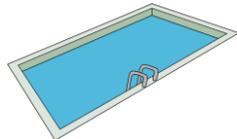
We lost several trees this summer, including lakeside. We are still considering options for replanting trees that add interest to the landscape without totally blocking views of the lake. All palm trees on property were trimmed before hurricane season.

Linda Reed and I (along with cleanup help from Don Lasch) spent several hours each week trimming, thinning, and shaping the plantings in our common areas, particularly around the clubhouse. We also worked on several courtyards and outside many of the buildings, moving plants in areas that were overgrown to areas that were bare. Our tropical landscape is in danger of getting overgrown, as our budget does not cover adequate weeding and trimming to keep up with current growth.

We need YOUR help! There are a lot of simple things that residents can do to keep Steeplechase looking beautiful. You're welcome and encouraged to plant annuals around front doors and walkways and in pots (2 per household). Please think in terms of design. Resist purchasing a cute plant that doesn't fit in with the rest of the plantings around your home. Remember that annuals must be low-growing (under 18 inches), and that they become the property of the Association as soon as they are planted.

- Water and fertilize to keep these plants healthy. Our current irrigation system is inadequate, especially during dry periods. Please water your courtyard. Watering takes only a few minutes and will keep plants from becoming diseased and leggy.
- Avoid placing pots or plants where they will keep shrubs from filling in.
- Avoid planting invasive plants. In the past residents have planted some invasive plants which are currently costing hundreds of dollars to remove.
- Despite recent rains, Naples is still in need of water. We're currently 7 inches under annual rainfall levels.
- Hoses are the responsibility of owners.
- Winter is our dry season, so our plants need extra care.

*Submitted by Sandy Lasch, Chair
Committee members: Chris Boudreau, Deb Finamore, Len Hook,
Smitty Howarth, Don Lasch, Linda Reed, Javier Suarez*



Pool Happenings

As of this writing, the pool and spa operations are in good shape. In June the Collier County Department of Health inspector rated the pool "Satisfactory" and no re-inspection date was set. One problem did occur during the summer we noticed the pool heater was off because the breaker was off. Concerned that a malfunction may be tripping the breaker, we called the heater company. Their technician said no malfunction was found; someone must have deliberately turned off the breaker each time. This service call cost us \$98.

No resident should ever turn off pool or spa breakers. If you suspect a malfunction, alert one of the pool Co-Chairs.

Three broken, unrepairable table chairs have been removed from the pool deck furniture. They have not been replaced because the pool maintenance and repair lines are over budget. Adequate seating has been available during the summer, but seating may be tight when seasonal residents return. We hope some money will magically appear in November or December so the chairs may be replaced at that time.

Please remember to return chairs to their original location and wind down and secure the umbrellas before you leave the pool area.

Are you wondering whether the COVID-19 virus can spread through our pool and spa? According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Florida Department of Health (DOH), “There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and hot tubs. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.” ER Pools properly services and measures our pool and spa three times each week. Another concern may be the spread of COVID-19 from person to person in the pool area. According to the CDC and DOH, “Mass gatherings can expose people to others’ respiratory aerosols.” Therefore, “Limit interactions if you are 65 or older and have underlying or chronic health conditions: compromised immunity, diabetes or heart or lung disease” and “keep at least 6 feet between you and other people.” We encourage everyone to protect themselves and others by following these guidelines. For the time-being we intend to keep our pool and spa open.

I want to extend my gratitude and thanks to everyone who has kept Ralph and me informed of pool and spa issues. You are our eyes and ears.

*submitted by John Rosenbaum (Co-Chair)
Ralph Childs (Co-Chair), Pat Hueter, Arlene Goffredi, Carole Veitch*

Emergency Committee



An example of an emergency is a hurricane warning, including an evacuation advisory or mandate from Collier County officials.

Committee members are volunteers to help in an emergency and are not obligated to stay here during an emergency. KNOW your Emergency Committee rep; see our Website.

During an emergency keep in mind that communication is often difficult, as power and cell phone service likely may be interrupted. The Association will get out a blast email regarding the status of the community as soon as possible.

Please keep in mind that neither the Board, nor any individual, is responsible for your unit. Nor can they ensure that things go as you would like during an emergency. Everyone helping is doing so as a volunteer.

It is essential for YOU to coordinate with your condo watcher when storms are forecast.

If you are in residence when a storm or other emergency is forecast, please inform one of the Committee members by phone or email whether you plan to leave or stay in anticipation of the emergency. Make sure your Emergency Contact form is filed with the Board and up to date.

If a storm is forecast, please help move the pool furniture into the clubhouse without anyone formally organizing it. We all have a vested interest in protecting our commonly owned items from damage.

*Submitted by Linda Reed, Chair, 402-890-5010
Committee Members: Arlene Goffredi, 239-537-5895; Javier Suarez, 847-502-0205*

Social Club

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no social events or get togethers are scheduled at this time. We will assess lifestyle conditions after the first of the new year.

However, we do want to create a festive atmosphere for the Christmas holiday, so we are planning to put up and decorate the two new Christmas trees we have for the clubhouse and put up lights at our entrance and mail kiosk. Tuesday, December 1, and Wednesday, December 2 are the target dates for these projects. Volunteers are needed and greatly appreciated. **Please** contact Arlene if you can help out. **SEE** the bulletin board for details!

Submitted by Arlene Goffredi, Social Club Chairperson

Tributes!

Glenn and Molly Ruoff recently moved to their new house around the corner from Steeplechase on Kings Lake Boulevard. We'd like to thank Glenn for his participation on the Building and Maintenance Committee. His work on behalf of our community was often "silent" but noticeable.

A solid example is the replacement of the cloudy bulletin board windows. No fuss. No trumpets. No announcements. A solid job well done. That's Glenn. Dear friend, we're missing you already. *-Toni*

Glenn never shirked in his contributions to Steeplechase Maintenance Committee and social events. His rallying call was always "Let's Get-er-Done." His knowledge of how to fix things is overpowering. *-Len Hook*

Another loss for us this year is the departure of Barbara and Galen Ausloos. They decided to join a retirement community in Naples in the midst of the pandemic. What a challenge! Here are what residents say Galen and Barbara meant to our neighborhood.

“Galen is such a good-natured guy, always willing to help out a neighbor. As a Board Member, I found his input and advice very helpful on many occasions and I relied on him often when I was President. Barbara was a valuable member of the Social Club, offering ideas, help, and making very good coffee.” – *Arlene Goffredi*

“I will always think of Galen walking around the property checking on things, especially making sure the walkway lights were lit. He is such an advocate for recycling it made me even more aware. A great gentleman, we miss you and Barbara.” – *Pat Hueter*

“Galen is a wealth of knowledge; if anyone knows the ins and outs of Steeplechase it is Galen! Barbara was always there to help set up for the socials and always one of the last to leave.” – *Linda Reed*

“Galen, was the best, we need him back !!!!!” – *Ron Connelly*

Many thanks for Galen sharing his knowledge of “How things work and where they are.” He was instrumental in the “knowledge base” of the Steeplechase Maintenance Manual that was developed in 2019/2020. – *Len Hook*

“As for me, I’m still calling on Galen’s ‘institutional’ memory.” – *Toni*

Reminders

Many recurring questions and issues are covered by documents on our **WEBSITE** at SteeplechaseNaples.com. For instance:

- There are forms on the Steeplechase Website for condo renovations (Request to Modify Property), guests (Occupancy When Owner Not Present), Emergency Contact, Insurance, and more.
- A complete set of the Steeplechase Declarations and Rules are on the Website.
- A listing of resident telephone numbers and email addresses for those that have chosen to share them. This list is password protected. If you don’t know the password, ask a Board member, please.

GUESTS: Anytime you are in residence, guests are permitted without restriction. Guests are permitted twice yearly when you are NOT in residence. See our Declarations on the Steeplechase Website, section 12.2, for information.

KEYS: We are all obligated to give a key to our unit, or the access code if we have one, to Guardian. It is recommended by your Board that you give the same to the Board President. This is a safety issue. We are all connected by virtue of living in a condominium, so if something goes wrong in your neighbor’s unit which results in yours being damaged while they are away, the

only way to help you is to access their unit via the “safety key” and vice versa. For instance, if there is a leak from above and your upstairs neighbor is away, an emergency key is the only way access can be gained to stop the leak and protect your property.

BEING AWAY: Speaking of being away -- if you are going to be away from your unit for more than 48 hours, you need to shut off your exterior water main, and lock it. Again, this is a safety measure as a leak in one unit will almost certainly damage a neighboring unit. If your unit does not have a padlock, ask the Building and Maintenance Committee.

TRASH: The dumpster is not intended for large items, only bagged garbage. Waste Management will pick up bulk items like sofas from Steeplechase. The pick-up has to be authorized by Guardian Management 48 hours prior to the proposed pick up. There is a fee for this service. Call our condo manager, Steve Beane, at Guardian at 239-514-7432.

SECURITY CAMERAS: Florida law allows security cameras as long as they are conspicuously placed, or visitors have written warning of their existence. It does not allow cameras where they are aimed at an area where people may expect privacy in a state of undress. This would probably include the pool area. Therefore, it is recommended that if you install a security camera, OR A DOORBELL CAMERA, you review statute 810.145 (Video Voyeurism).

If you have any suggestions for the next newsletter (Spring 2021) contact Bo Duplinsky at 301.807.0290 or boduplinsky@gmail.com

*Contributing to this newsletter: Bo Duplinsky (Editor),
Glenda Childs, Lorraine Duplinsky*