

# Bear Island

## Homeowners Association Newsletter

December 2020

*It's beginning to look a lot like ...*



*The entrance to Bear Island and the pocket park near the bridge on Bear Island Drive are lit up for the holidays.*

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Another holiday season is upon us – albeit not like past seasons. We still have a lot to be thankful for, including a little cooler weather after one of the hottest summers on record.

I would like to welcome all the new homeowners to Bear Island. There has been a lot of activity in home sales over the past year with prices continuously rising. If you see a new family, please welcome them into the community.

I would also like to welcome and thank our new Communications Chair and newsletter editor – Paul Nonnenmacher. Paul and his wife Cathy (and dogs) live in the “back 40.”

Once again, Florida Image, our landscaper, has planted flowers in the entrance for the holidays as a gift to the community. Our entrance, including the fence, has been pressure cleaned and repainted, removing the rust stains, and holidays lights installed.

The 2021 budget has been passed. Thank you to Maria Davis and Gail Saunders for working on the budget. The Board has been very diligent in trying to keep costs down, but again due to the City of West Palm Beach's water-rate increase, the quarterly assessments have increased \$25 per quarter or \$8.33 per month. Please try to conserve water.

### **REMINDERS AND UPDATES**

**Tree trimming:** Due to all the inclement weather the past few months, our arborist is behind schedule. As a result, palm trees and hardwoods in the common areas, entrance and front yards will be trimmed at the same time in January or February.

Some residents have asked why we don't trim the hardwoods before hurricane season. It's because they're

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## ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE REPORT

A warm welcome to our new residents and welcome back to our returning seasonal folks!

A lot of homeowners are cleaning and making repairs at this time of year. As we clean, repair, or paint our homes, be aware that fences, privacy walls and perimeter walls are your responsibility and should be attended to also. Some fences and gates need repairs and painting.

Also, privacy walls (the wall attached to your house) and perimeter walls (the wall on end lots where there is no adjacent house) must be cleaned and painted also. Quite a few wall tops need to be cleaned, and some ends of them need to be painted. I've noticed a couple where the paint color on the wall doesn't match the house color, which apparently was overlooked when the house was painted. Please take a look at your walls and fences and perform this maintenance.

Thank you all and enjoy the upcoming holidays!

Pat Miclean

Architectural Control Committee Chair

## LANDSCAPING COMMITTEE REPORT

I'm sure everyone is happy to see some cooler temperatures and hopefully less rain in the coming months.

The plans for improvement to the Bear Island Drive common area and the area near the bridge are approved and scheduled. The large overgrown plants will be removed in the common area and replaced with sod and the dead plants at the bridge area will be replaced.

Several homeowners have asked for suggestions on which plants are suitable to hide the air conditioning units in our front yards. Podocarpus (see photo) is a handsome, hardy and low-maintenance shrub for sun or shade that works nicely around the air-conditioning units. Cocoplum is another hardy plant that works well.

Wishing you a healthy and happy holiday season!

Vickie Bender

Landscaping Committee Chair

## From MARIA DAVIS, Board Member

Tis the season – time to celebrate the Holidays. This year is different, though: The coronavirus has changed the way we live our lives. No more large holiday parties or neighborhood get-togethers; smaller family events, maybe. Some of us may have difficulty visiting with our families altogether. My mother is 88 years old and lives in Germany. I have not been able to see her and I miss her very much.

Our life in Bear Island has changed, too. Most of us stay home more, and we have fewer social interactions. A friendly greeting or short conversation with your neighbors may make their day, and the contact with you may be one of only a few personal interactions they have had all week.

Our annual meeting was cancelled due to the coronavirus restrictions put in place in March. The Board has since resumed its meetings, and together with our committee members and property manager we have worked diligently to ensure that our community runs smoothly.

We have dealt with violations of our governing documents and neighborly disputes over the trimming of trees; rodents in overgrown, neglected backyards; swimming pools that violate city code; dog poop that is



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## PROPERTY MANAGER'S REPORT

**Entry and sidewalk power washing:** As we do every winter, Bear Island is performing the annual sidewalk and street gutter power-washing. Ability Pressure Cleaning will also power-wash several Association-owned common walls, driveway aprons and street-sign monuments. Should you wish to have Ability quote you a roof cleaning or driveway cleaning bid please feel free to contact Jose at 561-348-0567.

**Gate information updates:** Please keep the entry gate and MMI informed of changes to your telephone numbers and email addresses, and add or remove vendors and permanent guests. **The information-update form, along with all the others I mention in this report, is available from MMI or our website, [www.bearisland.us](http://www.bearisland.us).** We make sure to keep your contact information private, so be assured that residents cannot get these from MMI.

Bear Island has a voicemail update feature allowing homeowners to receive telephone messages in the event of an emergency. Forms are available online, or you can contact us directly to let us know if you change your email address.

**Selling or leasing your home:** There is a form to fill out should you desire to sell or lease your home. It grants specific permission to your real estate agent when showing or managing your home. It is important to remember if an owner is delinquent in his or her dues or if there are outstanding violations on the property the Board has the right to refuse to grant approval for a sale or lease. Remember, "For Sale" signs are not allowed.

**Bulk waste:** Bulk waste, recycling bins and landscaping debris may not be placed at the curb prior to 5 p.m. the day before pick-up. The pile may not exceed the approximate size of a small refrigerator, 4 feet by 4 feet by 4 feet. Any questions please feel free to contact the city Sanitation Department at 561-822-2075.

**Vendor and parking rules:** Just a reminder, vendors or people working on your home must be off the property by 6 p.m., unless it is an emergency. An emergency is defined as

- no air conditioning when the temperature is above 80 degrees,
- no heat when the temperature drops below 65 degrees,
- no electricity or
- a leak in your plumbing.

**Pets:** Pets must be kept on a leash and under control at all times. Remember to pick up after your pet and dispose of pet waste properly. Pet waste can transmit disease.

**Crime prevention:** Do not leave bait for criminals visible in your car. "Move it or lose it" is the motto of the West Palm Beach Police Department. Here's a neat trick I learned from the Police Department: Should you hear someone suspicious outside your home at night, simply press the panic button on your vehicle key fob. It will scare anyone away! Then immediately call the Police.

The Board also urges you to leave your exterior lights on between dusk and dawn to thwart criminal activity. It is a known fact that lights alone can prevent most burglaries and thefts. Home Depot, Lowe's and other stores sell light bulbs that turn on at dusk and off at dawn – no electrician needed.

**Exterior modifications:** Remember any exterior modification to your home requires the prior written approval of the Architectural Control Committee. It is not necessary to seek approval for common repairs.

Bryan Welch  
MMI

More information online at  
[bearisland.us](http://bearisland.us)

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

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dormant at that time, and pruning when trees are dormant can minimize the risk of pest problems associated with “wounding” and allows the trees to take advantage of the full growing season. Perkins Tree Service is the contractor and if you have any special requests (back yards, etc.), you can contract with Perkins directly.

**Mowing:** Florida Image is scheduled to cut grass

- every 10 days in December,
- every two weeks in January and February,
- every 10 days in March and
- once a week beginning in April.

The Board is aware of certain landscape issues like weeds but please remember we have had an exceptionally rainy summer and fall. Florida Image has sprayed for weeds but when it rains two or three hours later it washes away the weed killer. Again, if you have an issue with landscaping, please notify MMI and not speak with the workers.

2020 has been a trying year, not only for the nation, but for Bear Island also. Despite the pandemic, your Board has been trying to carry on with the business of managing a community of 227 homes without sacrificing quality of service. Instead of meeting at Bear Lakes Country Club, we meet in the garage of board member Ryland Dodge and his wife Rebecca, which they've graciously offered so that we can continue to conduct business. I know that we are not out of the woods yet, but let's hope for better times and getting back to normal as much as possible.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

Howard C. Berman  
President, Board of Directors

## **From MARIA DAVIS, Board Member**

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not picked up, which becomes a breeding ground for disease; and speeders through our community, to name just a few. Courtesy and kindness towards others are vital for our community to remain an enjoyable place to live.

In disputes between neighbors, the Board generally encourages the parties to work out issues between themselves, rather than the Board acting as neighborhood police. When grievances are brought to our attention, we take the time to listen and assess the circumstances. While not everyone may feel that his or her voice is heard, be assured that we take each matter seriously and that we strive to make Board decisions in an unbiased and fair manner.

Enjoy this special time of the year. Stay safe.

Maria Davis  
Treasurer

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