

The Official Newsletter of the Ballantrae Condo Assoc. Sarasota, FL



THE VOICE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



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President's Desk

2023 Vision by *Dennis Dryjanski*

I look forward to serving as the Ballantrae Board President for 2023. The challenges ahead are difficult and many. Our 2023 is a **working** Board and will be supervising and assisting our Committee Leaders. With the new leadership, we have new Committee Chairs who will work to enhance the community.

Two important tasks of the Ballantrae Board are budget control and grounds maintenance. The new Treasurer is Jim Boyd who is charged with the task of keeping a watchful eye on our checkbook. He is in the process of implementing policies and procedures which will establish controls over our spending and minimize waste of our resources. We have already seen the benefits of his efforts.

Vice President Dickie Furtado has volunteered to supervise grounds. Dickie has owned and operated a golf course for 25 years and, once again, we are seeing the benefits of his experience and efforts. With his supervision, our landscaping is beginning to improve and he is managing this within the current budget. Dickie will supervise Lane and other contractors who provide services related to our grounds. His desire is to include unit owners in future plans.

Board Secretary Dave Dicke has resigned effective January 11th. The Board is now working to identify a replacement for this position.

Drew Lowther is an at large Board Member. Drew is assisting the Welcome Committee and we look forward to him supervising other committees as well.

Jack Seaman has significant experience with Ballantrae buildings and security, and we are fortunate that he has volunteered to oversee this area. He will oversee supervising our roof projects.

Sue Frazzini has volunteered to be the Editor of the newsletter. Sue brings to the table expertise with a variety of programs and platforms and plans on revamping our newsletter. Please contact her with any ideas or articles that you feel would be of interest to our community.

If you have an interest in serving on any of our committees, please contact me. We have an immediate opening on the Rules and Regulations committee.

We had one uncomfortable issue that cropped up. The original 2022 Treasurer unfortunately did not understand State Statutes and Ballantrae Governing documents and installed a propane tank on common area. Fortunately, the purchasers of the unit were understanding, and we resolved the issue with the illegal propane tank being removed last week.

Under new leadership, Ballantrae owners can look forward to reasonable and intelligent application of the State Statutes and Governing Documents. We look forward to a productive New Year!

Treasurer's Report

Policy & Procedures *by Jim Boyd*

It goes without saying that 2022 was a difficult year. With all that occurred, the Board reluctantly increased maintenance fees and approved a special assessment for storm clean-up.

I was finally appointed to the Board late last year and was awarded the responsibility of Treasurer. After a quick look at operations, I suggested to the 2022 President an Expenditure Approval Form to control and document expenditures. He was not in favor of these fiscal controls, so I regrettably dropped the issue.

Our 2022 President took on the responsibility of the storm clean-up which was a substantial undertaking. He misunderstood the FEMA process and misreported multiple times to the community the work that would be completed. I suggested a Special Board Meeting to discuss funding and priorities to the 2022 President, but this did not happen. With hindsight, this could have uncovered some pitfalls with more than one person involved. This last week I asked for and received the accounting for the storm clean-up and received an unpleasant surprise-the way the funds are currently allocated we have more than maxed out the \$40,000 allocated and more work is necessary.

We recently had a guard rail replaced and this project involved more than a little confusion. The file apparently lacked a signed proposal and when the Board interviewed the contractor, the 2023 Board was awakened to the fact that this small project involved at least four people giving instructions to the contractor.

With the assistance of several other volunteers, I developed a Funding Request Form and Procedures. Prior to any services being rendered, the Board Member or Committee Chair must forward the completed form to the Treasurer and the Treasurer will approve or disapprove the expenditure based upon the budget or reserve funding availability. The Treasurer will apply the appropriate line item for the expenditure which will avoid the confusion and surprises that currently exists in the storm clean-up project.

The insurance premium for Ballantrae has been an open issue. Ballantrae has challenges when it comes to insurance which includes 1980's construction and older wood shake roofs. I attended several insurance panel discussions and reports of 33% to 50% + increases are common. Last week we received our preliminary figure of \$193,986 which is \$8,986 higher than our budget and 44% higher than 2022. Our agent indicated there are changes to the policy which he wants to meet with us and explain.

My efforts will be concentrated on careful fiscal management of our Association. This past week, we found a fuel surcharge that the vendor had appropriately added last April but had overlooked removing as fuel prices declined so it saved a few dollars. I will work toward eliminating surprises like the storm clean-up and the insurance premium. As a member of the 2023 Board, I look forward to improving our management, policies and procedures and having a successful New Year.

Landscaping Notes

Supervision Matters *by Dickie Furtado*

Ballantrae is a beautiful neighborhood, and our landscaping is the jewel that enhances our property values and lifestyle. Our vision is to bring our forty-year-old (current) landscaping up to award winning standards.

Landscaping costs are the second largest expenditure of the operating budget. It's in our best interest to control this expense through the streamlining and cleaning up of our beds and plantings and then replace/refurbish with native plants and grasses that need little or no maintenance.

Some of the immediate steps already taken to begin this process include:

- The contractor will now be doing the work Grounds along with Lane determine is necessary each week. The contractor will no longer be deciding what work is to be accomplished each week.
- We realize the ponds and surrounding vegetation are of concern to many residents. Discussions have been held with our current landscaping company to remove invasive vegetation around the ponds, cut the pond side grasses and start to pull out the grass growing in the pond. Leaves, especially around air conditioning units, are to be blown out. Several plant beds are to be cleaned out removing invasive plantings, dead or nearly dead/ugly plantings. We lowered the lawn cutting equipment for a more manicured look as a start.
- We are working with our Board on the continued Hurricane Ian clean up that is necessary.

Invasive plantings are a real problem for our neighborhood. As a community, we need to understand that the Grounds are a Common Element and not available for personal plant choices. It is the responsibility of every homeowner to submit a Work Order for requests to be reviewed for approval. No one should be planting any type of plant for any reason without an approved work order. Unapproved plantings will be removed without prior notification to owners.

We will have a conversation with the new pond maintenance company to understand exactly what their work entails and the outcomes we expect their work to produce.

Replenishing the grass eating carp in the ponds is already scheduled.

Lane is an asset to the community and his time is precious and limited. Owners should not impose on his time for personal requests. His work schedule is provided and directed by the Board for the betterment of the community and efficient use of our financial resources. All owners should fill out a Work Order with their request and it will be directed to the Board member best suited to reply and respond.

Outside of additional Hurricane Ian clean-up that is needed, the front entrance to Ballantrae is the first area where community participation can make a positive difference quickly. We suggest that a late January/early February shell path meeting be scheduled where we can discuss how best to approach the clean-up and re-design of this area. One idea would be to have a community clean-up day where owners show up and do a clean-up. Owners can express their willingness to do the work or decide if the association should shoulder that cost. The more the community participation the better the result will be. Anyone with a landscape design background is encouraged to offer suggestions/plan. Landscape design company suggestions are also welcome.

All this clean-up work will take several months. If you have any concerns over the plantings surrounding your unit, contact Dickie Furtado via email (dickiefurtado@yahoo.com) by the end of January to discuss.

Developing a plan for landscape overhaul and refurbishment is a focus this year with implementation of this multi-year project beginning in 2024.

The Board looks forward to working with the neighborhood to create an award-winning landscape that enhances our property values and effectively manages costs.

Committee Reports

Happening in the 'Hood

Social: 1st Annual Caroling with Santa

Many thanks to Dickie and Cindy Furtado for organizing and hosting the 1st Annual Caroling with Santa on December 16th. Many neighbors enjoyed Santa and the Carolers as they shared their Christmas Spirit! Lots of positive comments were heard and plans are already underway for next year's event.



Social: Mark Your Calendars



Happy Valentine's Day Gathering

Tuesday, February 14th at 4:00pm
At the Shell Path

Come join your neighbors and friends for some fun, games, and prizes. Appetizers and wine will be provided.

Watch the Mailbox Bulletin Boards for more details in the coming weeks.

Sonia Harland, Social and Caring Committee Chair, encourages volunteers to help plan and organize events. She can be reached at soniakap@aol.com with any ideas or to lend a helping hand.



Ballantrae extends a warm welcome to our new neighbors.

Dennis Amendola and Joe Karl moved into 7312 Killarney Dr. #21A on October 3rd, 2022. They moved from the Country Club of Sarasota after many years to downsize. Both are retired, drive white BMW's and love to travel.

David Medeiros and Tom Desera moved into 3622 Gleneagle Dr. #9C on January 6th. They have been residing between Sarasota and Stonington, CT, and are now here full time. Dave is retired and Tom is an upholsterer. When not driving a red Nissan truck and Camero convertible their hobbies include Italian cooking and disco music.

Ballantraecondoassoc.com

The Ballantrae website houses our Governing Documents, Resident Directory, Financials, Meeting Minutes and more. The password for the Resident side is 2022 at this time. It changes each year, and will be updated to 2023 by the end of January.



Jon Jenckes. A longtime resident has recently been residing at Manor Care Rehab Center on a temporary basis.

Sandy Kinsman recently had hip surgery and is now back at home after rehab at SMH. Sandy and her beloved dog Mattie are now reunited after being separated while Sandy was recovering.

Jack Seaman is home recovering from a fall that caused a major injury to his arm.

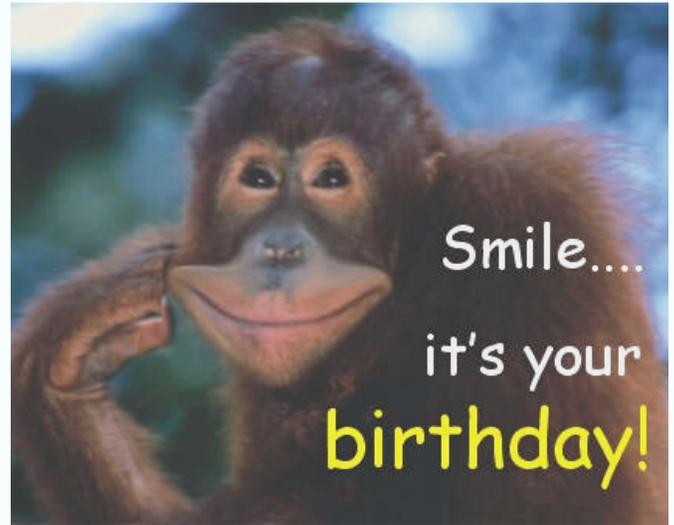
David Dicke was recently hospitalized due to a complication from a recent surgery.

Get well wishes are always appreciated and addresses can be found on the Ballantrae website.

The Ballantrae Community wishes all our neighbors a complete and speedy recovery.

**Next Board Meeting
January 18, 6PM
Gulf Gate Library
Room A**

Check the bulletin boards for a complete list of BOD and Committee contacts.



- Jan 1-Ken Rowland**
- Jan 7-Scott Welch**
- Jan 17 -John Rade**
- Feb 1-Jeff Appel**
- Feb 2-Alice Hopkins**
- Feb 8-Ann Westra**
- Feb 9-Barbara Bixby**
- Feb 24-Michele Dicke**
- Feb 26-Fran Clymore**
- Feb 26-Tom Hull**
- Mar 10-Maurice Menager**
- Mar 20-Michael Pryszyk**
- Mar 22-Stan Valerga**
- Mar 22-Dennis Amendola**
- Mar 27-Heather Appel**
- Mar 31-Marlene Valerga**
- Apr 1-Marilyn Miller**
- Apr 10-Kathy Hull**

The Voice Quarterly Newsletter and the Monthly Updates are official publications of the Ballantrae Condominium Association, Sarasota, FL.

Please send all comments and suggestions to the Editor at
SRQBCAnewsletter@gmail.com
www.ballantraecondoassoc.com