

Mirabella at LaVina

Newsletter – May 2005

Message from the President

Several homeowners have inquired about the assessments for the community. The homeowner's association is essentially a business, and these assessments are collected to operate our business. Our operating expenses include grounds maintenance for the community common areas, management fees, and utilities. A copy of the budget can be found on the website or by calling or sending an email to Rex Bowman. Homeowners failing to pay their assessments cause a strain on the operating budget for our community! Please note that attendance will be taken at the next association meeting and per By-Law Section 2.10(d), those homeowners that are not current in their assessments will be required to remit payment to participate in the vote.

Community Update

At the last homeowner's meeting on April 20, 2005, it was decided by vote of the homeowners that were present that no new fences would be approved by the Architectural Review Committee until after the meeting on May 26.

At the association meeting on May 26, there will be a vote on allowed fences in the association, including type of fence, color of fence, and height of fence. Please research each different fence type, as each type has advantages and disadvantages. The current allowed fences are wood, brick, stucco, wrought iron, and PVC. Two-thirds of the majority vote will decide what will be allowed in the community going forward.

Please note that according to Covenant Section 3.5, a sign indicating that a property is available for rent or lease is expressly prohibited! Anyone in violation of this will receive notice and the sign will be removed by the association.

An environmental specialist from the City of Orlando will be at the next meeting to discuss storm drains and pollution in urban areas.

Volunteers Needed

The association is looking for available volunteers for a neighborhood watch program and a community events committee. Volunteers should be available to attend association meetings as well as participate with others in a collaborative effort to improve our community. Please call or send an email to Rex Bowman with the name of the group listed above for which you would like to volunteer.

Architectural Review Committee

Please keep your lawn mowed, edged and watered! (Covenant Section 3.15) You are responsible for the area leading up to the street as well, which includes the easement between the street the sidewalk. The value of your property and your community can be negatively affected by a lawn with overgrown grass and weeds. Spring is here, and summer is coming soon, so the dormant season for sod has passed and you need to be aggressive

in maintaining an attractive lawn. A simple application of fertilizer (sometimes referred to as "weed & feed") will add nutrients that your lawn needs to grow and help restrict weeds. Keeping your lawn edged will prevent "runners" from creeping across the sidewalk and your driveway, detracting from the look of the property. Keep in mind that your shrubs should be neatly trimmed as well as they need to be pruned to promote continual growth.

Lawn Care Tips

St. Augustine sod should be mowed at a height of 3 to 3½ inches. This is usually the highest or second to highest setting on your lawn mower. When a turf is mowed too short, it will be less dense, have a brownish appearance and the root system will be weakened, as well as allowing more weeds to grow. It's time to mow your lawn when the grass is 4 to 4½ inches in height.

Be sure to keep your lawn mower blade sharp and sharpen once a year. A sharp mower blade will make a cleaner cut on the blade of grass and will reduce the amount of water lost from the grass during cutting preventing the "torn" look of your grass.

Take care when choosing a lawn care company. Each lawn care company will offer sod fertilization, insect and weed control, but the application can be with a liquid or a dry solution. They will usually offer easy payment schedules as well. Be sure to research a company before signing into a contract! Landscaping maintenance companies can also vary in the services they offer. Make sure that if you choose to hire someone, they guarantee at least mowing (at 3 - 3½ inches) and edging. An edged lawn makes a significant difference in the appearance of your lawn.

Lawn Watering Tips

The area we live in is managed by the St. John's River Water Management Program, which permits watering only twice a week. You only need to water your lawn with ¾ to 1 inch of water, and this equals (on average) approximately 15 minutes of watering per zone. Ideally, you want to water your lawn once in the morning instead of in the morning and evenings. Watering too late in the evening can promote fungus growth on your lawn since dew and overnight moisture prevents the irrigation water from being absorbed into the ground. Watering too frequently will promote weeds such as dollar weed and sedge weed.

Website

The website is now online! The address is <http://www.mirabellalavina.com>. All of the community forms, association meeting minutes, and newsletters are stored online, and updates will progress as the website grows and more information is added. All community contacts will also be kept on the webpage for easy reference.