



Your CasaBlanca

September 2008

Our Review of the “Off Season”

We kick off the new season with this September issue of our newsletter. With the assistance of our Association President, Gail Christiansen, and Landscape Committee Chair, Howard Butzer, and myself, Syd Sonneborn, Chair of the Communications Committee, we will try to bring you up to date on what has transpired over the Summer months. The new season will officially kick off with our first Board meeting on October 21, 2008.

Gail’s Review Review of Summer Months

By Gail Christiansen

Of course the Villa Portofino second phase issue--they were going to have the public hearing in August and then that was put on "indefinite hold" because he hadn't applied for the permit.

By the way, I have found out that the property over there is in default with the bank. It was scheduled to go to sale today (September 8)---it had been scheduled originally for August 14th but was postponed a few times by "mutual agreement". I would hazard a guess that he is trying to re-negotiate his loan with the bank.

We have had quite a few problems over the summer with the water system---first, the tank overflowed as a result of the float---So. Ca. Pump came out and gave us a proposal for over \$2,000.00. Dana fixed it for about \$150.00.

Then the pump (the old one) went out. It was at the same time that we had the power outage, which may have had something to do with it. So. Cal Pump came out and switched over to the new pump and gave us a proposal for the old pump of over \$3,000.00. I then fired them.

Then the electric went out at the system. We had an electrician out and found that the breaker was fried and the entire panel was pretty much shot. He replaced everything and so hopefully that will be the end of the problems.

As far as the old pump, Dick Stephan, our manager, was supposed to have someone come out and check it but he has pretty much been out for the last month, so that hasn't happened yet. I am not real concerned about it, we do have the new pump and if nothing else, we can wait until Fred Schwartz gets back out here and let him deal with it. (He knows about this stuff).

So that is pretty much it that I can think of. Lindsey Griffith, our Treasurer, has moved some money (CD's) around (and considering the market), gotten some good interest rates).

Over the summer months we lost two of our homeowners. Art Ingle passed away in June while traveling back to the east coast for the summer and Dan Barnes passed away in July. Dan was a retired Palm Desert City employee and assisted our association with advise and who to contact within the City government.

Gail Christiansen, President

Communication Committee

The Communications Committee continued to meet at pool # 1 on the second Tuesday of each month throughout the summer months. The monthly meetings of this committee consist of informing the attendees of current issues being dealt with by our board and a "members forum" where the attendees can let attending Board Members become aware of issues or problems the homeowners feel the board should address at their next board meeting.

Since the board has not had a meeting since June, I have condensed the concerns our members addressed at our meetings. The board members should now take up these issues, discuss them, and respond to them at the October Board Meeting.

Synopsis of Members input at the Summer Communications Meetings

July 8 Meeting

Jack Gerhardt had prepared a list of items he wanted addressed.

1.) The reasoning on the \$100.00 fee for architectural changes? (Gail's answer: to

cover expenses and bring in revenue to the Association- assisting in keeping monthly dues down.)

2.) Status on foreclosures in our Association? (Gail's answer: There have been 5 but only 2 have been going on for about 2 years for lack of association dues. Once the bank takes over, the fees will be paid and brought up to date when the property is sold.

3.) Any thing happening on the smoking issue at swimming pools he brought up last month? (Gail's answer: No, it was not addressed at the last Board meeting).

4.) Sidewalks are not being edged but every other week.

5.) The phone kiosk at our entry way looks like a cemetery memorial marker. Can anything be done to improve its appearance?

6.) Circular flower/plant beds at both entry ways are misshaped, not the same size. A concrete edging would assist in their appearance and make it easier to control their size & shape.

August 12 Meeting

The meeting was then turned over to the attendees for input. Julie Waren had multiple items to bring forward.

(1) It would be nice if we could get the landscapers to alter the way the grass is cut on Tuesday mornings so that the pools in the west end could be used on alternate meetings or to change the day from Tuesdays.

(2) Someone on Calle Bisque is feeding ducks and it is causing a big mess. At last count, 40 ducks are flying in, eating and making a mess. (Answer:A letter has been sent to the individual asking for them to stop feeding the ducks. Our rules and regulations need to reflect that feeding ducks and birds is not tolerated because it makes a mess on the common grounds and draws in rats in the

winter months. It is hoped the Board will address updating the rules when they start meeting in the fall).

(3) Associated with the above, we need to have garden hoses at the pools so furniture and decks can be squirted off.

(4) The pool skimmers do not seem to be being cleaned properly. They continuously are full of leaves, dead bugs etc. They are even dirty right after the pools has been cleaned.

(5) Pool 3 still does not have a regulation Burrtec Trash can.

Jack Gerhardt repeated the issues he had from last month on the entry flower beds, installing a concrete curb edge, doing something to improve the looks of our phone kiosk and eliminating smoking from the pool areas (again a new rules issue). Jack was reminded the Board is not meeting in the summer months but his issues will be brought up when they again begin the new season in October.

September 9 Meeting

Doris Elmo brought up a question as to how close to our homes the gardeners were to maintain the vegetation. Gail indicated that they were supposed to take care of everything except the patio area.

Julie Waren indicated one of her neighbors wondered if it might not be better to eliminate all plants in a flower bed when they begin to die off rather than just leave large bald areas. She also indicated that the shower in the pool #3 area has maintenance problems. There is mud on the shower area floor and the shut off for the shower is up too high for some people to reach safely. The head is corroded too. Lindsey Griffith indicated she was able to turn over one of our CD's at maturity to one at Washington Mutual for 5% for 13 months! The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Casablanca Landscape Committee: 2008 Summer News

It has been a hot and humid summer. But in spite of the heat, we have had fewer landscape problems than last year. Some shrubs around our homes have the usual summer burn, but that will be trimmed back once the temperature drops. Those that don't survive will be removed and replaced.

It seems we have had more weeds in the lawn than usual. Greenview used control spray on the invasive nutsedge grass in mid August and is spraying weed control for weeds now. Shortcutting will begin about the week of September 9 in preparation for rye grass seeding. It is a new process that will require four weeks of cutting shorter each week and reducing the water by two thirds. Reseeding will take place without scalping after October 15.

We didn't seem to have the rabbit problem we had last year; however, ducks were a problem in and around the swimming pools. Now that homeowners have quit feeding them, that problem has been resolved.

The olive trees were treated in the spring for fruit control, but this was not as effective as usual. As a result, Greenview has trimmed those trees which were a problem at no charge to us.

Our irrigation problems are ongoing; however, expenses are less than they were last year. In some cases we are having Greenview repair, rather than replace, to save us money. The Landscape Committee will resume our usual work around the complex once the temperatures cool down.

Please do not make landscape changes around your home, other than on your patio, without approval. Refer all landscape questions or problems to Dick Stephan at J & W Management.

October News Letter to address Shakeout

The next issue of “*Your Casablanca*” in October, will be mostly dedicated to the proposed November 13 earthquake drill titled “The Great Southern California Shakeout” which will be held over all of Southern California on November 13. It will be the largest earthquake drill conducted in U.S. history!

The drill will evolve around a theoretical 7.8 earthquake to rupture on the San Andreas Fault starting at the Northeast end of the Salton Sea. The shaking is proposed to last a full minute and will move us that are on the Pacific plate (South of the fault line) about 40 feet to the Northwest! Please read this issue when it comes out and participate with our Emergency Preparedness Committee in this exercise. We also plan to distribute information to homeowners via a handbill placed at your mailbox.

Casablanca Management

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