

Greetings to my neighbors.

I have been a member of the Colonial Gable Homeowner's Association (CGHA) since purchasing my parents' home in Sept 2005. I jumped in with both feet to become a member, (and a board member), of the Colonial Gable Homeowner's Association because I wanted to make a difference in the neighborhood. I am currently taking a break as an elected member. However, I remain active with the board by creating the monthly newsletter, going to board meetings, along with attending general meetings to be active in the neighborhood association.

I have supported the creating a monthly newsletter. I believe there are many of our residents that do not have access to the internet, or have limited access. I have always believed the information included each month is valuable information to the residents of the neighborhood. If you read the Presidents letter, the current level of funds cannot maintain the current projects with only about 200 members when there are 600 plus homes with Colonial Gables. The current plans, goals, upgrades to the neighborhood entrance can only be maintained with the increase of membership. If this does not happen, one of the first items to go could be the newsletter. Advertising does not fund the cost of printing. I do not believe CGHA could ever create a newsletters fully funded by advertising and still have valuable information, all within the same newsletter. My belief of self-funded newsletter would be all advertisements.

The only way the CGHA can continue creating a newsletter for every home, and continue the improvements, is by creating a larger membership level. It does not matter if you're a homeowner, or only renting a home, if you enjoy the work of the CGHA, including reading the monthly newsletter, your assistance is required. Your assistance is needed by paying the voluntary membership of twenty dollars. If you can afford more, your donation will assist with supporting your neighborhood.

Also consider attending the general meeting on May 1, 2012. You can meet new neighbors and other interested folks of Colonial Gables. Share in the discussion concerning continued goals of the association.

Dan Patterson

**Colonial Gables
Homeowners Association
Founded 1980**

GENERAL MEETINGS

May 1, 2012

7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Colonial Oaks Park
5300 Colonial Oaks Blvd.

Room C

Sarasota, FL 34232

BOARD MEETING

March 6, 2012 - 7:00 PM

Call for location

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

~ President ~

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~ Vice President ~

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WEB SITE

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Surviving the Foreclosure Mess

By John Alexander Aurora Property Services, LLC

As all of us know all too well, the U.S. is in The Great Recession. Our home values have dropped like a stone; neighbors have moved out to find work; foreclosures are keeping houses vacant; yards are not being mowed. The list goes on and on.

This article will explain what can be done by neighbors to keep our heads above water and get through this mess in one piece. Make no mistake: We WILL get through it together. Things WILL get better eventually. Here are some things to do in the meantime:

1. Keep an eye on the vacant houses. Sarasota used to have a shortage of "affordable housing." Well, we've sure got it now: Vacant houses that attract vagrants, squatters, and other dangerous people. Here's what to do: (1) If you see people coming and going from a vacant house call the Sheriff right away and keep calling until someone comes to check things out. Also, the banks have people who come around to check on the houses from time to time. Those guys put notices on the windows with their names and phone numbers on them. Call them, too. Their job is to keep the house safe and secure and they appreciate help from the neighbors.

2. Keep the house looking like it's occupied. This will take some neighborly cooperation. (1) Take turns cutting the grass and picking up old newspapers in the driveway. (2) Park your car in the vacant house's driveway now and then. (3) Put an old pair of work boots by the front door. (4) Just make it look decent. If it looks like someone lives there the vagrants will keep walking.

3. Do everything you can to keep the neighborhood looking good. The resale of foreclosed homes is pushing everyone's property values down. Recently, the market has improved because banks finally got smart and held bank-owned houses off the market so they didn't destroy it completely. Prices are bottoming-out. Young families are now getting mortgage financing so they can buy houses. What we need to do is keep up appearances of the neighborhood. (1) Help out with neighborhood cleanup days. You'll meet some nice people – just like you. (2) Keep your home neat and trim. Lawn mowed, trees trimmed, plant some flowers – Home Depot has them on sale.

4. How to handle bad tenants. A lot of houses are being bought by landlords who rent them out, waiting for prices to go back up. Most landlords are decent people who know they have to keep their place nice and rent to nice people. "Most", not all. If you have trouble with bad tenant neighbors contact the landlord. Look up the address on the Sarasota County Property Appraiser's web site, find the owner's name in the phone book, and call them to let them know their tenants are being a pain in the neck. If the landlord does not straighten them out, start taking notes (dates, times, what you saw) regarding the bad apples and then call the sheriff. They will need the details in order to pressure the tenants and the owner to clean up their act. Also, if the landlord doesn't control his tenants call Sarasota County Code Enforcement people and complain. Be a squeaky wheel. It's your neighborhood you're protecting !!

I hope these suggestions are helpful. If you have questions or want more information please call me at (941) 724-5907. Onward !!

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Kids Corner

One of the hot Christmas items in the past was Moon Sand. But while it's certainly not a bank-breaker, it is costly for what is basically wet sand. There are many recipes that suggest you can make your own Moon Sand™.

Try the following recipe and see how your homemade "moon sand" compares to the commercial Moon Sand™.

- To 1 cup of cornstarch add ½ cup of cold water.
- Mix thoroughly together for several minutes until it is of a smooth consistency.
- Use your fingers to gradually mix in 2 cups of sand, a small amount at a time.
- Compare your "moon sand" with the commercial "Moon Sand."
- When done, keep it in a sealed container
- Optional coloring: food coloring or powdered KoolAid



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CGHA board announces new prices for advertising within the Newsletter. Please contact the Treasurer Lori Rinker via email at rinkld@aol.com for more information.

- Business card - \$5.00 / month
- Quarter page - \$10.00 / month
- Half page - \$15.00 / month
- Full page insert - \$30.00 / month

Newsletter Submissions

All articles, ads, and payments must be submitted by the 15th of each month. You can submit articles through the website or email rinkld@aol.com



Upcoming Yard Sale

*Colonial Gables Homeowners Association will sponsor a community yard sale. This will include advertisement in various publications for **March 24, 2012** from 8 AM to 1 PM. **Rain date March 31, 2012.** A listing of those yard sales that have made a donation will be listed in a master yard sale listing that will be provided to guests as they arrive, along with a map. Please see the attached flyer from Feb Newsletter for more information, or email Casey Martin (Vice President) or Lori Rinker (Treasurer/Secretary). Your information must be submitted by **March 9, 2012***

Colonial Gables News

Colonial Gables News



March 2012 Edition

Dear Colonial Gables homeowners,

As your President, I want to take this opportunity to share my thoughts and concerns.

We are only a few months away from the Election of Officers and the 2012 Membership Drive. For those of you who don't know, the "Membership Drive" is when we notify all homeowners that it is time to pay their yearly dues.

Currently, the "dues" are \$20 per year. That is not very much when you think about all that is done with that money. This past year we were able to:

- Redo the Woodmont entrance with sprinklers and landscaping.
- The large tree in the middle of Woodmont was trimmed.
- A water meter was installed at the Hayden entrance, getting it ready for sprinklers and landscaping, in 2012.
- Insurance * Water bills * PO Box fee * Monthly newsletters

Over the last few years, the board was able to put a little money away "for a rainy day" and sorry to say, that rainy day is here. If we don't either make an increase in the number of memberships or increase the amount of the dues, the CGHA will be forced to make some hard decisions.

Running a Homeowner Association is the same as running a business. When the business has financial problems, changes must be made. Since the Board of Directors are all VOLUNTEERS that means there are no salaries that can be cut, so we have to look at other expenses.

- The first cut we will have to address is supplying water to the Woodmont entrance, which means we will have to rely on the rain to keep the trees alive and the plants, which we just paid for, from dying.
- The next item on the list will be the completion of the upgrade to the Hayden entrance. We really don't want to do that because keeping our entrances looking well-manicured is what increases the value of our homes and attracts the type of homeowners and renters that we want in our neighborhood.

The reason I am bringing this to your attention is that we are about 6 months away from being broke. I am asking everyone to please pay your 2012 dues. If we could get half of the 600 plus homes in the neighborhood to pay dues, the improvements to Colonial Gables would be endless. Thank you for your help!!

Nicholas Mavrikas

President

Email: NickMavrikas@verizon.net