

Friends of the Village Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 9

 Laguna Woods Village

November/December 2011

COME CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS

with Friends of the Village

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, CLUBHOUSE 5



NO-HOST BAR AND APPETIZERS AT 5:15

DINNER BY JOLANDA AT 6:00

\$25 PER PERSON INCLUDES APPETIZERS, ENTERTAINMENT
AND WINE WITH DINNER

CHOOSE FROM PRIME RIB, SEA BASS OR CHICKEN CORDON BLEU

**PREVIEW THE MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT BY RON & SHOKO ROBBINS AND VOCALIST
RESA:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6quMykwFBW4>

YOU MAY MAKE UP A TABLE OF EIGHT OR TEN WITH YOUR RESERVATION,
OR YOUR SEATING WILL BE ASSIGNED

*****RESERVATION DEADLINE IS WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23*****

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL ALOHA SAXON AT 949-770-7633
OR SEND YOUR CHECK (MADE PAYABLE TO FRIENDS OF THE VILLAGE)

AND RESERVATION INFORMATION TO:

ALOHA SAXON, 5539-C VIA LA MESA, LAGUNA WOODS, CA 92637

Residents Offer Suggestions for Long-Range Planning

by Marian Dailey

At the October 6, 2011 meeting of Friends of the Village, residents were asked to participate in planning the future of the Village and of Friends of the Village (FOV). Groups of eight or ten were formed and asked to discuss and then agree on the top two or three suggestions most important to them for Village planning over the next five years and the top two or three suggestions for FOV programs for next year. Each group reported its items, which were recorded and consolidated by moderator Joan Milliman.

Long-Range Suggestions for the Village

The following consolidated list of suggestions from the discussion groups has been forwarded to the presidents of the United, Third and GRF boards for their consideration going forward:

- Do not drop manor maintenance nonemergency chargeable services for Third residents.
- Explain/control the facilities fee for new buyers.
- Increase residents' interest in Board participation.
- Explore/develop solar energy for the Village.
- Abolish United's six-month rental rule.
- Provide better training for maintenance workers, specifically on leaf blowers – blow away from residences.
- Replace flat roofs with a new style.
- All boards communicate with residents better by posting meeting agendas in advance.
- Make GRF more transparent.
- Encourage happy residents to give more of their positive feedback.
- Continue wiring for WIFI to encompass whole Village.
- Continue to solve the dark street problems.
- Enclose carports.
- Create “neighborhoods” where neighbor knows neighbor.
- Continue Saddleback classes.
- Continue variety of activities.
- Discontinue the multi-mobile trails along El Toro – they are dangerous to pedestrians.
- Maintain monthly fees at a level that will maintain and improve the Village.
- Improve gate and neighborhood security. Do not allow people to come in either the exit or entrance without passes.
- Establish serious revitalization of landscaping.
- Establish better pre-purchase information on website – six-month rule, for example, differences between condos and coops, etc.

- Revise policies for more equitable treatment of residents, especially for RV parking and garden plots.
- Create small coffee houses (ala Starbucks' atmosphere) where residents could go to buy a snack and coffee and just “hang out.” This would be more than the current Clubhouse 1 lounge offers, for example. Hopefully, the café in the new golf building will be close to this, but we need more!
- Have GRF board elected by residents and have a balanced representation on same.

Future Programs Suggested for FOV

Ideas gathered from the meeting participants for future meeting programs are listed below and will be reviewed by the FOV Board as planning for 2012 meetings gets underway:

- Increase “fun” speakers – not issue oriented.
- Explain committee structure –
 - Have handouts telling when and where they meet;
 - Explain that the “real work” is done there.
- Repeat PCM and Associa meeting.
- Have the Globe editor and reporter speak.
- Repeat board and PCM questions and answers.
- Have boards present and explain their budgets.
- Invite speakers from boards to talk about their five-year priorities.
- Repeat Meet-the-Candidates.
- Present information on the services provided to residents in Third and United – compare and contrast.
- Present explanation of shared costs.
- Repeat this style of planning meeting next year.

Other Suggestions to Improve the Club and the Community

The following additional ideas regarding FOV and the community were also discussed:

- Vary meetings with both afternoon and night meetings.
- Sponsor/support the coffees held by Third and United where residents can informally discuss any issues with board members.
- Reach out to new residents for involvement in FOV.
- Use seminar-style seating with six per table at meetings.
- Present pros and cons of having GRF board members elected by residents and have a balanced representation on same.
- Get local real estate people to advertise the Village – to increase property values.

2012 Budget Expenditures for GRF

by Mary Robertson

Residents received this week their copy of the 2012 budget for their mutual and GRF. This is a second article on what the budgets look like for 2012.

United Budget Correction

But first, let me correct an item in our last newsletter. I had stated United's 2012 monthly assessment would be \$325. However, I had failed to pick up on a last-minute change the United Board made to reduce the residents' contribution to the Contingency Fund by \$5.

As a result, residents in United will be assessed only \$320 per month for the United part of their costs (\$319.71 in dollars and cents). This is a 57¢ increase over their 2011 assessment. The reduction was made partly to offset the effect of GRF's increase in their monthly assessment of \$8.

GRF Facilities Monthly Costs

This article will look in more detail at the cost for our monthly GRF amenities in 2012. Each resident will pay \$208 a month for the upkeep of our amenities. Of this, \$30 will be placed in the reserve accounts for major repairs/improvements and unanticipated expenditures and \$178 will be used for daily operating costs.

Laguna Woods Village was built as an active retirement community with more amenities and activities than many retirement communities. This is what a resident pays monthly in his/her assessment for some of our various amenities (all figures rounded):

Item	Monthly Cost
Cable TV	\$23.00
Bus Service	21.00
Golf	10.00
Swimming	4.00
Fitness Centers	3.00
Auditorium (CH 3)	4.00
Crafts/Workshops (CH 4)	3.00
Clubhouse 1	3.00
Clubhouse 2	2.00
Clubhouse 5	3.00
Clubhouse 6	1.00
Clubhouse 7	1.00
Horse Stables	2.00
Garden Plot Centers	1.00
Lawn Bowling	1.00
Community Center Rooms	.33
Tennis Courts	.02

The monthly assessment does not cover the entire cost for most of these amenities. For instance, residents are paying in their monthly assessments for only 53 percent of the cost of golf and only 61 percent for clubhouse 7. User fees collected from individuals and clubs cover the rest of the cost of the amenity.

Only cable TV, the bus service, lawn bowling and tennis are 100 percent paid for through our monthly assessments.

Major Capital Expenditures on Facilities

In addition to these daily operating costs, there are major maintenance needs for the amenities. GRF plans on spending \$4.3 million from the reserves on various major improvements in 2012.

Plans are to repurpose the Shuffleboard Building B for other uses for a cost of \$725,000. GRF also plans on spending \$500,000 to renovate the Community Center. The specific renovations for these two projects will be determined in 2012.

Our asphalt streets and parking areas also require major maintenance, and GRF anticipates spending \$375,000 in 2012 on these. Another \$454,700 is planned to improve the look of the GRF perimeter walls along El Toro and Moulton.

GRF has budgeted \$1,959,100 from its equipment reserves for 2012, almost all being used to replace existing worn-out vehicles and equipment. Nineteen vehicles are scheduled for replacement, which includes three buses. The three buses

will cost \$668,700; however, in the past, federal grants have been received to recoup a large part of the cost of our buses. Federal grants may be available again in 2012.

Other vehicles being replaced are three one-ton trucks, a fifteen-passenger van, a tee mower, a compact tractor, a manlift, three security vehicles, a semi truck, a skid steer tractor, a small pickup and three utility vehicles.

In addition, 50 new golf carts will be purchased for \$239,400. One other new vehicle being purchased for the golf course is a collection mower to clean fallen leaves and debris.

GRF also expects to spend \$179,600 to replace the network server systems and \$38,000 to hire a communications consultant to evaluate replacement alternatives for the phone switching system. Replacement of the in-car video surveillance system and portable phones is also budgeted for 2012.

Major Rule Change in Vehicle Parking in Village to Be Voted at December GRF Board Meeting

by Mary Robertson

At its November meeting, the GRF board introduced a resolution requiring all resident vehicles have the GRF decal on their windshield and guest vehicles parked overnight in the Village have an overnight guest permit on the dashboard.

Overnight is defined as midnight to 6 a.m. According to the proposal, residents having guests staying after midnight will notify the Gate and an overnight parking permit will be issued by the Gate staff. (See below for actual rule wording.)

GRF states this change will help identify unauthorized, inoperable and abandoned vehicles parked in our community.

The new rule is now in the 30-day notice period and will be voted on at the next board meeting (December 6, 2011). Residents may deliver their written comments to the Village Community Center Information Desk, addressed to the GRF Board, or mail them to the following address:

GRF Board of Directors
P.O. Box 2220
Laguna Woods, CA 92654

Golden Rain Foundation of Laguna Woods PROPOSED TRAFFIC RULE CHANGES

3.1 All resident-owned MOTOR VEHICLES must be registered with the Golden Rain Foundation and display the current Golden Rain Foundation vehicle decal.

7.1.1 All non-resident vehicles must display a parking permit, on the vehicle dashboard, issued by the Security Division or Community Access Department to park in the Community between the hours of Midnight and 6:00 am.

The Foundation of Laguna Woods Village

by Pat Wilkinson

The Social Services Dept. at Laguna Woods Village has been selected as SAGE 2011 Program of the Year. The award was announced by the 55+ Housing Council of Southern California. The Foundation was first awarded this honor in 2004.

It is through the help of Social Services that we are able to give temporary aid to our residents. For instance, we are working with a 79 year old resident, diagnosed with cancer that has now metastasized.

The resident has a small Social Security check each month and she needed help with some basics. The Foundation was able to help this resident by covering her utility bills and providing a grocery gift card to help her with her groceries.

Have you heard about "**The FOUNDATION OF LAGUNA WOODS COOKBOOK**"?

The publication of this cookbook is generously being underwritten by BROADBAND. Send your favorite recipes to thefoundation@comline.com or mail to; PO Box 3279, Laguna Woods, CA 92637. For more information, call Marion Levine, President, at 949-269-2246. There will be more information next month.

Donating is easy - use your credit card on our website: www.lagunawoodsvillagefoundation.com

And Happy Holidays to everyone from all of us at the Foundation. It's you who make a difference to our wonderful community!! Thanks so much!

SAGE Awards

Initiated in 1995, the SAGE Awards honor individuals, projects and programs that have made an outstanding contribution to enhancing the quality of life for Southern California [Santa Barbara to San Diego] residents aged 55+.



Message from the President

This year I have really enjoyed writing about some of the many positive features of life in Laguna Woods Village. For my last contribution as president I will spotlight what I, personally, feel is a gift to prospective members.

I am referring to the two distinct choices of ownership – own a deed or own a share in a stock cooperative. So far, I’ve heard of very few other retirement communities that invite the prospective member to join a condominium mutual or a cooperative mutual with both available in the same retirement community. The attributes of both are, sometimes, different and I like to call them “Different Perks.”

Here’s a list of the Different Perks that my husband and I found attractive in condominium-style living as well as cooperative-style living.

CONDOMINIUMS: Third Mutual

Some new buyers prefer a deed, which comes with the purchase of a condo.

Third Mutual does not impound the property taxes, so owners have control/use of the money until taxes are actually due.

Member ownership includes everything from the walls in as well as an undivided interest in the common areas.

Rent restrictions are more attractive to investors.

Condo owners have greater privacy when they decide to sell. Inspections are only for the purpose of determining that proper permits were obtained for work performed.

COOPERATIVES: United Mutual

The Mutual assumes the responsibility for the exterior and interior maintenance (to original standards).

United provides interior inspections of windows, doors, smoke detectors, etc., and replacements of GE appliances.

The subleasing restriction strives to keep the mutual “owner-occupied” as originally planned.

Since United Mutual is the actual owner of all the property, it can, if necessary, borrow against its valuable assets. So, increases in monthly assessments would probably be minimal for each stockholder.

If liens must ever be filed against shareholders, United is in first position, thereby almost guaranteed to recoup 100 percent of all liens.

2012 FOV MEETING SCHEDULE	
JANUARY 5	ELECTION OF OFFICERS
MARCH 1	PROGRAM TBD
MAY 3	PROGRAM TBD

CALL THE “B” BUS...

...if you need transportation to and from the FOV meetings.

To arrange for special pickups, call 949-597-4659 before 3:30 p.m. the day of the event.

EXTRA, EXTRA...GET YOUR NEWSLETTER

To receive your FOV newsletter by email, please contact maryrobertson@comline.com. Those without an email address can receive the newsletter by regular mail by paying the annual \$15 dues.

Membership News

Starting January 1, 2012, FOV’s membership year will coincide with the calendar year. Dues for the year will still be \$15 single and \$20 double.

Send your check for 2012 to Elinor Chaum at 3312 San Amadeo, Unit #B and mark it “FOV Membership Renewal.”

If you’re not sure what your membership status is, call Elinor at 472-8980. A form for new members is available at the end of this Newsletter and at www.friendsofthevillage.com.

Words, Lies and Homesteading

by Jan Marshall

www.authorhumoristjanmarshall.com

Foreclosures are up; my face muscles are down. The streets are filled with “for sale” notices. One desperate seller actually displayed a “cash and carry” sign. While the “ambassadors” at the entrance were busy waxing their legs and discussing *The Housewives of Gate 9*, it was purchased and whisked away by a weight lifter with a stolen gate pass.

I sympathetically view the crowds milling about who hope to find a gem, then quickly leave shaking their head(s) in disbelief. Expectations are daunted since the most creative writing award no longer belongs to executives preparing their expense accounts or me looking for tax write offs while humming that old ditty, *Nothing from Nothing is Nothing*.

The Oscar now goes to.... Real Estate copy writers. They create the most fanciful phrases since Shakespeare. Very few of the classifieds’ descriptions have a connection to an *actual* dwelling. Here are the *real* meaning of ads in our newspaper.

FIXER UPPER - Condemned by the City of Laguna Woods.

SPLIT LEVEL - There *is* 1 step before front door.

FABULOUS VIEW - Neighbor is an exhibitionist.

DOLLHOUSE - Ken and Barbie must sell since he is now with *Plus Size* Barbie.

TROPICAL LANDSCAPE - Gardeners are absent; busy potting and pruning property for the new Golf Clubhouse.

CHARMING OLD WORLD - Plumbing outdoors - waiting for maintenance's arrival.

BY OWNER - So ugly, even brokers won't list it.

SOLAR ENERGY - With Central Air: Roof blew off. PCM due anytime.

SECLUDED ESTATE - Try and find it. *Who named and numbered these things?*

There are many streets with the same or similar sounding names? I reside on a box of Carmels (Avenida) in my area. Several times a year a stranger knocks and calls out... Mama?? If it weren't for the lovely Mother's Day gifts I receive, I definitely would consider reporting these intrusions.

TA DA: The ACTUAL BEST BARGAINS!

INTERNATIONAL DELIGHT - Cordoba, Majorca, Navarro and the VILLAS Nueva, Terraza and Barthelona: All good deals selling at Leisure World in... **SPAIN!**

Perhaps I'll become a snowbird. Mi Casa will then be Su Casa and vice versa, *mi* Senora's e Senor's! Antonio Banderas; please call to discuss *my* real estate.

*NO DISRESPECT: The housing issue in our community and the country is painful to endure. Like my neighbors, I cannot get a reverse mortgage **nor** sell my home or entice Warren Buffett to adopt me. The way I cope is to seek a "chuckle" along with Chuck, a friend I met at Trader Joe's. Won't you join us?*

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Jan is seeking sponsors for her latest humorous *survival* book, "DANCIN, SHMANCIN with the SCARS!" (A portion of the profits will be contributed to the Laguna Woods Foundation.) For information, contact Jan at 458-0660.

*Happy Holidays to All
and to all a Good Year!*



Friends of the Village
Newsletter
Newsletter Staff
Team Leader: Mary Robertson
Editor: Marian Dailey
For E-mail Distribution:
..... maryrobertson@comline.com
Letters/Comments:
..... lwvfriends@gmail.com