



Silverlakes News

Residents raise a stink about dog droppings

From the HOA President:

In keeping with the Silverlakes-Gateway HOA Board of Directors' commitment to open and honest communication with the membership, I offer the following comments on the Jan. 20 board meeting.

Homeowners Forum:

- this month's meeting. Failure to clean up after your dog is a violation of not only our documents, but of Lee County statutes. I've heard some pet-owners say they do not like to pick up feces due to the odor. Some people in Silverlakes are not picking up their dog droppings, prompting several complaints at Others cannot bend over very well to do so. I have seen a product — and have made one for my own use — that catches the droppings BEFORE they touch anyone's grass. This is especially useful if the droppings are too soft to affect a clean removal. It cost me less than 10 bucks to make and is available to anyone who wants it. Just let me know if you're interested.

In addition, some residents have taken to following dog-owners who do not pick up after their dogs and noting where they live. If a written complaint is presented to the board, we must act on it through fines and, if it continues, the animal could be ordered to be removed from Silverlakes as a nuisance. NOBODY wants something like this to happen. My poop catcher is available to any resident who wants it. Also, all dogs must be on a leash of no more than 6 feet so that the droppings are confined to the area along the curb. I have seen some pet-owners who have one of those recoiling leashes that are 15 feet or more. Everyone MUST keep the dogs close to the curb and not allow them to wander the front yard of homes. PLEASE curb and clean up after your pets.

- I have observed some residents sweeping the lawn clippings out of the street/gutter, and I'm VERY grateful to see them doing so. Thank you for helping to keep our lake water clean. That simple act helps to keep the algae from growing in our lakes.
- There was a short presentation from a group that wants to build a 10-by-60-foot Bocce Ball Court in Circle Park, the common area on the southeast corner of Lakeland Circle, which abuts the south lake. The group was asked to provide a quote for professional installation, as well as a materials quote. The project would also require membership approval via proxy vote prior to our annual membership meeting.

- A relatively new resident wanted to know why the lake weeds behind their home were sprayed and are dying. A member of Gateway's Storm Water Working Group explained the reasons for this and the ongoing work with Gateway Services. Silverlakes does not own or maintain the ponds/lakes in our community. Gateway Services District has that responsibility for all the 69 lakes/ponds in Gateway.

Property Manager's Report:

- Between Nov. 18, 2015 and Jan. 19, 2016, the Call Center at Alliant received 217 calls. The top three categories were: questions on violations, gates and general questions. The Call Center handled 54 of these calls. There was one parking ticket issued, but it is being investigated as to whether it was valid.
- There is a yard on the north side of Lakeland Circle with weeds. Ongoing correspondence with the owners and their landscaping company has resulted in progress. Improvement must be noted by the end of March.

Committees:

Architectural Control (ACC):

- Seven requests were submitted for approval and six (6) were approved. A request to replace mulch at the side of the driveway with pavers was denied, since the pavers would not match the driveway.
- The roofing material has been ordered for the home under construction.

Communications Committee:

- Our Webmaster now has 291 email addresses for Silverlakes residents.
- It was mentioned that the Website information is difficult to find and suggested the sections be divided into categories. This will be looked into, as will the cost of a different Web site.

Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee is in dire need of a committee chairperson. There are several people on the committee with historical knowledge of our finance system. So if you would like to volunteer for this position, I'm sure the existing members would be willing to help a new volunteer get "up to speed." Supervision is required by the chair to work with our collection agency, Alliance CAS.

- Gene Hogg, a finance committee member, stated there was no January meeting as there was no data to review. The next meeting will be in February.

Fine Appeal Committee:

In the on-going appeal regarding 11127 Lakeland Circle, the committee has all the documents and is reviewing them. Once finished, another meeting will be scheduled and a letter sent to the board.

Neighborhood Action Committee:

The committee leaders were not present, since they are in New York awaiting the birth of their sixth grandchild.

Exercise Committee:

The carpet in the exercise room needs to be replaced. The funds have been allocated in the 2016 budget. The committee chair will be contacted to obtain quotes for replacement.

Vendor Oversight Committee (VOC):

- Charles has agreed to remain chair of the VOC. The VOC objectives will return to their vision of operating in compliance with the Silverlakes at Gateway HOA Committee General Rules. It had become a maintenance committee. Now, the committee will oversee vendors, not do the work themselves.
- Discussion of VOC Basic Objectives: All future repairs will be referred to Alliant to handle.
- At committee members' discretion, changing light bulbs without using ladders and resetting circuit breakers and timers may be completed by committee members. Currently, there are five members on the VOC, and only three are available year-round.
- During discussion of the final two lake fountains to be replaced, it was noted that a signed contract and deposit check have been sent to Vertex to begin construction. The board estimates installation in four to five weeks.
- During the discussion of surplus brick pavers, it was decided to offer them free with leftovers to be donated to Habitat for Humanity.
- In landscaping issues: two palm trees had to be replaced with Foxtail palms, one on the east side of the clubhouse and the other on the north side of the entrance monument.
- The license tag entry camera has been adjusted to better highlight and focus on car tag numbers in all light situations.
- The pool camera had to be adjusted after someone pulled it down lower than it was originally set.
- Alliant's mechanic is working on repairs to the entry/exit gates.

Treasurer's Report:

- As of Dec. 31, 2015, there were 24 names on the delinquent list; no bankruptcies or bank foreclosures; one lien foreclosure; six attorney actions; four 45-day liens; four who owe between \$500 and \$1,000; and seven who owe less than \$140, for a total of \$52,652. The largest outstanding debt is by a single owner, 11250 Lakeland Circle, which owes \$32,600. Of the \$32,600 total, \$13,919 represents maintenance fees; \$9,262, legal fees; and \$19,724, fines.
- Operating Funds total \$214,617 and Reserves, \$539,265. Operating funds include: mortgage security, \$10,000; bad debt allowance, \$21,700; and prepaid assessments, \$65,700.
- Actual free cash at the end of December was \$117,200. This amount should keep us on track for a free cash balance of some \$90,000 by year-end 2016, per our budget forecast.
- For the 12 months ending Dec. 31, 2015, spending was \$17,704 under budget. The main contributors to under budget spending were lower legal fees, lower interest charges for the clubhouse loan, and lower lawn maintenance cost. Only Villa ground expense was overspent by \$2,688 due to ground expenses and irrigation

repairs. That amount will have to be assessed from each Villa owner for refund to the HOA. A motion passed to assess each of the 14 Villa owners a one-time payment of \$192 to repay the general HOA fund.

- The funding level in comparison to the Reserve Study is \$9,236-plus for HOA and \$580-plus for the Villas.
- The year-end figures for the HOA are encouraging and the results are positive and rewarding. The budget utilization stands at 93.9 percent.
- Delinquencies are in better shape compared to the end of 2014. The main problem areas are the fines, which are difficult to collect, and the properties in lien foreclosure.
- The accrued reserves are in line with the levels suggested by the Reserve Study.

Legal Issues:

The attorney is being contacted to set up a meeting with the board to bring us up to date on the issues he is handling.

Rental Tracking:

We currently have 28 rentals and several more who are not in compliance.

Reaffirm Board Decisions:

- A clubhouse renter violated the specific language in the rental contract. A fine of \$100 will be assessed, and the remainder of the \$235 deposit refunded.
- A motion was passed to continue the contract with Commercial Fitness for maintenance of the equipment in the exercise room.
- A motion passed to award the landscaping contract for 2016 to Rodgers Landscape.
- The contract for painting the Villas was signed Dec. 14. The vendor is warranting the work for seven years and indicated the work would begin within 60 days after Jan. 1. The VOC Chair will call and find out when work is to begin. Villa owners will need to clear their lanais before the work begins, and Rodgers Landscape will need to cut back all foliage from the Villa walls. The payment schedule will be determined with the vendor.
- Since there is no Finance Committee chair, our treasurer has had a conversation with Alliant. Alliant approves the work the Alliant CAS does. Most of the work to be handled is fines, and they are very difficult to collect. The only option is to collect when the property is rented or sold. Until a finance chair is named, our treasurer was asked to be the caretaker of Alliance CAS. Our treasurer agreed to do so.
- The board amended the clubhouse reservation agreement to allow renters of the clubhouse access to the pool. The maximum number of people in the pool may not exceed the posted number.
- Two safety issues were discussed: drivers who do not stop at stop signs, just coast through at a normal rate of speed, and parking. If two cars are parked opposite each other on a street, a fire truck or ambulance would be unable to get through. Cars need to stagger their parking.

- Entry and exit gates evaluation: the amount spent on repairing the gates in just the past two years is considered to be excessive. The board is considering whether it is time to consider replacing versus fixing the gates. Alliant's mechanic was asked to provide quotes to repair the north gate operator's gear box and the control panel for the exit gate and to repair the cracks on the gates. In addition, the VOC Chair will obtain three vendor quotes to replace the four operators and operating arms. Also, three vendor quotes will be requested to repair the existing gates and three to replace them. It is not felt that a quick lift arm to control tailgating would work, especially for landscapers who have long trailers. In addition, the cost would have to be approved by the entire community.

*Respectfully submitted by Lauren "Bird" Siegel, president, for the Board of Directors:
PJ Stratton, vice president; Jane Grethey, secretary; Markus Albrecht, treasurer; and Claude Marku, legal liaison.*

Sunshine Committee:

The Sunshine Committee sends cards to Silverlakes residents who are welcoming a new baby, recovering from an illness or surgery or mourning the loss of a loved one. If you know someone who could use a little sunshine, please call the chairman of the committee, Sue Beard, at (239) 689-8065 or email her at shadden@comcast.net.

Red Hat Review:

Seven beautiful Red Hat ladies went to the Wisteria Tea Room for High Tea on Thursday, Dec. 10, to enjoy tea, friendship and the holidays. Members were seated on the porch, where they chose a lovely winter tea infused with coconut. It was delicious! Our three-tiered trays came a bit later, and we wondered how we were going to be able to finish it all: slices of spinach and cheese quiche, tiny sandwiches, scones and Devonshire cream, crème brulee, brownies and much more. Needless to say, most of us took home some of the desserts. We had a fun gift exchange, including the chance to "steal" the gift that had just been opened. It seems that everyone liked their gift and chose not to steal. It was a very decadent and leisurely event, enjoyed very much by all. Thank you to Pam for hosting the event. If you'd like to join the group, contact our queen mum, Jan Wold.



Social Committee:



December Activities: December was a busy month in Silverlakes. Our first event was the Santa Breakfast. It was very well attended, with over 70 people enjoying pancakes, waffles, and sausages. The children enjoyed telling Santa what they wanted for Christmas and taking pictures with him. Judy Dobson and her team did a wonderful job! On the same morning, we had our first Gingerbread House competition. Our adult winners were Mary Hardisty and Marilyn

Steiner. Our children winners were Julia and Hank Diener (pictured with Jayna Aldrich, our elf). This fun activity was spear-headed by Donna Marchetti. We look forward to this becoming an annual event!



Jeanette Farmer did a great job organizing a group of carolers. We even tried out a parody on Jingle Bells. The chorus goes like this: *Jingle Bells, Coconut Shells, Dolphins in the bay, Oh what fun it is to live in sunny F.L.A. Orange juice stands, Mickey Mouse land, Gators in the way, Oh what fun it is to live in sunny F.L.A!* This was the perfect way to get into the Christmas spirit.



That evening, the winners of the Best Christmas Decorations were chosen. The winners were: First Place – Rebecca Exum and David Vogel (they asked us to give their winnings to a charity), Second Place – Tanya Brashear, Third Place – David and Barbara Philips. This was a very difficult decision to make as there were so many beautiful homes from which to choose. Thank you all for making our community so festive!



The \$50 winnings from the first place winner (11098 Lakeland Circle) for the Best Christmas Decorations was donated to newly formed group within Rural Neighborhoods, a nonprofit organization in Immokalee. A group of women, most of them migrants, are learning to sew clothing for themselves and their families and items to sell to supplement their incomes. Thank you to Rebecca Exum and David Vogel.

Casino Night - Half of the proceeds, \$132, from the last casino event were donated to Harry Chapin Food Pantry, along with 98 pounds of food. This year, all the proceeds will go to the food bank.

January Activities:

On January 9, we enjoyed a catered Chinese dinner from China Star, located in Lehigh Acres. The clubhouse was decorated with fans and lanterns. Before eating, people gathered in accordance to their Chinese animal to discover what they had in common. There were Fortune Sticks to read and origami fortune cookies to determine the order in which tables were called to the buffet. Some people received red envelopes containing “gold coins” and three people won Panda Bears. The two lucky 50/50 winners received \$50.00 each!



A great big thank you goes out to Dan and Judy Dobson for all their efforts to make the Chinese dinner a huge success!

BINGO – On January thirty-four people played Bingo at the clubhouse. New rule...when need-only one more number win, please stand up!



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Upcoming events in Silverlakes:

February	Event
Feb. 4 Adult Game Night	Bring a game
Feb. 6 Family Breakfast	Adults \$5, Children \$3, Family \$15
Feb. 11 Bunco	Adults \$5.00 BYOB
Feb. 13 Garage Sale/Clothing drive	Fee \$5.00 per house
Feb. 18 Adult Game Night	Bring a game
Feb. 20 Casino Night	Entrance Fee \$5.00
Feb. 25 Adult Game Night	Bring a game

Adult Game Night – Want to learn how to play cribbage? Here’s the perfect opportunity! Or bring your favorite game. We continue to play Hand and Foot on Monday evenings at 7PM and Euchre on Tuesday evenings at 7PM. Don’t miss out on the fun!

Casino Night!!! We are looking for Poker and Black Jack dealers. Also, if you have a certificate or tickets to an event/game that you cannot attend, please consider donating it to the Social Committee for this charitable event. Perhaps you know a business owner willing to donate a certificate or product. We appreciate all of your assistance. We have decided to give 100% of the proceeds to the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Garage Sale/Clothing drive – The social committee will collect clothing to donate to the Women’s Shelter. Please bring women’s and children’s clothes to the Clubhouse on February 13 between 12:00pm and 1:00pm. Thank you!

March	
March 3 Adult Game Night	Bring a game
March 10 Bunco	Adults \$5.00 BYOB
March 11 St. Patrick’s Day Pot Luck	\$5.00
March 16 Folk Singers	\$5.00 – Money donated to charity
March 17 Adult Game Night	Bring a game
March 19 Family Breakfast	Adults \$5, Children \$3, Family \$15
March 24 Adult Bingo	\$5 for 3 cards & \$2 for additional card
March 26 Easter Egg Hunt	Free – Starting at 10am
March 31 Adult Game Night	Bring a game