Players Journal

The official newspaper of the Sawgrass Players Club Homeowners Association

www.SawgrassPlayersClub.org · VOL. 17 Issue 2- SUMMER 2024

# Annual Membership Meeting held; new directors elected

By Kristy Richland

The annual Membership Meeting for the Master Association (the Association) was held on June 27 at the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse.

The newly elected board members are John Flynn by acclamation and Gerry Klingman. Existing board members whose terms will continue are Marc Stearns, Teri Mathes, Adam Guillette, Maury Dettmer, Nancy Gormley, and Derek Sprague.

TJ Welsh, whose term expired, will continue to serve until his successor is duly appointed by the remaining board members. TJ is recognized for numerous contributions to the Association including updating Architectural Control Committee policies and implementing the capital contribution covenant amendment. The capital contribution program has already helped to offset reserve contribution increases and has funded new traffic calming devices and stormwater improvements without additional dues increases.

In addition to serving on the board, TJ continues to provide his invaluable service on Operations Maintenance and Waterways, and the Architectural Control Committee. Thank you, TJ Welsh!

Photos courtesy Kristy Richland

The annual Membership Meeting for the Master Association was held on June 27.

Homeowners in attendance at the annual Membership Meeting.

## Spring Fling = Super Fun!

See page 12 for more fun photos from Spring Fling, which was hosted by your Recreation Committee on Sunday, April 14!

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## Sawgrass Master Association 2023 Financial Audit and Notice of Rule Revision

Dear Resident,

The Sawgrass Players Club Master Board, after review by its Finance Committee, has accepted the audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2023. The full audit report is available on the website or upon request to krichland@marshlanding.org.

Additionally, in accordance with FL Statutes, Ch 720, you are hereby notified that the Master Board, at its regular meeting on August 22 at 3 p.m., at Marsh Landing Management Company Office and by ZOOM, will discuss and vote on minor rule revisions. Changes are to align with Florida Statute changes. The Proposed Rules are available on the website or upon request to krichland@marshlanding.org

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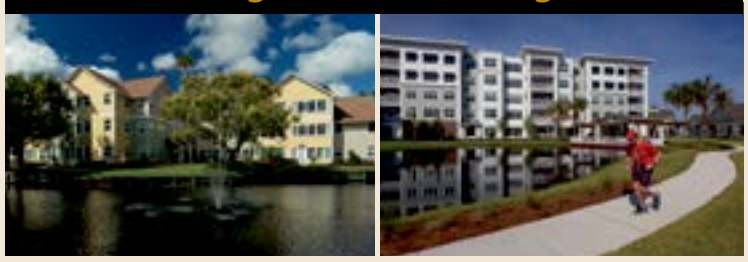

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# Controlled Access Committee: Addressing communications, access and speeding

By Derek Sprague and Gerry Klingman

The Controlled Access Committee has had a busy first half of the year with several initiatives that are underway or will be soon.

After feedback from a few residents, we have worked with our legal counsel and the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office on concerns of our residents, which fall into four areas below. We developed a communication plan using several platforms like email, website, postcards, and Facebook to reach as many residents as possible about these concerns.

In addition to developing a communication plan, we have heard from residents that they want stricter access control at our gates. The committee recently had driver's license readers installed. Beginning July 1, guests coming through the visitor's lane will be required to show their driver's license to gain access. Please alert your guests and vendors of this change. Signs will be installed advising guests of this requirement.

We also installed new cameras at each gate that capture the license plate of each car. These cameras are connected to St. Johns County should an incident happen within our community that requires sheriff deputies. Of interest, in 2023 there were more than one million vehicles recorded coming into Players Club, including 560,154 RFID entries through the main gate.

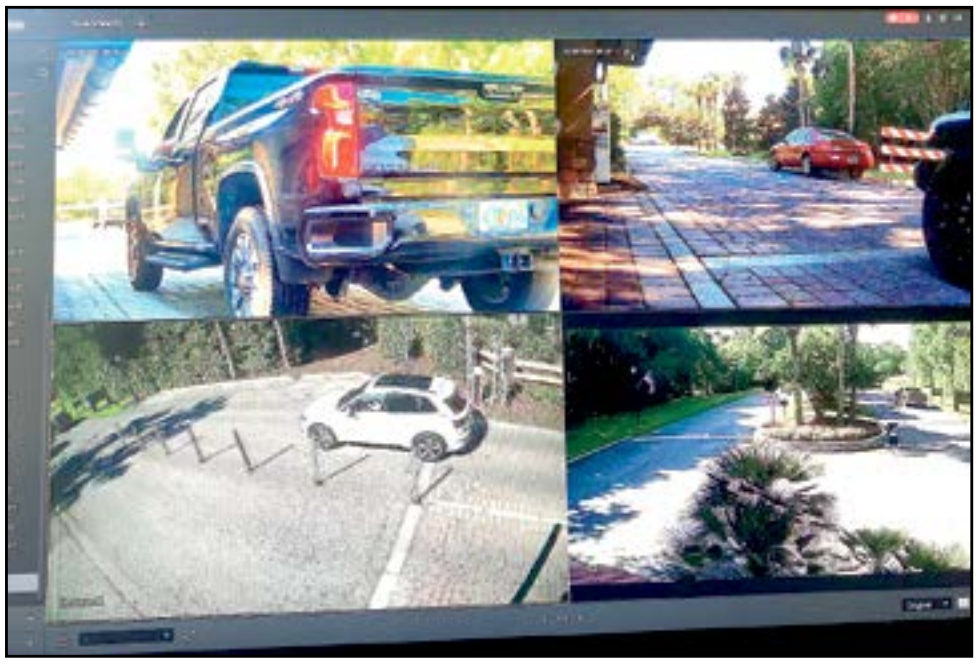


Photo courtesy Derek Sprague

Computer screen showing camera upgrades to the entry gate.

Another topic our committee has been working on is TEA (Traffic Enforcement Agreement). As most of you know, our roadways inside the community are private. Some sub-associations were interested in having a TEA to have sheriff deputies patrol their streets within their sub-association. This process is very involved and expensive and would require each sub-association to do a traffic engineering study to make sure every street has the proper signage and other markings to make the streets "legal." One sub-association did the engineering study and they would need to spend nearly $50,000 to get their streets compliant before a TEA could be applied for. Secondly, in working with the Sheriff's Office, they require all 16 sub-associations within our community to have a TEA so that their deputies don't have to decipher which sub-association has a TEA and which ones don't. If your sub-association is interested in a TEA, please let us know. There are other ways to combat speeding in our community.

To help with enforcing speed on our streets, we currently have four Safe Pace Radar signs to help make drivers aware of the speed they are driving. As we know, many of the "speeders" are not residents, so these signs do help keep the speed down. We are working on purchasing a fifth Safe Pace Radar sign to use in our community.

Finally, our account manager for First Coast Security, Ralph Sylvester, will be assuming a new role within the company. His replacement, Ty Galloway, will be training with Ralph for several months as he learns our community. Ralph will be called in to support special events like THE PLAYERS Championship due to his extensive knowledge of how best our roadways work. We want to thank Ralph for his 14 years of dedicated service to our residents!

## Stay Informed and Get Involved!

To register on the website:

1. Go to www.sawgrassplayersclub.org
2. Select Resident Login / Register
3. The Login / Register page will be displayed
4. Select the Register button
5. The Registration Form will be displayed
6. Complete the form and select Submit
7. You will be notified via the email address you provided once your registration is verified and approved. This should take two to three days.

**Bicyclists should ride WITH traffic**

**Walkers should walk FACING traffic**

# New law imposes limitations on HOAs

By Kristy Richland

Gov. Ron DeSantis signed HB 1203, which limits HOA fines and requires more transparency from the organizations. The measure, effective July 1, mandates an HOA with more than 100 parcels must post all its rules, covenants, budgets and other pertinent documents such as vendor contracts, insurance policies and audits on its website by Jan. 1, 2025.

It must also provide notice of any scheduled meeting of its members and the agenda for the meeting at least 14 days in advance. (This is not the same as a regular board meeting)

A few key items of the bill will restrict HOAs from:

• Banning residents from parking non-commercial, personal or work vehicles on the property. First responder vehicles are also exempted.

• Creating requirements or rules for the interior of a home that is not visible from the street, a neighbor's property, an adjacent common area or a community golf course.

• Requiring a review and approval of plans for a central air conditioning, refrigeration, heating or ventilation system that can't be seen from the street, a neighbor's property, an adjacent common area or community golf course.

• Preventing homeowners from having a vegetable garden that can't be seen from the street, a neighbor's property, an adjacent common area or community golf course.

• Fining residents for leaving garbage cans at the curb or end of their driveway within 24 hours of a scheduled trash collection.

• Fining residents for leaving up holiday decorations or lights longer than indicated in the HOA's governing documents without prior notice. If the association provides written notice of the violation to the homeowner, the homeowner has one week to take the decorations down.

• Fining residents if they comply with the violation before the hearing has been held.

The new law also provides that HOA managers and directors must satisfy certain educational requirements approved by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, including four to eight hours of yearly continued education courses.

| Whom to Call | | |
|---|---|---|
| **In an Emergency** | **Fire, Medical or Police** | **Dial 911** |
| **Maintenance Emergency of Common Area Master** | **On Call Property Manager** | **904-307-2759** |
| **Maintenance Emergency within Neighborhood** | **Subassociation Property Manager** | **Visit www.sawgrassplayersclub.org** |
| Architectural Modifications (and Tree Removal Requests) | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-273-3033 |
| Alligator Sightings | County-Alligator Hot Line | 1-866-392-4286 |
| Master Common Area Complaints | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-273-3033 |
| Covenant Violations | Subassociation Property Manager | Visit the website |
| Estate Sale and Open House | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-273-3033 |
| Gatehouse | First Coast Security Staff-Main Gate<br>First Coast Security Staff-Solana Gate | 904-543-0043<br>904-285-5488 |
| Guest Authorization | Recorded Number | 904-285-4161<br>904-285-4160 |
| Incident Reports | First Coast Security Services (Gate Access) | 904-370-4875 |
| Lakes/Ponds/Canals | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-273-3033 |
| Landscape (Common Areas) | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-273-3033 |
| Parties (10+ guests) or Youth | First Coast Security Services | 904-543-0043 |
| Patrol Officer | First Coast Security Services | 904-370-4875 |
| Pets off leash/loud barking | Animal Control | 904-209-0746 |
| Power Outage | Beaches Energy | 904-247-6171 |
| Recycling | Republic Services | 904-825-0991 |
| Reserve Recreational Facility | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-273-3033 |
| RFIDs/Decals | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-373-5600 |
| Streetlights | Beaches Energy | 904-247-6171 |
| Suspicious Activity and Trespassing | SJSO | 904-824-8304 |
| Trash and Yard Waste | Republic Services | 904-825-0991 |
| Unwanted Guest List | First Coast Security Services | 904-543-0043 |
| Vehicle Registration | Marsh Landing Management Company | 904-373-5600 |
| Water/Sewer | St. Johns County Utility Department | 904-209-2728<br>904-209-2745 (afterhours) |

# What do our HOA dues pay for?

By Torrey Glass

My niece is shopping for her first home and she questioned me about the difference between owning a property in a neighborhood without a homeowners association (HOA) versus one with an HOA. Basically, her question was "What do HOA dues pay for and who pays into the association?" Prior to my recent retirement I had more than 20 years' experience in real estate development, management and finance so I guess I am qualified to give her an answer.

The earliest homeowners association dates to the early 1900s in Southern California, but the real growth occurred beginning in the late 1950s. Early HOAs served the purpose of delimiting the composition of a neighborhood as it applied to architecture and even who could live there; however, as HOAs evolved one of the primary reasons for their existence was the principle of limited local government. Through the shift to HOAs in costs and responsibility for certain infrastructure expenses like maintenance of roads and sewers along with care and beautification of common areas, property taxes collected by local governments could then be used for other purposes. Clearly it was an idea that local politicians liked!

So, what do our association dues pay for? Well in the case of the Sawgrass Players Club Association, the aforementioned maintenance of roads is one large expense. There are five miles of master owned roads within our gates and these roads through normal usage will need to be repaved and repaired. In addition to roads, the ongoing maintenance and operation of our various waterways and drainage areas costs money. These waterways allow us to regulate water levels during heavy rains as required under our permits. The care and maintenance of our common areas allow all of us to enjoy beautiful plants and flowers and ultimately contribute to our property values. We also operate a park, a children's playground, and a community pool. All these amenities require ongoing maintenance. We also produce a few community events each year. A gatehouse (or in our case two gates) serves to control access allowed in our community along with a 24/7 roving patrol officer. All these tasks are accomplished via independent contractors who are hired and directed by our management company. Lastly, we live in a litigious society, so we need to carry insurance for both our property and our potential liabilities.

Dues are paid by all members of the HOA and in Sawgrass Players Club Association's case, this includes all residents, plus six drainage entities, Vicar's Landing, The Yards, the Global Tour and 31 commercial enterprises. These non-resident entities' "contribution" totals more than $1,000,000 annually.

So, when you pay your next dues bill, keep in mind and appreciate that your dues pay for the management and upkeep of our beautiful community. And a beautiful and thriving community means we will continue to have excellent property values.

# Financial health remains strong, insurance rates will cause dues increase

By Maury Dettmer, Treasurer

Apart from our insurance fees increasing dramatically, this year has seen significant improvements in our financial position. We have increased our certificates of deposit to 18, totaling $1,370,000, all earning more than 5.00 percent. We are averaging around 10 home sales per month, which has generated several hundred thousand dollars of capital improvement funds. Our emergency contingency fund has covered some unplanned expenditures and will be used to cover the dramatic increases to our insurance costs. We also have recently extended our line of credit for another year, which provides a pre-approved loan of $400,000 at a nominal cost in the case of major unexpected damages.

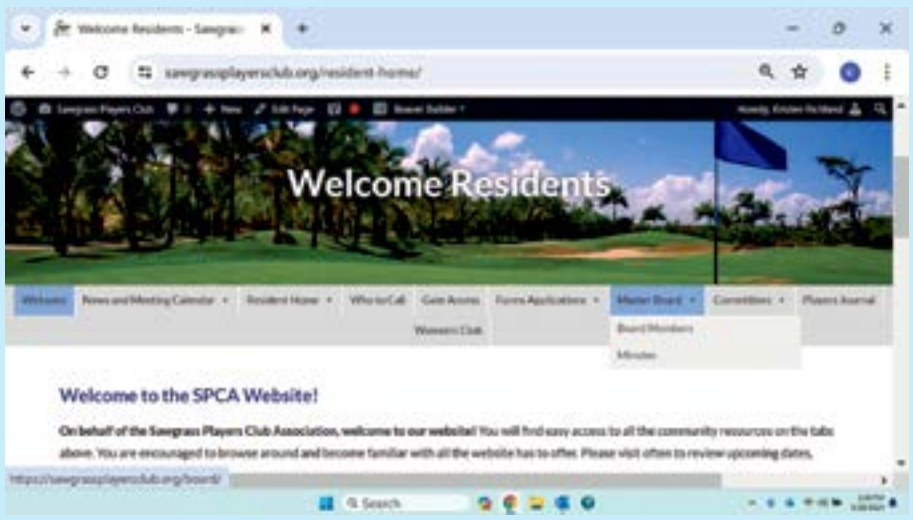
We recently received our annual CPA report which, upon in-depth analysis, fully agreed that we followed generally accepted accounting principles. Both our commercial and residential accounts receivable remains workable and under control and our Reserve Studies are current and adequately funded. Our onsite commercial enterprises — TPC, The Yards, and Vicar's Landing — all continue to pay annual dues for use of our stormwater system and roadways, which helps keep our annual dues lower than other surrounding neighborhoods.

Our primary financial quagmire is the cost of insurance, which has stormed higher due to the changing insurance climate in Florida, and the difficulty of finding companies willing to offer us policies due to the sheer size of our community. These fees have placed us in a position that we may have to totally wipe out our contingency account at the end of this year. While we are trying to avoid/minimize this possibility, the homeowners' assessments will need to increase in 2025 to fund new insurance rates. Keep in mind that your board has a desire to maintain our facilities in usable and workable shape not only in the short run, but in the foreseeable future. Our Reserve Study planning covers the next 30 years of improvements or replacements of all assets on a timely basis when needed to maintain the quality of our community and lifestyle.

# Helpful tips to navigate the website

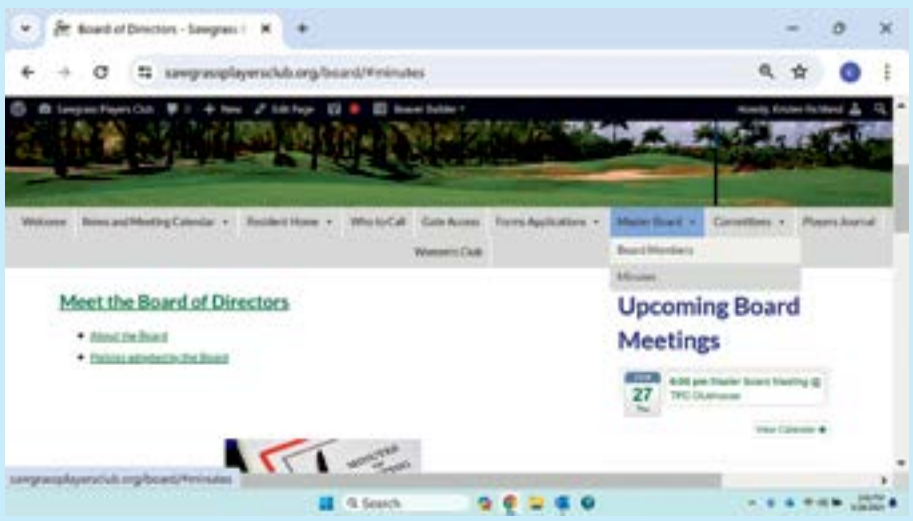
By Kristy Richland

If you have not visited the Players Club website, please be sure to do so. The Players Club website is easy to use and allows you to view upcoming meeting agendas as well as past prior minutes, financials, reserve studies and budgets. Below is an example of how to view board meeting information.




Select “Resident Home Page”

Then click on “Master Board” tab




From “Master Board” tab, select the “Minutes” option

Look on the right side of the page and you will see the meeting for June 27. If you click on the meeting link, you will see the agenda and more details.

# What you need to know: Gate visitor authorization

By Pat McInerney

Gatehouse staff cannot grant entry to visitors without prior authorization by a resident. All visitors must present their driver’s license to gate officers for scanning before gate entry.

Please remember that everyone who comes to your address must be on your visitor list or they may be turned away at the gate. The exceptions to this are the US Mail, UPS, FedEx and Amazon, as well as Beaches Energy Services, AT&T, Comcast, St. Johns County Utilities, and first responders.

There are two ways to admit your guests or vendors.

1. Automated Telephone System. The automated telephone system is (904) 285-4161 or (904) 285-4160.

After dialing the above number, you will hear a greeting; listen closely and follow the prompts. You will be prompted with the following choices:

For a one-day pass, press 1 (Note: a one-day pass is only valid for the day the phone authorization is placed.)

For a three-day pass, press 2.

For a seven-day pass, press 3.

For a 30-day pass, press 4.

After making your selection you will be prompted to say the name of your guest or vendor. After you’ve stated the name, you may either hang up or you will be prompted to authorize another guest or vendor. You must authorize each guest individually; you can’t authorize multiple guests at one time. Follow the prompts each time you include a new guest or vendor.

2. Authorization Via the Web. You can manage your guest list directly from the following site and authorize guests or vendors for any length of time including making them permanent.

Direct link for Gatehouse Web: https://tpc.gatehouseportal.com

You may also access the gate house portal from the Sawgrass Players Club website (sawgrassplayersclub.org). (Note: your Sawgrass Players club website username and password will be different from the Gate Access username and password.

From the Sawgrass Players Club Home Page, you will find the Welcome Residents page with a menu across the page. Click on the Gate Access box and you will come to a page with a blue box “Gate Access Software Procedures” follow these instructions to set up and\ manage your account and authorized visitor’s list.

If you have any questions, need your username, password or PIN for the gate house portal, contact the Controlled Access Administrator, Pat McInerney, at pmcinerney@marshlanding.org or via phone: (904) 373-5600.

## Sawgrass Players Club Association Board of Directors 2024 – 2025

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Vice President: Teri Mathes .....minshet@msn.com
Treasurer: Maury Dettmer..... mldett@juno.com
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Director: Gerry Klingman ..... gjk55@aol.com
Director: Derek Sprague.....DerekSprague@pgatourtpc.com
Interim Dir: TJ Welsh .....tjwelsh@att.net

# Top 4 Safety Reminders for Everyone

By Derek Sprague and Adam Guillette

As community residents, we are fortunate to enjoy the benefit of private roadways and a safe neighborhood with an overall low incident rate. We ask you to take a moment to please review these helpful reminders to help keep our entire community safer:

1. Bikes. Please remember that Players Club rules require that any bike going more than 15 mph must stay off sidewalks. Also, even though our roads are private, Florida law requires bicyclists to obey stop signs and use hand signals; additionally, helmets are required for persons younger than 16 years of age.

2. Pedestrians. We are lucky to have five miles of sidewalks. Whether you are enjoying a leisurely stroll or training for a marathon, please be aware of your surroundings, wear reflective clothing at dawn/dusk, and keep your eyes out for any potential hazards.

3. Golf Cart Owner Operations. With three great golf courses in the community, many of us own a golf cart or LSV. Here are the key Players Club rules to know. 1) Drivers must have a valid driver's license. 2) Passengers must be seated. 3) Carts are not for use on sidewalks. 4) Carts must be equipped with brakes, and in good working condition. 5) Between sunset and sunrise, carts must have headlights and taillights on.

4. Respect for Your Neighbors and Property. Did you know that although the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office (SJSO) cannot write traffic tickets within Players Club, they can and do respond to and enforce criminal activity such as trespassing on private property, vandalism and DUIs. For emergencies call 911. For non-emergencies call SJSO at (904) 824-8304. SJSO also has a program called Connect St Johns to connect your security cameras to their system. You can visit https://connectstjohns.org for details.

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# OMW: Jacking systems and canal cleaning

By Marc Stearns, OMW Committee member

The Operations, Maintenance, and Waterways (OMW) Committee has been busy this spring preparing our stormwater system components for the new hurricane season we are now entering. New battery chargers were installed in both pump stations. Drive belts for the pumps were replaced. All fuel was tested and fuel and oil filters changed by our diesel engine manufacturer's representative technician.

The Seven Mile Drive pump station house was given a new "skin" that included additional ventilation holes for additional cooling fans. The old house skin had dry rot and was beginning to deteriorate significantly. The new house for the pump station is a "beauty" and should give us many years of service. Also, the additional cooling vents have assisted in lowering the temperature in the pump stations, so our engines do not overheat.

When our water pump drive motors are changed from electric motor to diesel engine, the diesel engines must be "jacked" into place to properly tension the pump drive belt. Through the years the jacking systems have been a bit of a headache, in that they only had a single jack to adjust the engine position. This has caused alignment issues with the belt drives. Recently, the jacking systems were modified to include two jacks on each system, which allows for much more accurate positioning of each diesel engine with respect to the pump. This will add to belt life and help minimize belt failure during a storm event.

We have had our canal cleaning contractor do a significant amount of additional cleaning of our stormwater conveyance system. Approximately 7,800 feet of canal was cleaned to restore original channel depths. The muck and vegetation debris is typically side cast to the channel edge, shaped, and may have a geotextile material put on it to stabilize it and then may be seeded or sodded, depending on the location. This spring's work was done primarily in the Oakbridge area. Our operations team identifies problems in canals (obstructions, shallow areas, etc.) and then prioritizes the canals with the most problems to be cleaned first. We cleaned several thousand feet of canal last year and just continued this process this year under our new budget. We plan to continue this cleaning process each year and will do the full amount our budget allows. The goal is to have our storm water flow as efficiently as possible to our pump stations.

A strong "Thank You" to committee member, Paul Rushton, for again updating the pump station operations manual. Paul's significant technical expertise has been very important in solving problems at the pump stations as they come up; and yes, they do come up.

There is one more project in the pipeline that will soon be started. Our selected contractor has been delayed in getting started. We have located a partial plug in one of our important drainage culverts running from the pond at the end of the old 11th fairway in Oak Bridge all the way to the canal that drains into the canal that feeds directly into Rio Dam. The problem with the culvert is caused by root intrusion into the concrete pipe joint that partially blocks water flow through the culvert. We will be removing the root obstruction, replacing the pipe sections as necessary, and installing at least two new storm water collection boxes to solve some "standing water" issues that have developed along the route of the culvert.

Photos courtesy Marc Stearns

New "skin" on the Seven Mile Drive pump station.

Thousands of feet of canals have been cleaned

# Sawgrass Players Club storm season preparation in progress

By Paul Rushton

Can you believe it's been seven years since our last bad one — Irma on Sept. 8, 2017. A few scares since then but no big hurricanes. A few that were threatening enough to draw down the system in advance, but that turned out to be just precautionary and the storm veered away. The Players Club stormwater system is designed and permitted to withstand a 25-year 24-hour storm (rainfall) event. We are fortunate to live in an area of Florida where the coastline is concave and not too many storms come in here. Nevertheless, we must be prepared. All of our equipment is in good working order as we entered this hurricane season.

The Operations, Maintenance and Waterway (OMW) Committee continues its efforts to provide the greatest security possible for protection of our communities from the potential devastating effects of these storms. The OMW has continued following the long-range capital improvement plan that we outlined several years ago. In 2023, we replaced the third of four diesel engines, this one going into the Seven Mile Drive station. This is a significant improvement in our ability to pump continuously during a storm. This upcoming year, we are planning to purchase the last of the four replacement diesel engines. There's been plenty of smaller changes and improvements too.

Also, this year we put a new "skin" on the Seven Mile Drive station. The old siding had rotted in several places and was in major need of replacement. Next year we will do the same for the other station. Go by and take a look; it looks great! Take the gravel driveway off the right side of Valley 17 green and you'll find the station. If anybody would like to visit a pump station to see how we've been spending your money, just contact me.

The next thing we are looking at is fire suppression for the pump stations. There are a lot of electrical systems in the pump stations, a 1,000 or 2,000 gallon diesel fuel tank, fans, motors and engines, so it makes a lot of sense to protect our assets from fire. We have insurance, but all the same, if one of these stations is subject to a fire, we could be out of commission for a long time while the station is restored to service. This could have major consequences so I hope you would agree with the new fire protection project.

# Summer pond and waterway update

By Joe Lawton, Clear Waters

Summer is upon us; the warm weather and high humidity have been with us for several weeks now. Daylight hours have peaked and are slowly getting shorter.

At the same time, we have experienced extremely dry conditions with little or no rainfall that have the water levels receding and water temperatures rising. This has caused planktonic and filamentous algae to bloom in many of the ponds and waterways. Clear Waters technicians have been carefully treating these blooms. When large areas of algae are present the dissolved oxygen levels tend to be low so we must be careful and treat incrementally to hopefully avoid any problems with fish kills.

Vallisneria has been aggressively growing in the ponds where it is present. Clear Waters technicians have applied two rounds of treatment in the last few weeks and it is starting to show good signs. This will continue throughout the year. The plants are actively growing and trying to recover so the time is right to keep the pressure on. We will continue to manage the duckweed and water fern throughout the growing season. The plan is to keep it under control to avoid large concentrations from forming.

The Midge flies have not been widespread yet. Clear Waters will continue to apply Bio Zyme in the known areas where we are not applying algicides to help break down the muck layer that the larvae reside in. We cannot eradicate them; however, we can help cut down on the population that will be with us over the next few months.

Clear Waters will be continuing with remedial treatments on the waterways that have the highest concentrations of algae. Along with necessary treatments we will be utilizing products that sequester excess nutrient from the water column.

As part of our balanced lake management program, we have stocked 430 grass carp this year in the waterways with the highest concentrations of undesirable vegetation. Every year or two it is important to stock a younger generation of fish that will consume more than their older counterparts. Very much like humans, their metabolism slows down as they age so they are not as active and don't eat as much.

As always please be vigilant in the management of your lawn and landscapers by asking them to direct their chutes away from the water to keep the clippings from entering the waterway. Remember, excess clippings and other organic debris add nutrient to the water column as they break down and sink to the bottom. Make sure fertilizers and pesticides are kept back from the shoreline so it does not enter the water. Any clippings or debris on driveways, sidewalks and streets should be blown onto the lawn or swept up and discarded with landscape pick up. The common goal is when the water is discharged into the salt marsh and Intracoastal Waterway, it is as clean as possible.

# Summer landscaping tips

By Trey Lineberger, Precision Turf

The summertime heat can be a stressful time for your landscape. Be sure to keep an eye on your lawn and plants. If we're not getting much rain, be sure to supplement with extra irrigation. If we're getting lots of rain, be sure to back down your irrigation system, so you don't overwater creating fungus and health issues for your plants.

Raising your mower blades to four inches will help your lawn stay full and lush and protect itself from the summer heat.

Now is a good time for you to take a look above you for any dead trees or dead tree limbs that should be removed before hurricane season.

Hope everyone has a great summer!

What would you like to read about in Players Journal? Let us know!

krichland@marshlanding.org

# Sawgrass Players Club Women's Association: Always in action

By Marcy Fiacco

Two new activities were introduced in June to bring the total number of activity groups in the Sawgrass Players Club Women's Association (SPCWA) to 30. The Women of Action group is a breakfast speaker series where local charity or community groups speak to our interested SPCWA members about volunteer opportunities. Julia DeSantis is the coordinator of the group. The Epicurean Club will be a themed weekend dinner event for interested SPCWA members and a guest. Both of these new SPCWA groups plan to meet quarterly.

The inaugural Women of Action group gathered on June 5 to hear an inspiring presentation over coffee and pastries. The first guest speaker was Elizabeth Magnano of Jax THRIVE, a student-led group that provides a welcoming resource to refugee students in the area. Tutoring, mentoring, life skills and friendship are what the group provides to youth that have been through tremendous hardship at home, to arrive in a country where they need much help to succeed. Assistance with language, cultural, social and transportation challenges are often needed. The next Women of Action gathering will be in the fall. If you are a member of SPCWA, you may email Julia DeSantis to get on the email list or to nominate another local charity group as a guest speaker.

The Epicurean Club hosted by Elizabeth Sides and Tracy Sobiecki was a success with 32 members and guests attending on June 15. It featured a Backyard Picnic theme with hamburgers and hot dogs with all the fixings. SPCWA participants will take turns hosting and can choose their theme and menu for these fun weekend gatherings.

Membership for SPCWA is available throughout the year, with membership forms and credit card payment available on the website: www.spcwa.org. Inquiries by email can be sent to info@SPCWA.org. All women in Sawgrass Players Club are welcome to join, whether you own or rent a home. Our membership includes women of all ages and is only $30 a year. Members receive a monthly newsletter and a calendar with more than 30 fun activities. Although this is a club for women, spouses or guests are welcome at many events.

**Photos courtesy Sawgrass Players Club Women's Association**

SPCWA June Bunco group.

SPCWA Book Club

SPCWA members.

# A Conversation with ...

# Kristy Richland, Senior Property Manager, Marsh Landing Management

By Torrey Glass

**Hometown:** Northern Virginia — Fairfax County

**Family:** Husband Tripp and one son

Graduate of Virginia Tech; Moved to Jacksonville in 2004

**Torrey:** How did you get into property management?

**Kristy:** I entered college with the goal of becoming a middle school theater teacher. By the beginning of my junior year, I realized that teaching was not going to be part of my future. I changed my degree to interdisciplinary studies which, given the courses I had already taken, would allow me to graduate on time. By my senior year I began making contacts as I thought about my future. Property Management "fell in my lap" and I began my career managing college apartments. A company transfer brought me to Jacksonville in 2004 managing multi-family housing. In 2008 I moved over to homeowners association property management and never looked back.

**Torrey:** What do you like about your job?

**Kristy:** I love working with board and committee members. Committee members donate their time and in return they get a chance to really understand all the statutes that govern the HOA and how the homeowners association works. Through our continuous communication we're able to form relationships as we work together for the betterment of our community.

**Torrey:** What does your "average" workday look like?

**Kristy:** I try to arrive an hour before the office opens to get ahead. Most days I am in at least one meeting for about two hours. I spend an additional two hours on key action items and then the rest of the day I usually respond to email and service calls. I used to type much slower, but in this environment, you learn to be fast!

**Torrey:** What's the most challenging part of your job?

**Kristy:** Staying on task while responding to unforeseen issues that arise at the same time is always challenging. Effectively communicating with so many residents is an ongoing challenge that all managers face. And of course, always remembering not to take things personally. That can sometimes be easier said than done.

**Torrey:** You've managed many properties during your career. What makes SPCA different from those other properties?

**Kristy:** SPCA is unique because there is one master association and 16 sub- associations (neighborhoods) each with their own set of rules. The master board and its committees act globally and in accordance with their covenants and regulations for the benefit of the entire SPCA community. The neighborhoods focus on their covenants and priorities so as to best serve their community. One of the most unique things about SPCA is that while the homeowners pay dues, dues are also paid by non-homeowner entities

**Conversation** cont. on pg. 14

## Enjoy our amenities responsibly!

By Kristy Richland

Summer is here and we hope many of you are enjoying Players Pool and Park. Please help keep our amenities great by abiding by the following guidelines:

• Be responsible: Please pick up your trash and belongings when you leave and remember glass containers are not permissible at the pool or park.

• Respect amenity hours and parking: The pool and park open at 8 a.m. and close at dusk.

• Monitor your children: An adult must be with anyone under the age of 12 when using the pool. Also, please make sure your kids know they cannot climb on shade sails.

• Know the rules for pets: Your furry four-legged friends are welcome to walk on a leash with you at the park, but they cannot be in the pool area or tot lot. Also, remember if they want to run off a leash you will need to take them to a neighboring dog park as it is against both St. Johns County and Sawgrass Players Club rules to do so.

### Important information regarding neighborhood publications

While we welcome news regarding our wonderful Sawgrass Players Club community, the new monthly magazine, Stroll Sawgrass, is not a Sawgrass Players Club publication.

The quarterly Players Journal is the official newspaper of the Sawgrass Players Club Homeowners Association and has a wide variety of pertinent articles, updates, photos of events and neighborhood information. Our website, sawgrassplayersclub.org has current information such as news, meetings, policies, forms, neighborhood information and much more. Once signed up, you will receive email blasts that relay important and timely information.

## Players Park parking lot expansion planned

By Tripp Richland

"There's nowhere to park!"

That's a common complaint from Sawgrass residents when attempting to visit Players Park.

The Operations Maintenance and Waterways (OMW) Committee in conjunction with the Recreation Committee were tasked by the Master Board to address this recurring problem. Between Recreation Committee events, pavilion rentals, and individual sports practices, Players Park is a popular place. Our goal is to find a safe way to improve parking without restricting access.

Currently, conceptual plans are being re-drafted by the engineer of record, Almond Engineering. Our goal is to see if there may be an option to enhance our existing community assets. When the final concepts are available, they will be shared with the residents and then both timing and funding will be discussed for future long-range consideration.

It's also important to understand that these proposals are limited to the parking lot. Players Park is not building an amphitheater, nor is it becoming a "regional sports hub." The engineer used that phrase when referring to how popular the park is amongst our residents and it created a small bit of confusion.

Additionally, there have been questions about how the park will look with the additional parking. Naturally, considerations will be taken to ensure the aesthetics and functionality of Players Park aren't diminished. There's no sense in adding spots if we make the place less desirable!

If you have any questions about the expansion, please contact Marsh Landing Management Company.

## Reminder from St Johns County: New trash vendor

On Dec. 19, 2023, during the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting, FCC Environmental Services Florida, LLC was identified as the top-ranked firm, and a contract for residential solid waste collection including household garbage, recycling, and yard waste collection services was approved.

The new contract begins Aug. 1, 2024. There will be no increase in customer fees for the first year of service. All current service levels will remain in place, which include weekly curbside collection of household garbage, yard waste, recycling, and bulk waste as well as scheduled services like appliance pick-up requested by customers.

Contact St Johns County Solid Waste Division for questions.

Email: solidwaste@sjcfl.us

Phone:(904) 827-6980

2750 Industry Center Road

St. Augustine, FL 32084

**Photo courtesy St. Johns County**

Beginning Aug. 1, FCC Environmental Services Florida will collect household garbage, recycling, and yard waste.

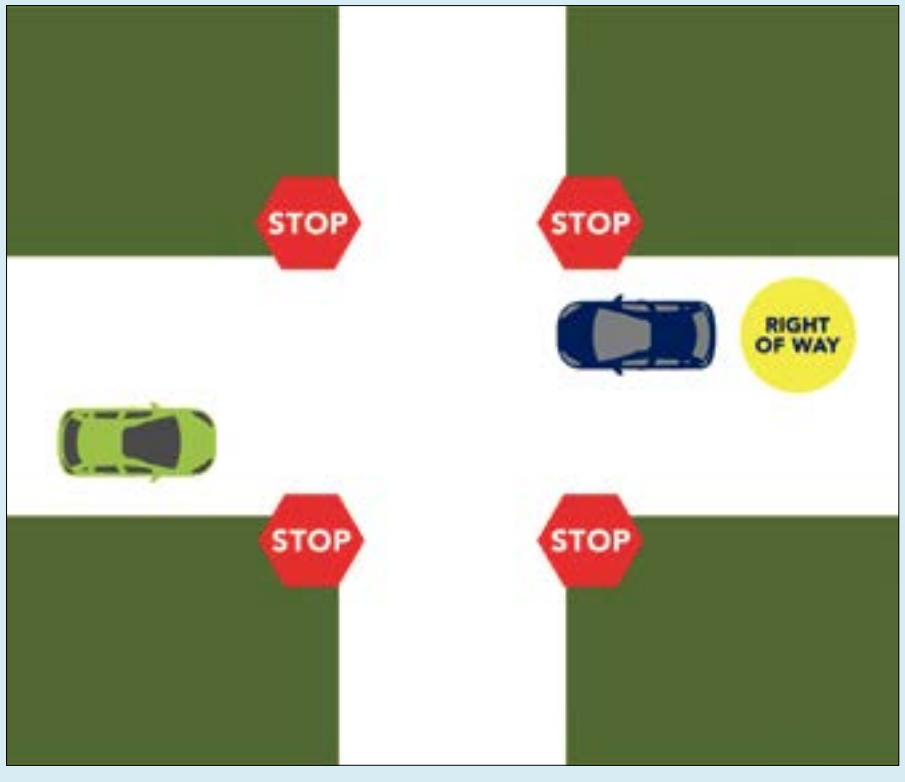
## Reminder for 4-way stop signs

Yield the right-of-way to all other traffic and pedestrians at stop signs.

Move forward only when the road is clear

At a four-way stop intersection, the driver of the first vehicle to stop at the intersection shall be the first to proceed.

If two or more vehicles reach the four-way stop intersection at the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left shall yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right.



# Recreation Committee Corner

## Spring Fling = Super Fun!

By Debbie McWade

The weather could not have been more perfect on Sunday, April 14 as the Recreation Committee hosted its Spring Fling. By our count at least 275 folks attended this annual event.

The Petting Zoo, once again, was a huge hit. Parents and kids alike were greeted by Coco the miniature horse, who did enjoy the occasional brushing. Maybelline or Mabel the Zebu cow enjoyed all of the attention. Chewy the pot bellied pig appeared unimpressed, but did enjoy the pets. The bunnies, the goats, the sheep and lambs, guinea pigs, chickens, baby chicks and ducks all received lots of love from everyone.

Twist of Fun proved as popular as ever — Justin and Nikko made amazing creations with their balloon artistry. The Bubble Truck, while a little late in arriving, did not dampen the excitement. Lots and lots of bubbles!

The food trucks, What's the Catch and Slider Rider, provided snacks and meals. Repicci's Italian Ice provided cool treats all afternoon.

And of course, we had our always challenging and fun field games all afternoon. Kids gathered around Coach Doug and Coach Eddie for their instructions that kept the games moving. The contests were Limbo, Hula Hoop, Sack Races and Water Balloon Toss. All winners received a gift card to Millie's Homemade Ice Cream.

All of this was to the great music and announcements from our DJ, Phil Hart.

Photos courtesy Sawgrass Players Club Association

# Recreation Committee Corner

## Upcoming Recreation Committee Events

Mark your calendars so you don't miss these future events!

Food Truck Tuesday: Players Pool at The Coves. We've had such a great response to this event that we are continuing through the summer and the rest of the year: July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5 and Dec. 3. Take a break from the kitchen (or the grill) and come join us; choose from three food trucks offering delicious menus and a sweet treat truck too!

Fall Music Night: Players Park, Friday, Oct. 25 with a rain date of Friday, Nov. 1. Back by popular demand, Sawgrass Players Club's own — The ConMen will be performing!

Flick in the Field: Players Park, Saturday, Nov. 9 with a rain date of Saturday, Nov. 16. We're working on choosing a great movie for this family event.

Stay tuned for further communications regarding these events. Make sure you are signed up on the Sawgrass Players Club website (sawgrassplayersclub.org). We'll be sending out email blasts to keep you informed!

## Tot Lot refresh coming soon!

By Debbie McWade

The Recreation Committee is very excited about the planned refresh of our Tot Lot at Players Park.

There will be a new play piece for two- to five-year-olds with two slides and more along with a new play piece for children aged five to 12, which includes monkey bars and three slides. Both will continue to have a shade sail. The two new play pieces will remain in their existing spaces.

A new six-seat swing set which includes two infant seats, complete with a shade sail, will be installed in the same area as the existing swing set.

We're adding a new play piece, the atom spinner. The frog, whale, and alligator will be staying along with the small picnic pavilion. Additional mulch will be added. We've received a ship date of July 21, so we are hopeful that work could begin in August.

Graphic courtesy Irene Lombardo

Visit us online!
www.sawgrassplayersclub.org

## Spring Music Nights showcased talented bands

By Debbie McWade

Unfortunately, both of our Music Nights had to be rescheduled due to the lack of cooperation from Mother Nature.

Friday, April 5 with The Shades of Grey Band. It was a beautiful evening. While attendance was down a bit, the crowd listened to classic sounds from the '50s through the '70s, including rock, Motown, doo-wop, R & B, with a little funky Chicago blues thrown in for good measure. By the end of the night, we did have some folks dancing to the tunes.

Saturday, May 11 with Sidewalk 65. Another beautiful evening and worth the wait. As advertised, Sidewalk 65 is a good time rock and roll party band. We were treated to classic rock, Motown, R & B, funk and more. Attendance was down a bit; too bad, because a great opportunity to hear three really great musicians was missed.

For our Fall Music Night, see the article regarding the Rec Committee's upcoming events.

Photos courtesy Sawgrass Players Club Association

# Neighborhood News

### Bridgewater Island holds annual meeting and social

Bridgewater Island held its annual meeting and social on Sunday, May 5 in the cul-de-sac in Bridgewater. Forty people attended, representing 21 homes. A welcome was extended to all and then a brief business meeting was held, which included the approval of the following board members:

President: Debbie McWade

Vice President and Treasurer: John Levchuk

Secretary: Cheryl McCann

Directors: Fran Davey and Michael Miller

John Levchuk presented a treasurer's report stating Bridgewater is in good financial shape and extended a thank you to all for paying their assessments on time. New residents were introduced and welcomed.

Bridgewater business from the past year was reviewed. The community, especially those along the western side of Bridgewater were very pleased when the Operations, Maintenance, and Waterways (OMW) Committee saw that the canal between Bridgewater and Water Oak was an immediate problem because of it being a major artery for water flow. Work began in September by Future Horizons and the canal was cleared to OMW's desire of eight feet wide and two feet deep. Residents are happy to see a good water flow again.

Community updates were discussed such as the annoying and sometimes uncontrolled barking dogs from Sawgrass Pet Resort, the new/additional entrance and exit for Vicar's Landing, new garbage contract and a new directory which will be forthcoming along with other topics. Friendly reminders were offered regarding ARB/ACC rules, hurricane preparedness, keeping street gutters clear of debris, the Master Association Annual meeting, and Sawgrass Players Club website, along with a reminder of the community speed limit which is 15 mph.

With the meeting's adjournment, everyone enjoyed hamburgers and hot dogs and assorted beverages provided by the Bridgewater HOA as well as a delicious array of foods and desserts provided by residents. A special thank you to Fran Davey for allowing us to use her driveway and a very special thanks to our grill master, Jeff Fleming.

**Photo courtesy Debbie McWade**

Bridgewater Island held its annual meeting and social on Sunday, May 5.

Afterwards, all were invited to come listen to a group of neighborhood guys here in Bridgewater that have created a band with a pretty darn good sound!

### Who turned 60?

On April 30 at noon at the A1A Gatehouse conference room, several people gathered to surprise our head of First Coast Security, Ralph Sylvester, with a birthday celebration of someone turning 60 years young!

Ashley Stubbs, party planner extraordinaire set the whole event up — from decorations, delicious food and drinks to a beautiful birthday cake. Ralph was very surprised!

Ralph was born and raised in Mobile, Alabama and after high school left to join the Navy. He retired after 21 years of service as a Chief Petty Officer. Ralph has a wonderful and supportive family: wife Eula, daughters Latojahshay, Morquesia, Darneshia and sons Chris and Rakeem (who is currently serving in the Navy). Also, he has several grandchildren who keep him on his toes!

**Photo courtesy Debbie McWade**

Head of First Coast Security, Ralph Sylvester, was celebrated on his 60th birthday.

In 2011, Ralph became head of First Coast Security in Sawgrass Players Club. He's been invaluable in heading up a fantastic team.

After 14 years, Ralph will be leaving us and head to corporate to apply all of his knowledge and expertise on a bigger stage. He will return from time to time, especially for special events such as THE PLAYERS. He is currently training his replacement, Ty Galloway, and we look forward to working with him.

Everyone would like to thank you, Ralph, for your military service and for your dedication, hard work and wonderful attitude in taking such good care of the residents (and visitors) in Sawgrass Players Club. We wish you continued success!

**Conversation** cont. from pg. 10

including Vicar's Landing, six drainage entities, TPC, and 31 commercial members including The Yards, Global Tour. There is a formula to determine the dues for each of these entities, which in aggregate totals more than $1,000,000 in dues to SPCA. If these entities weren't part of our community, our homeowner dues would be significantly higher.

**Torrey:** This has been an especially challenging year with inflation impacting the cost of everything including labor. Added to that is the catastrophic increase in insurance costs. How will these increases impact next year and the next three years?

**Kristy:** Each year we set the association budget to net zero. In other words, our budget will cover our expenses and contracts and allow us to build reserves for the ongoing repair/renewal of our infrastructure. In addition, we accrue funds to be available in case of catastrophe. Our contracts include those for both of our gatehouse staffs and 24/7 rover, the landscaping of all our common areas, management services and waterways treatment. In fact, these contracts are the largest component of our budget at 43 percent of total expenses. As costs continue to rise these contracts, which come up for renewal on an annual basis, will also increase. The next largest component of our budget is reserve funding which amounts to 23 percent of the total budget. The amount of these reserves are determined through studies conducted by an independent engineering firm (Reserve Advisors). Reserve Advisors reviews all of our existing infrastructure (think roads, playground equipment, pools, pumpstations and gatehouses) and determines the amount of useful life left before these assets need to be replaced. This review is updated annually. Each year the Finance Committee recommends an amount to be placed in reserve based on this information.

**Torrey:** What about insurance? I know my car and homeowners have gone up!

**Kristy:** As you mentioned, insurance rates have dramatically increased. In 2024 as part of our budget due diligence we shopped 20 insurance companies through two insurance brokerages. This thorough process still ended up with SPCA insurance increasing by $300,000! We were fortunate that the Finance Committee had established an emergency contingency account, which was utilized in lieu of a mid-year budget amendment. While that took care of this year our residents should expect dues increases to pay for these increased costs along with replenishment of the emergency contingency fund.

**Torrey:** Well, clearly, you're a very busy person. So, if you could add one more day to a week, what would you do with it?

**Kristy:** I would like to tell you that I would take the one full day to relax, but there is a good chance I would probably end up doing more work. I can always find something to do and am terrible at sitting still!

**Torrey:** So, when you do "sit still" what do you like to do in your free time?

**Kristy:** I love reading, being on the water, spending time with friends, traveling and dining out. But the two strange things I also love to do are cleaning and mowing the yard. Oh, and I love organizing! My canned goods are alphabetized and arranged by expiration date.

# Hurricane Season Preparedness: What you need to know

Hurricane season is officially underway and will run through the end of November. Please register on the Sawgrass Players Club website at www.sawgrassplayersclub.org and visit the St. Johns County Emergency Management Website at www.sjcemergencymanagement.com/ to sign up for Alert St Johns. Additionally, please review the following information:

Waterways: The ponds within the community were designed and permitted for 25-year rainfall events. Some rainwater is absorbed by the ground, while excess collects in our pond system and must be pumped out. There are two pump stations to remove the rainwater into the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). Every other year a licensed engineer certifies the stormwater system, annually independent contractors inspect the pump stations, and monthly Marsh Landing Management Company (MLMC) runs the equipment for functionality. The resident volunteers of the Operations, Maintenance and Waterways (OMW) Committee work with vendors to maintain flow to the pump stations and ensure equipment reliability. In anticipation of a storm's arrival, further preparations occur, including filling fuel tanks and the drawdown of certain waterways when possible. Although the system has managed previous storm events, there is always a flooding risk when living on a barrier island, and your finished floor elevation is the best protection during intense rainfall events or storm surge.

Gate Houses: First Coast Security (FCS) personnel are contracted by the board for gate access. Staff remains on site until approximately four to six hours before bridge closure. The gatehouse entry and exit arms are placed in the upright position when FCS personnel leave. First Coast Security personnel will return to the community once it has been deemed safe to do so by authorities.

Property Management: Marsh Landing Management Company serves as primary liaison to all vendors and staff. They work with the website provider to send email notifications and when MLMC offices close due to an evacuation order, they remain in communication with key contacts.

Bridge Closures and Traffic: The decision to close bridges has a different criterion than the decision to order a mandatory evacuation. Typically, once a bridge closes, it does not reopen for the duration of the storm. The Florida Transportation Department uses the Florida 511 Traveler Information System; visit the Florida 511 website at FL511.com for details.

Evacuation and Routes: Sawgrass Players Club is in Evacuation Zone A. An evacuation allows time to leave the designated area safely and to allow for traffic congestion before the conditions deteriorate. Should you choose to stay when an evacuation order is announced, please remember electric, sewer, water and other emergency services could be disrupted. You stay at your own risk.

Sandbag Operations: When a hurricane is imminent, St. Johns County provides free sandbags at various locations. Visit www.sjcemergencymanagement.com for details.

Shelters: If possible, evacuate to the home of a friend or family member outside of the evacuation area. Shelters are an option if you have nowhere else to go. Plan to bring a shelter supply kit with water and other essential items. Check St. Johns County Emergency shelter information at sjcemergencymanagement.com/shetinfo.html or call (904) 824-5550.

Electric/Beaches Energy Services: Beaches Energy Services provides power to our area. Contact the 24-hour emergency line at (904) 247-6171 or visit https://beachesenergy.com/about-us/alerts to sign up for Code Red Alerts.

Re-entry: Visit www.sjcemergencymanagement.com before planning your return and remember that getting back home is dependent on the status of the bridges.

Emergency Storm Debris Collection: St. Johns County oversees all pick up. To contact the County Solid Waste Division for storm debris call (904) 827-6980 and to contact Republic Services for normal refuse services call (904) 825-0991. Please note the county requests you:

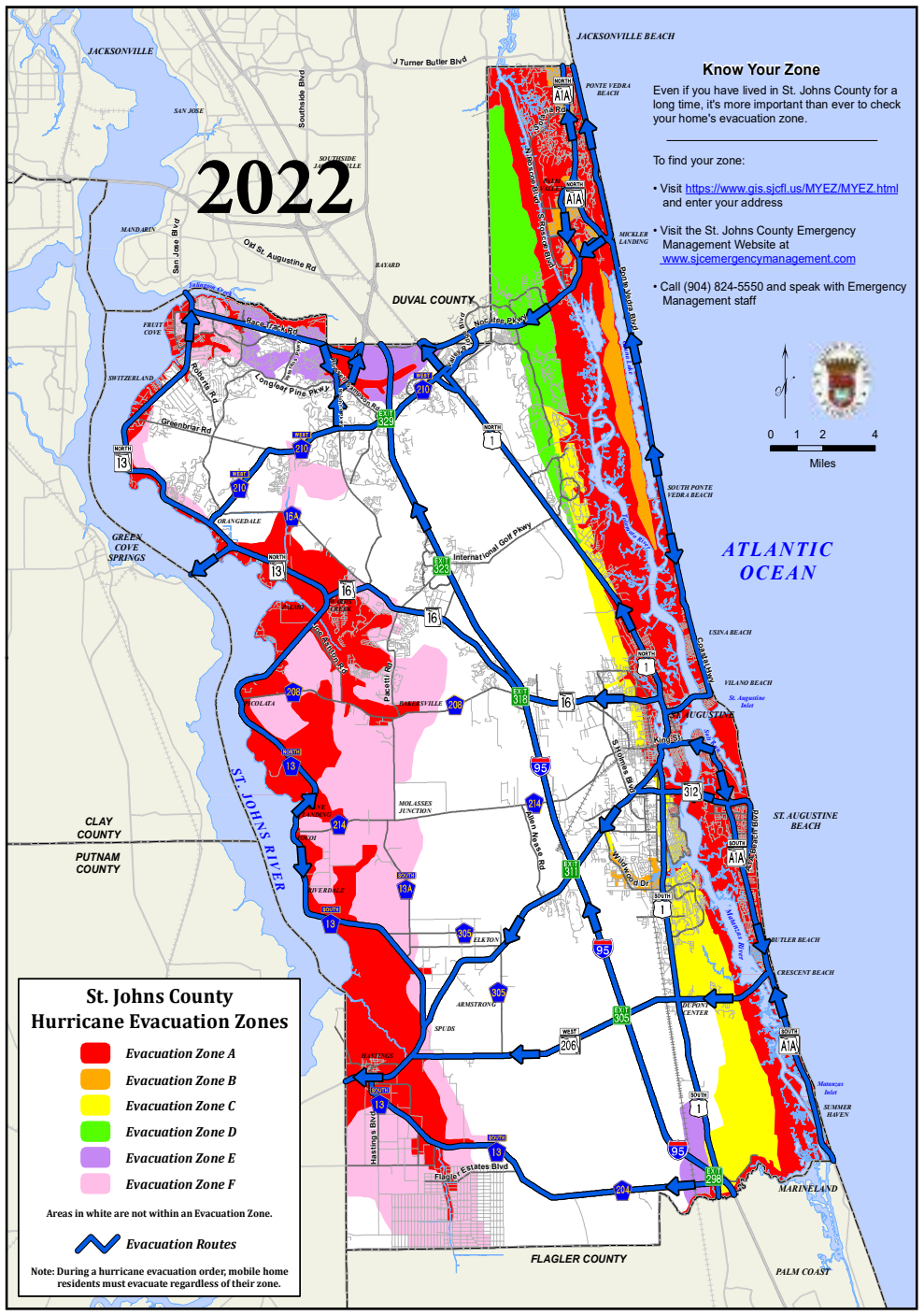
- Pile storm-related debris un-bagged at the curb. (No leaves or small items)
- Place storm debris at least three feet from utility boxes, mailboxes, poles, fire hydrants and other obstacles.
- Normal household garbage, recycling, and bagged debris of any kind will not be picked up with storm debris. Please continue to follow your normal garbage removal schedule.

Debris can pile up and remain uncollected for weeks until the county or FEMA has made it to our communities. Some subassociations may decide to hire contractors to remove storm debris from their neighborhood. If so, the subassociation will communicate this information to its residents.

**Alert St.Johns**
**Emergency Notification System**

**Receive alerts about emergencies by signing up for the St. Johns County Emergency Notification System, Alert St. Johns. You will be notified via phone, email or text (you choose) about critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, water advisories, missing persons, evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods and incidents that may threaten public safety.**

**Visit www.sjso.org and select Resources then Alert St. Johns to sign up.**



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