

Pinewood Country Estates Home Owner's Association  
"Working for a Great Community for Great Neighbors"

December 2015

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Holiday season will soon be in full swing and the New Year will be upon us. Best wishes to all neighbors of Pinewood Country Estates as the year winds down.

As you all know, Pinewood Country Estates is an 85 home, deed restricted, single family home (with the lone exception being short term, that is 30 day or less, rentals) subdivision. As directed by the Declarations of the Estates, the HOA Board is committed to maintaining the subdivision so as to enhance all of our investments and make this a great place to live. The Board is currently facing some challenging issues including parking, landscape maintenance and storm water management.

It has gone by quickly but the current board has now served five years. During that time we are proud of our accomplishments including:

- ▲ the new entry wall required after the Ronald Reagan parkway expansion
- ▲ Christmas decorations for the entry wall
- ▲ clearing out of the pond in the rear of the subdivision
- ▲ installation of new sod in the common areas
- ▲ installation of a new well for irrigation of the common areas
- ▲ clearing and cleaning the picnic area
- ▲ installation of plants in two planting beds on Pinewood that had been washing out

We believe all of these efforts have beautified the subdivision and enhanced our property values.

### **Parking**

All owners and homes have recently received a newsletter regarding our parking issues. We are meeting with representatives of several agencies to explore solutions. At this time the school buses are not coming into our subdivision because of difficulty getting past parked cars and emergency vehicles would be hindered also. We must determine a solution to insure the safety of all neighbors while allowing buses and emergency responders access.

### **Landscape Maintenance**

The Declarations that are part of all of our deeds are very clear regarding upkeep of property. Due to financial hardships brought on by the current economy, the Board has been lenient regarding lawn growth and has even allowed alternate, more economical, styles of sod to be installed. However, mowing and trimming as well as cleaning and painting, are lagging behind in some properties.

### **The Hearing Committee**

The Declarations detail specific steps to take and a time line to follow regarding corrections necessary to keep properties in accordance with original concepts. The Board has been frustrated at times as we are informed that some of our written procedures may be opposed by Florida law or judicial decisions.

As recommended by our community management team, we have recently adopted policy which establishes a Hearing Committee that would allow steps to make efforts for upkeep enforceable in accordance with current Florida law.

The three person committee, which cannot be board members or relatives of board members, will review fines imposed on home owners for ignoring items designated by the manager as violations of the standards established in the Declarations. Remember the purpose of the committee is to help ensure that we, as a community, maintain our property values.

Three persons have been appointed by the Board and are beginning to understand their roles so we can put the concept into effect.

### **Storm Water Management**

As a means of updating owners, I'd like to review our storm water management issues.

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) issued a permit for our original construction plans which called for a retention pond in the rear, a detention pond in the front and a swale (ditch) in the backyards along the lake. The "ditch" was conceived to prevent runoff from reaching the lake from the 21 home properties that border the lake.

For years the HOA has had periodic inspections by engineers and SWFWMD to verify compliance of the system. From documentations we have at our disposal, we have always been approved, SWFWMD noting in correspondence that we meet their criteria. However, the inspections, both our engineers and SWFWMD, had always been for the rear pond only.

Four years ago, fifteen or more years after our construction approval and after several years of approved inspections, a SWFWMD inspector wrote us up for the swale being in non-compliance. After several meetings and thousands of dollars to determine corrective measures, and facing a project that has been estimated up to six figures, the Board appealed in writing in February 2015 for SWFWMD to ignore or amend the original concept. This stance is mostly based on the fact that three other housing properties that border the lake have no swales and were approved by SWFWMD after completion of our development.

To date we have had no response from SWFWMD.

Should you have any questions regarding any of this information feel free to attend the Board meetings or email the HOA Board at [pinewoodcountryestates@hotmail.com](mailto:pinewoodcountryestates@hotmail.com).

Best wishes for all neighbors for a joyous holiday season and a great 2016!



Earl Hartman, President  
Pinewood HOA