

Royal Park Newsletter

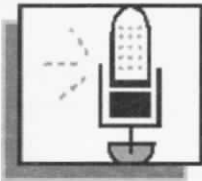
Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2008

Elections For The New Board

Special Interest Articles

- Nominees for Election 2008 Board, Royal Park
- Preventive Maintenance
- Diverse Broward County
- Let's Explore Florida Keys
- 10 Most Spoken Languages in the World



According to our condo documents, elections for the New Board of Directors are held on the 1st Monday in February. This year, it is Monday, the 4th of February, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. Please make sure you complete **The Ballot** and **Proxy** as per instructions and mail or drop at the office as soon as possible. You can also do the same at the meeting.

The candidates running are Dominique Clergeau, Monika Conroy, Lee Hinkle, John Hynes, D. Michael Iradi, David Kaminski, Art Kaufman, Nancy McNeill, Linda McNicoll, Harvey Ross, Bill Schwing, and Daniel Smith. Their resumes were mailed together with the ballot and proxy in early January. It is encouraging to see a dozen names

volunteering their time to serve the community. All candidates are good people deserving an equal chance, so please make sure you participate and exercise your right to vote.

I dare not pretend to suggest any New Year resolution, because in another life I was a billionaire, till I started to bet everyone who breaks his New Year resolution, that I will give a dollar - thinking that people cannot be that cheap to break such an intense promise for a dollar. I was soon to be proved wrong ... and now I am a bankrupt billionaire!

Instead of a New Year resolution, everyone should promise themselves to take care of the community in their own

special way, by taking interest in their property, volunteering for building representative or community events, serving in special committees, and most importantly, actively participating in the monthly Board meetings.

Royal Park residents thank the present Board of Directors for their hard work during 2007 and look forward to welcoming the New Board in February.

Hoping everyone had a **HAPPY NEW YEAR**, and wishing you all a healthy one!



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President's Comments

It's 2008 already, and a very eventful year is behind us. We have had three different Property Managers, and six changes in the Board of Directors, as well as changes in Office Staff this last year.

Even with all this turmoil

(for lack of a better word), there was a lot accomplished in 2007:

Signed Comcast contract that gave us back a \$33,650 refund.

Replaced the long neglected sprinkler system on both sides of the Entrance-

way (it was damaged by WILMA).

Installed curbing at the Gate-house Entrance-way. Signed new Landscaping contract, saving Royal Park \$34,000 a year, with much better service.

Continued on page 2

Royal Park Notice Board

Register Your Complaint

Did you ever notice that at times, while visiting the condo office, the phone is ringing off the hook, and sounds like a **Complaint Central Station** - the calls are not only less important, but some residents take up so much of the staff's time in lodging their complaints assuming they are on a **Complaint Hot Line!**

Unless it is an **EMERGENCY**, please refrain from making these calls as the office has a Complaint Sheet and also a Work Order sheet for maintenance issues at the office

counter.

Submitting these in writing will not only free up the staff's valuable time but will also ensure timely execution of the issues. Although these will be dealt on first come first serve basis - an order of priority will determine the completion of the tasks in hand, so please be patient!

Our Manager Robert Deme is working diligently to streamline certain procedures in the office and for the outside maintenance.

Thank you for your co-operation.
The Editor

ON A POSITIVE NOTE!

I would like to **THANK** our Board of Governors for all the time and devotion that they give to everyone in Royal Park. We are fortunate to have a few good people who volunteer to help run this huge complex and in spite of the large turnover of the management and staff and other problems they continue to do their job.

Let's all give the Board a big
THANK YOU!
as their term ends and a new Board takes over in February so let's also wish the new Board
GOOD LUCK!

Jane Baker
Building 101
A Long Term Royal Park Resident/Owner

Continued from page 1

Signed new Landscaping contract, saving Royal Park \$34,000 a year, with much better service.

Signed a new Cleaning & Maintenance contract, saving Royal Park \$24,000 a year, with improved service.

Reduced telephone expense by 30% by reverting back to ATT.

Engaged a new Lift Station Pumping Company, reducing each service call by approximately

\$600 on each call.

Installed Hurricane Shutters on the Condo Office, and also installed a Security System for Condo Office protection.

By closely checking all other expenditures on all services & supplies, we ended the year in EXCELLENT financial condition. Thanks should go to all members of the Board of Directors and our current Property Manager, Robert Deme.

The end result was a REDUCTION, in

your Quarterly Maintenance Payments, which is unprecedented in all the history of Royal Park.

Please make sure you take active interest in the voting process and return the ballots and proxies in a timely manner.

I hope the new Board of Directors will continue in a similar path, and I wish them all success, in this sometimes "a thankless volunteer job".

Bob O'Kon,
President

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Plus download or print Condo Rules & Regulations, Applications, Plans etc.

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Club

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Royal Park Newsletter

January 2008 issue

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

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Anatomy of a Royal Park Condo: Part II

It is a known fact that you do not really know someone well until you marry them. Condo living is very much like a marriage - without sex of course. Once you buy the property and agree to live amongst your neighbors, you sign the screening documents agreeing to abide by the rules and regulations, while at the same time ensuring your rights to quiet enjoyment and peaceful living. With time and being a human you come to like and in some cases dislike your neighbors due to a multitude of reasons. To ensure a harmonious existence and keeping your side of the turf in good graces, the first and foremost task is to take care of your property.

Hence, **PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE** is the key. Otherwise, like a bad

marriage, it will become a "till a sale do us apart" scenario!

Generally speaking when something goes wrong in any condo, community residents are quick to blame the Association, the Board and the maintenance staff without giving much aforethought. First of all, the Board members are volunteers elected by the owners, and they certainly did not volunteer for health reasons! Management and staff can always function effectively if residents obey simple rules and take interest in their property and cooperate in the betterment of the community.

On a normal car worth \$20,000, you spend on average \$2,000 a year in maintenance such as oil changes, tuning, transmission, tire, wheel

alignment and other unforeseen repairs, which is roughly 10% of the purchase price, but when it comes to a property worth say \$150,000 most people will balk on spending \$1500 a year - a mere 1% of the purchase price.

Consider your apartment as a car and once in a while take the high road to "**Common Sense**" and keep an eye on the goal post saying "**Logic**" - on the way to the summit do not ignore the slogans "respect thyself" "respect thy property" "respect thy neighbor" and "respect thy community." Arriving at the destination - your Preventive Maintenance Repair Shop - you will find the key to worry-free living which will avoid emergency situations and unexpected damages; for instance,

Maintenance Matters - Preventive maintenance ensures worry-free living ...

when your leaky pipes are paying an occasional visit or your recently acquired pesky critters are making midnight sorties into your neighbors' apartment.

In Florida you are self insured; in other words, if your water damage goes to the floor below you or next door then your insurance company will only fix your apartment not your neighbor's and vice versa - in other words if the floor above leaks into yours then yours will be fixed but if you do not have insurance then others' insurance will not cover your damages.

Water: By far water related damages are most prevalent and affect not only your property but the surrounding neighbors and can be avoided with little effort and common sense.

Toilet: If the water commode and tank is original then it's time

to change to a new water efficient set. Most shut-off valves get frozen with time, the trick is to open all the way then close one turn. It is prudent to change valves under the kitchen sink, wash basins and toilet tanks every 10 years. All toilet tanks should have the siphon style water dispenser rather than the old style ball and lever unless the whole system is made of copper. If the lever is connected to water intake pipe with plastic then you have a disaster waiting to happen as with usage the plastic part either breaks or cracks resulting in flooding when you least expect it. For this reason these old style tank parts are forbidden in some condominiums.



Plumbing: Most licensed plumbers will advise against using *Draino* as its chemicals are harsh for the pipes particularly old pipes. If the system is

not abused then there is no need to use strong de-clogging chemicals as our maintenance crew routinely 'snake' the building from the roof and side.

Unfortunately, many residents continue to throw objects including diapers, paper towels and even mop heads in the toilet resulting in blockage at the septic tank and breaking the system.

Similarly, the **disposal** is the most abused equipment. It should only be used for crushing delicate objects like eggshells, discarded cooked food and vegetables. Skins of a couple of potatoes are one thing but grinding a load of 2 lbs of potato peels for your party is likely to clog the system. An occasional grinding of ice will keep the blades sharpened.

It's important to run the **dish-washer** at least once a month to prevent freezing of the motor.Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

Only dishwasher detergent should be used, if you run out, never use the dishwashing liquid as a substitute. The bubbles and water will somehow find a way on the kitchen floor giving you the biggest surprise upon return from work. Never use liquid bleach to clean the interior instead use 1/4th cup white vinegar and run it with glass and crockery items and the tea and coffee stains from the cups and coffee pot will be gone too!

The most common problem in the **shower area** is the wall containing shower pipes and connection to the tub spout. Original valves and plumbing, if started to corrode, will leak inside the wall weakening or caving in the wall and also leaking into the ceiling of bathroom below. Preventive measure is to make a square hole at the valve junction and have all the guts inside replaced (cost including new shower head, lever and spout approx \$400) then repair that wall and either install larger tiles throughout the shower area or a metal plate closing the hole since

the original small tiles are hard to find. In some cases the whole wall has to be replaced.

Average life of a **hot water heater** is 8 to 12 years depending on the manufacture but many owners still keep them beyond 15 years. If yours is old then it is imperative to replace even if the outside rust is invisible. Make sure you have it installed by a licensed plumber or a certified handyman and that a hot water shut-off valve is properly installed on top of the heater. Install the lever type similar to the cold water shut-off as the old-fashioned screw valve has tendency for the threads to wear off or will get frozen with time.

.....To be Continued

Next Issue: A/C - Electric - Floors - Walls - Termites - Etc.



SAVE THE DATE !!!

Sunday, March 9, 2008...The Broward County Women's History Coalition will be inducting several Broward County Women into the Broward County Women's Hall of Fame, Class of 2008.

Dues notices will be going out in the next 2 weeks...as well as info for NOMINATING a deserving woman into the Hall of Fame.

Committee positions are available, and volunteers are needed.

Once again, our event will be at the BCC/Coconut Creek North Regional Library. If you are available to serve on any committee, please respond to this e-mail. An official notification will also be sent shortly, by US Mail.

We NEED your expertise, your knowledge of women in the County, and your willingness to serve.

Any regular mail communications may be sent to our mailing address:

PO Box 1234
Pompano Beach, FL 33061-1234

The time is short...we need your input.

Patti Lynn, President

Broward County Women's History Coalition

Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

World's 10 Most Widely Spoken languages:

Rank/Language:

1. Chinese, Mandarin
2. English
3. Spanish
4. Arabic
5. Bengali
6. Hindi
7. Russian
8. Portuguese
9. Japanese
10. German

French is ranked 14th!

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Celebrating Our Differences: By Kristen Jacobs – Broward County Commission, District 2

Reprinted from *Island City News*, with Ms. Kristin Jacobs' permission – Bob O'Kon, President.

Experts agree that the definition of "diversity," when referencing a community's population, refer to individual differences. Add sunshine and water to differences such as race, gender or ages, then fold in less noticeable variances including religion, ability status, sexual orientation, education or socio-economic circumstances and you have created the tropical blend we call Broward County.

Since 1990, Broward County has risen from the 16th to the 3rd most racially diverse county in Florida. Approximately 21% of the population is African American, including a large number of individuals who immigrated from Haiti, Jamaica, and other parts of the Caribbean, as well as Central and South America. More than one-quarter of our residents are now foreign born, with 70 % of those from Latin America. Hispanics, primarily of Puerto Rican, Cuban and Columbian descent, currently represent 17 % of Broward County's total population.

Highlighting Broward County's appeal as a retirement community, roughly 13% of residents are age 65 or older. In addition to permanent

population, nearly 90,000 part-time residents live within Broward County at the peak of its "season," and more than 10.4 million tourists visit the county annually. It is estimated that 950,000 of the visitors represent the gay and lesbian communities.

Our educational make-up is also varied. More than 30% of Broward's population has a high school diploma, another 28% have some college, and 29% have either a bachelor's or advanced degree. Nearly one in five residents age five and above has a disability, defined as a physical, mental or sensory condition that substantially limits one or more of an individual's major life activities.

As one of nine Broward County Commissioners I have worked to foster a diverse work environment as well as develop and promote programs that encourage diversity and assists those in need of resources to move forward in the marketplace and community.

Multi-Ethnic Resources Guide Available: Broward County's *Libraries Division Outreach Services Unit* has produced an online directory to inform the public of organizations that offer resources for the community, including civic, educational, media, gay and lesbians, religious and political organizations, cultural groups.

Support For Small And Minority Busi-

ness: Broward's *Small Business Development Division of the Office of Equal Opportunity* promotes the growth of small, minority, and women-owned firms by providing a variety of innovative business development programs. The County also supports the efforts of the *Small Business Advisory Board* to enhance communication with small and disadvantaged businesses.

Cultural Diversity In The Arts: *Broward Cultural Division* offers a Cultural Diversity Program to encourage and assist small, not-for-profit cultural organizations based in culturally diverse ethnicities (African, Latin, Asian-Pacific Islander, Native American descent). The program seeks to preserve cultural heritage and heritage through the arts and create opportunities to Broward residents to experience culturally diverse/ethnic-specific cultural programs and events. Grant monies may be used for general operating expenses associated with the organization's total program or for specific projects. The Division also hosts grant-writing workshops to assist organizations that may be interested in applying for a *Cultural Diversity Program* grant.

If you are interested in finding out more about the services discussed, check out:

www.broward.org/celeberatingdiversity.com

or just let me know how I can help you. I'm always available by e-mail at [kjacob@broward.org](mailto:kjacobs@broward.org) or you may also call me anytime at 954-357-7002. Broward is Florida's second largest County and one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the state, home to 1.8 million people seeking economic opportunity, freedom of expression and a superior quality of life. I'm working hard to make Broward County even better.

* * * * *

This article was slightly modified to accommodate the space available.

The Editor.

Fine Food For Hungry Thoughts Part III: World's Most Expensive Food

Sandwich: **The \$100 von Essen** is served at the Cliveden restaurant in Berkshire, England and contains quail eggs and truffles.

Bottled water: Created by a US writer-producer, a \$40 bottle of *Bling H2O* comes with hand-applied Swarovski crystals.

Dinner: **A 10-course gourmet dinner** concocted by world-renowned chefs at \$25,000 a head was served in Bangkok, Thailand on 2/11/2007. High-rolling food lovers flew in from the United States, Europe, the Middle East and other parts of Asia for the 40-seat dinner organized by the Lebua luxury hotel in Bangkok, grandly titled "Epicurean Masters of the World." Many of those who attended the culinary extravaganza hailed it as the meal of a lifetime. But it's no easy task to eat plate after plate of Beluga caviar, Perigord truffles, Kobe beef, Brittany lobster — each paired with a rare and robust vintage wine.

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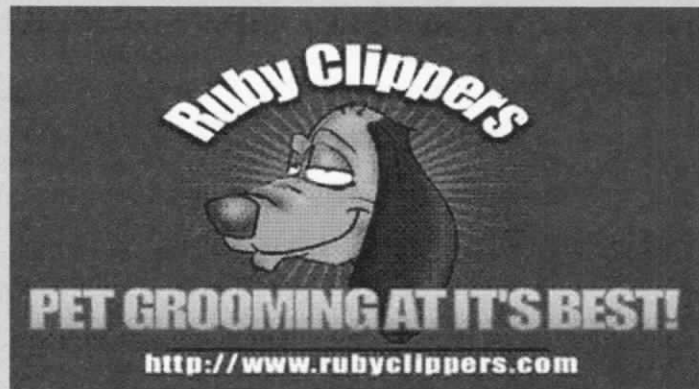


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Let's Explore Florida Keys..... Florida Fun Facts Part III

Known as the "Tropical Paradise" The Keys are divided into five regions: Key Largo, Islamorada, Marathon Bay, Big Pine & Lower Keys, and Key West - each offering its unique and laid-back charm and special attraction including fishing, diving, water sports, historical museums, animal and bird species and an abundance of seafood restaurants.

Driving South from Miami through the Keys one encounters panoramic views of deep blue sea and emerald-green lagoons interrupted with palm trees, tall rustling pines and mangroves amid other flora and fauna. Florida Keys is considered a perfect getaway to relax and enjoy nature.

named as one of the top ten beaches in USA.

Big Pine & Lower Keys: A national refuge for alligators, tropical fish species and the famous Key deer, Big Pine Key offers many popular nature tours by boats and kayaks. Check out the information for locations and timings in the visitors' brochures or on the websites.

Key West: The Overseas Highway spanning 113 miles with a total of 42 bridges is the southern tip of US1 and Key West is the final stop where the land ends and embraces the sea

Key Largo: D. John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is the main attraction and the first underwater preserve in the USA and is part of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary featuring 55 varieties of fragile coral and over 600 genres of fish. The park offers several water sport activities including snorkeling, scuba diving and coral reef excursions in the glass-bottom-boat.

Islamorada: Huddled amongst a group of islands called "Purple Isles" Islamorada is famous as the Sport-Fishing Capital of the World and holding more records than any other fishing destination in the world.

In the shallow coastal waters anglers find Sailfish, Marlin, Dolphins, Barra-

amid old world charm and modern-day attractions.

The two-by-four-mile island is laid-back and picturesque with century old mansions known as Key West style homes and palm-studded streets but undeniably its most colorful elements are its residents, known as Conchs. This southernmost city is closer to Cuba than Miami!

Consisting of a strong artistic com-

cuda and King-Fish amongst other.

Marathon: Centrally located between Key Largo and Key West, Marathon is the heart of the Florida Keys and is home to the Seven Mile Bridge; the largest Segmental Bridge in the world leading to Lower Keys.

Marathon's famous Crane Point is a significant historical and archaeological site; a 64 acre land expanse that contains remnants of prehistoric Bahamian and pre-Columbian artifacts. Another attraction is the Dolphin Research Center, one of the five Keys facilities that provide an opportunity for visitors to interact and swim with Dolphins.

Driving further South you can relax in Bahia Honda State Park Beach,

munity and a number of art galleries and curio shops, Key West was once the home of Ernest Hemingway, and the city still attracts numerous artists and writers to its quaint locale and yearly festivals, and the famous drag parade attracts visitors from all over USA, Canada and overseas.

**Unbeknown to many
Floridians The Keys hold
many World Records!**

For further information visit:
www.fla-keys.com

An Archipelago with an affluent history..... Discover the paradise so closeby.....



No visit to the Key West is complete without sampling the seafood and tasting the native 'Key Lime Pie', the island chain's signature dessert.

Hopefully you will take some time off to experience the beauty and indulge the senses in this little paradise so close by!

