

Royal Park Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 4

August 2010

Hurricane Season - Are You Ready?

- Special Articles of Interest**
- Hurricane 2010
 - Hope for South Florida Real Estate
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Antarctica



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It is already third month into the hurricane period and so far we have been lucky, however, it is better to be safe than sorry so please keep yourself vigilant of the fact that we live in a tropical paradise with hurricane season.

It is important for all of us to be cognizant of the community by helping our neighbors, specially the weak and elderly in case of emergency.

Complacency may leave us bewildered in Emergency - remember Andrew was the first storm of 1992, it almost dissipated en route before it landed as a category 4 Hurricane killing 65 people and damages estimated at 25 Billion. In 2010 allowing for inflation that damages are equal to 38.85 Billion.

Residents should update their phone numbers with the condo office and make sure that the office has a copy of their door key (all keys are kept in a safe and will only be used in emergency.) Also check with their immediate neighbors or building reps about their special needs and contact numbers.

HURRICANE WATCH:

Prepare for a hurricane as early as possible. Once a storm's path is forecasted to be near South Florida, begin to monitor the storm and prepare for an evacuation if ordered by the city.

PREPARATION PLAN:

Everyone is urged to make an Emergency Plan in case of evacuation. Plan in advance where you will stay, how you will get

there, and what supplies you will take.

You should have an emergency supply kit ready. When you return, you may not have electricity or water for weeks. Consider the needs of elderly and infant family members and pets.

Make prior arrangements with friends or relatives living in a non-evacuation area or check into a hotel located inland; or, as a last resort, use a public shelter. Make sure that you take proper ID with you; you will need it to re-enter your home. Send a list of friends' and neighbors' telephone numbers and copies of important papers to family members in another city.

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Hopeful Signs for South Florida Real Estate

According to Miami Board of Realtors South Florida's housing market affirmed its independence from national trends recently as marked improvement in sales helped by the region's international buyers and dropping prices.

In July, Miami-Dade pending contracts stood at 10,113, up 40.5% from July 2009, whereas in Broward



pending sales were 7,830 up 25.4% from last year. Pending contracts offer an early indicator of sales activity because typical sales have 4 to 8 weeks lag between a sales contract and a closed deal.

Continued on page 7.....

Royal Park Notice Board

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Marlene Masson,
Property Manager

Email: royalpark_marlene@comcast.net

Veronica Martin
Assistant to
Property Manager

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Alvin
Head man

James Ricatti

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Royal Park Newsletter

August 2010 issue

Editor: **Naim Naqi**
Articles, Graphics & Ads: **Naim Naqi**

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The Vice President and Treasurer's Update

Several well meaning unit owners informed me that there is a recall under way to replace some of the board members and the manager. One owner was asked if he would serve and he declined, even though rumor has it that he would. The same owner recommended that I should be softer and less direct in my approach in dealing with issues.

I truly appreciate his concern, however, as a business person; I deal with issues in a logical, direct way, leaving charm to personal relationships. One of the benefits in being a no-nonsense person, set goals are accomplished. In other words, I will continue to be direct and forthright in the creation of solutions to Royal Park's financial problems.

This doesn't mean if advised, don't rock the boat put your business acumen aside and just levy a \$500 one-time special assessment to make up for the shortfall and pay RP's expenses I gladly do this. Why not? Then in 2011 we simply raise the maintenance by \$75 a quarter. Your choice!

I do promise, should we ever receive all of the money owed from the past due owners and the rest of Royal Park owners are comfortable paying higher maintenance fees and freely support the liberal spending of their money, I have no problem hiring people back that work about 2 hours a day because the rest of the time they are otherwise occupied.

Now an update on the changes:

Contracts: Iguana has a new contract and we saved a few dollars, yet added 3 fertilizations per year for our palm trees and shrubs and 2 weed sprays per year for our grass, **free of charge**. A **reduction of our telephone charges** was achieved and in the process eliminated a phone number we paid for 3 years and did not know we had. The cleaning service **also reduced their fee**. The only contract left is the elevator company and we are shopping!

We also signed up with a new company to do background and credit checks which again **reduced the expense** for Royal Park and the same is **true for the company doing our payroll**.

Employees: The next big change came by realigning our staff. We discovered that the excessive use of monthly pool chemicals suddenly stopped, and we actually had some chemicals left over at the end of the month. Our pools are now professionally maintained at a cost of about \$1,800 more per year over the yearly chemical cost. We saved the pool maintenance person's salary that with benefits came to the high 30's. We hired a new person who can devote 85% of his time to maintenance, which means that we are now current on all our maintenance and finally can begin with repairing items that have been placed on the back burner due to lack of time.

Royal Park's overtime expenses in 2009 were **\$13,000**. I can assure you this large expense will not occur in 2010 unless there is a qualified emergency.

A simple overtime saving measure was realized by not having the trash collected on a Monday holiday. ie: Memorial Day, 4th of July and we will be doing the same for Labor Day. This way the employees can and did enjoy a holiday with their families and Royal Park saved the overtime expense. A win-win situation for everyone.



We hired a new **office manager, Marlene Masson**, who also is a licensed CAM, very computer literate and bilingual. The office manager will bring the office into the 21st century, clean Royal Park's files, and make the office function in a **professional and efficient** manner. Meaning that the office is a place to work, addressing unit owners needs, such as issuing decals, insurance forms, work orders, accepting forms from realtors for rentals or purchases and a multitude of other work. After all, an office is not a place for gossiping, chatting, or lounging around.

General Info: Unit owners damaging common areas that RP must repair, will be back-charged for the cost. i.e. disabling the fire alarm blaster in your unit.

Naim Naqi provided me with a company's name for collection. I appreciate his concern; however the collection agency charges 25% of the collected amount, while an attorney charges the unit owner and not the association. Money wise, staying with an attorney is a better deal for an association. But keep the emails coming.

Also a light of reason should be shown on some of the creative stories making the rounds in Royal Park about the board and the manager.

After the termination of Tony, Mrs. Pendergast told me "I was doing a good job, and people should leave me/us alone." Suddenly there is a change of heart. Could it be because Gloria discovered that Dick Pendergast is not licensed to install new A/C's, he can only repair them and she took his roof key?

I can assure you; none of the board members ever harassed any employee. Instead employees were asked if they needed help to do their job. But the offer was declined. One staff member was asked, "Are you receiving overtime pay for staying late," the response was, "no, they liked to work here and they work slow, this is why they stay late."

Continued on page 8.....

Get Prepared For The Hurricane Season!

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Cool Facts about **ANTARCTICA**



Antarctica is the most southerly continent located about the Geographic South Pole. The magnetic South Pole is located off the coast of Antarctica. It is the 5th largest of the world's seven continents but was not sighted until 1820.

Antarctica is a large land mass buried under a vast ice cap and surrounded by oceans. In this respect it is very different from the Arctic which is a frozen ocean surrounded by land, the North Pole is located on shifting sea-ice.

Antarctica is the only land on our planet that is not owned by any country. Ninety percent of the world's ice covers Antarctica. This ice also represents seventy percent of all the fresh water in the world. As strange as it sounds, however, Antarctica is essentially a desert; the average yearly total precipitation is about two inches. Although covered with ice, all but 0.4% of its land area, Antarctica is the driest place on the planet!

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Newsletter**

IN MEMORIAM

Dana Arline Detkos of Bldg. 119 passed away July 12, 2010,
75 years young, Memorial Service held in Niagara Falls
hometown on August 14, survived by her husband
George, son Greg, and daughter Lisa.



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CHURCH BULLETINS

They're Back! Those wonderful Church Bulletins! Thank God for church ladies with typewriters... These sentences (with all the BLOOPERS) actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services: (I think)

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.'
The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off- let the Church help.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM prayer and medication to follow.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM sharp. Please use the large double door at the side entrance.
And the best one for last

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday:
'I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours!'

Submitted by: Joe Masterson, Building 109

EXOTIC FRUITS



For years consumers have struggled to fit the large round fruit in their refrigerators. And then there was the problem of trying to cut the fruit when it kept rolling around.

But, 20 years ago a forward-thinking farmer on Japan's South-Western island of Shikoku solved the problem.

The farmer from Zentsuji, came up with the idea of making a cube-shaped watermelon which could easily be packed and stored. To make it happen, farmers grew the melons in glass boxes and the fruit then naturally assumed the same shape.

Today, the cubic shaped watermelons are hand-picked and shipped all over Japan.

But the fruit, on sale in a selection of department stores and up-market supermarkets, appeals mainly to the wealthy and fashion-conscious of Tokyo and Osaka, Japan's two major cities.

Each melon sells for 10,000 yen, equivalent to about \$83 which is almost double, or even triple than of a normal watermelon in Japan.

When Grandma Goes To Court

Humor; Posted on: 2008-01-17 20:06:02 [[Print](#) / [Instant Flyer](#)]

Lawyers should never ask a Mississippi grandma a question if they aren't prepared for the answer.

In a trial, a Southern small-town prosecuting attorney called his first witness, a grandmotherly, elderly woman to the stand. He approached her and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know me?' She responded, 'Why, yes, I do know you, Mr. Williams. I've known you since you were a boy, and frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, and you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realize you'll never amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you.'

The lawyer was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know the defense attorney?'

She again replied, 'Why yes, I do. I've known Mr. Bradley since he was a youngster, too. He's lazy, bigoted, and he has a drinking problem. He can't build a normal relationship with anyone, and his law practice is one of the worst in the entire state. Not to mention he cheated on his wife with three different women. One of them was your wife. Yes, I know him.'

The defense attorney nearly died.

The judge asked both counselors to approach the bench and, in a very quiet voice, said,

'If either of you idiots asks her if she knows me, I'll send you both to the electric chair.'



.....continued from page 1

South Florida Real Estate Market

The local market hasn't been completely immune from the post-tax-credit slump. In the past 3 months, pending sales are down 5.1 percent in Broward and 3.2 percent in Miami-Dade. However, about 60 percent of South Florida sales have gone to foreign buyers, who are more likely to pay with cash and were never eligible for the tax credit.



With financing still difficult to obtain, deep discounts on distressed properties and cash buyers are propping up sales, according to Peter Zalewski of Miami based Condo Vultures Realty and Condo Vultures.com.

Short Sales (pre-foreclosures) now account for 25% of South Florida sales.

Although the pending sales statistics seem encouraging they may not reflect the true picture since a large portion of short sales take months to get a final answer from banks or lenders and a high percentage end up being rejected or buyers not being able to close and the property end up being back on the market several months later with a possible drop in price.

In other words, closed sales are the true indicator and in today's market consider short sales contracts like a football game - its not over till its over!

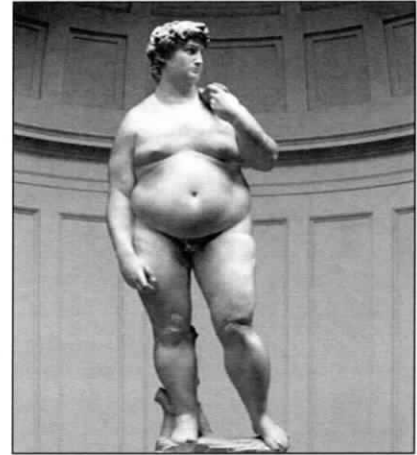
Naim Naqi

Statistical Source:
Florida Realtors,
Orlando



*Beauty of
Mathematics*

$$\begin{aligned}
 1 \times 8 + 1 &= 9 \\
 12 \times 8 + 2 &= 98 \\
 123 \times 8 + 3 &= 987 \\
 1234 \times 8 + 4 &= 9876 \\
 12345 \times 8 + 5 &= 98765 \\
 123456 \times 8 + 6 &= 987654 \\
 1234567 \times 8 + 7 &= 9876543 \\
 12345678 \times 8 + 8 &= 98765432 \\
 123456789 \times 8 + 9 &= 987654321
 \end{aligned}$$



After a short visit to the United States, Michelangelo's David returns to Italy.

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.....continued from page 3

The Vice President & Treasurer's Report

Reviewing payroll records, a different story emerged. Royal Park paid the staff member for every hour past 8 hours worked.

You should ask yourself what is **our agenda**. It's rather simple, let's move forward and solve the problems. We also want Royal Park to be run like a million dollar Corporation and not like a brother-in-law's job. Meaning we had to hire him, but don't expect anything in return. **This board does!**

Why no board meetings during the summer? We haven't had them in the past years and I have been living here for a while.

Starting in September we will have board meetings again and I am looking forward to creating a budget committee. If interested, please serve! This way you see what it actually cost to run an association.

Monika Courroy



.....continued from page 1

Hurricane - Are you ready?

Review your insurance policies to ensure that you are fully covered. Insurers cease issuing policies when tropical systems are within the quadrant.

Inventory and take photos of your property and valuables, and store these photos and other important documents in a waterproof container and take with you when evacuating.

QUICK HOME INSPECTION

Whether you plan to stay or leave here is a checklist:

Update insurance coverage
Check your shutters
Secure your condo.
Bring in tables, plants, furniture and other loose items from porch.
Board up windows and glass doors.
Fill prescriptions and car gas tank.
Unplug TV/computer and all electrical appliances.
Move furniture and electronics away from windows and cover with plastic.
Shut-off water main valve (inside foyer closet) and electric range from main fuse box in kitchen.
Turn your refrigerator to its coldest setting.
Place valuables in waterproof containers and store in high place.
Two-week supply of food/drink
Special dietary needs items
Small containers of canned meats, fruits, soups, etc.
Dry Cereal and crackers, vitamins,

protein bars, nuts, peanut butter.
Bread, canned or bottled juices
Dry or non-refrigerated milk and baby food or formula.

Radio/TV/Fan (battery-powered)
Flashlight(s), batteries, can opener, matches or lighter

Toiletries, paper plates, plastic bags, eating utensils, toilet paper
Bleach, water purification tablets, rain gear, sleeping bags, blankets
Mosquito/insect repellent
Clothes, hearing aid, reading glasses etc.

Extra cash.

Cooler with ice/water supplies
Toys/books/activities for kids and Survival Kit

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Broward County Sheriff - 954-831-8901

Broward County Fire Rescue

954-831-8200

Broward Hurricane Hotline:

954-831-4000

911 (for emergencies)

Evacuation Assistance: 954-537-2888

Florida Emergency Information Line:

800-342-3557

Broward County

954-831-4000

UTILITIES:

Florida Power & Light

1-800-468-8243

BellSouth

611 (Repairs)

1-888-757-6500

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GREAT TRUTHS THAT ADULTS HAVE LEARNED:

Raising teenagers is like nailing jelly to a tree.

Wrinkles don't hurt.

Families are like fudge...mostly sweet, with a few nuts.

Today's mighty oak is just yesterday's nut that held its ground.

Laughing is good exercise. It's like jogging on the inside.

Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber, not the toy.

SUCCESS:

At age 4 success is Not piddling in your pants

At age 12 success is Having friends

At age 17 success is Having a driver's license

At age 35 success is Having money

At age 50 success is Having money

At age 70 success is Having friends

At age 75 success is Having a driver's license

At age 85 success is Not piddling in your pants

EVER WONDER ...

If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?

If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the terminal?

How come we choose from just two people to run for president and over fifty for Miss America?

When we were young we used to go "skinny dipping," now we just "chunky dunk."

Why is it that our children can't read a Bible in school, but they can in prison?

Life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.



Definition of a Bucket Seat



Dreams of Animals

