

OUR CIRCLE REPORT

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www.thecottagesofrivendell.com

DECEMBER - JANUARY 2007

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THE CHRISTMAS ARCHIVES

Here's some facts about Christmas, some you may know of, some you may not.

The first decorated tree was at Riga in Latvia, in 1510. Martin Luther is said to have decorated a small tree with candles to show his children how stars twinkle through the night.

Christmas markets, or as we call it today, shopping, were set up in German towns in the mid 16th century. Merchants sold everything from gifts, food and more practical things such as a knife to carve the Christmas goose! At these markets, bakers made shaped gingerbread and wax ornaments for people to buy as souvenirs and take home to hang on their tree.

Tinsel was invented in Germany around 1610. At first real silver was used and machines were invented to "draw" the silver into long, wafer thin strips. While silver was durable, it tarnished from the candlelight and attempts were made to combine silver and lead but that tended to make the tinsel much too heavy. So pure silver was used right up to the 1800's.

Christmas trees made their appearance in America in the 1700's but it took another 100 years for ornaments to adorn the tree. Because the Germans provided much of the decorations, WWI saw the growth of the decorating industry, especially "lights" spread rapidly to America, and Japan.

The decorating of a large tree in the town square started in wartime England. Because of a ban against cutting down trees, one "town tree" was substituted for the household tree. The advent of the now very popular very realistic artificial tree came about in the 1970's. Much to the delight of environmentalists! Today there are more artificial trees on display in homes than "fresh cut" trees.

May you, your family and friends have a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season.

NEWS FROM YOUR BOARD

The following is highlight news from the most recent Board meeting and **ARE NOT OFFICIAL** until they are approved at the next meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 in the Club House on Thursday, November 15th. Directors Axiom, Miles & Straw were present constituting a quorum along with nine (9) homeowners.

Homeowner input included questions about mulching, lawn maintenance and comments about the Club House and pool heat. A suggestion was made to investigate solar heating for the pool to reduce the high cost for heating. A committee to review the suggestion was formed.

Committee Reports:

- a.) **Grounds:** mulch schedule, completed Club House repairs, new cleaning service, sod and planting replacement
- b.) **Finance:** 2008 Budget recommendations, next year's quarterly dues (\$430), status on year-to-date 2007 operational budget

The new 2008 Budget will be distributed in December.

Architectural Review items: **Approved:** new roof at 589 MSC, **Denied:** screened front porch at 551 MSC. These actions will be forwarded to RCA for their next meeting.

Board Election Nominations: A nominating committee was formed, There are three (3) positions open for election. The committee will report nominating results to the community in early January.

Next meeting will be held at the Club House on January 3rd at 7:00pm.



GROWING ON YOU

This is the time of year our plants have been waiting for! The brutal heat of the summer is finally over. At this time of year plants do not grow very much and the grass does not need mowing every week. We will continue to be watered once a week.



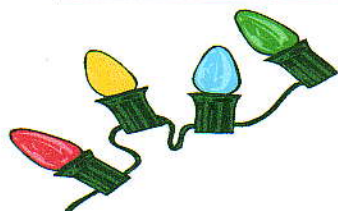
Weather forecasters are predicting a drier than normal winter which means our plants and grass will not be a lush green color.

Good annuals to plant this time of year are Begonias, Impatiens, Geraniums, Blue Daze and Pentas. When you plant annuals you will need to water them by hand as the once per week irrigation water won't be enough to keep them alive.

FREEZE WARNINGS

Hopefully any freezing temperatures will by-pass our area this coming winter but in case they don't here's something to keep in mind. When you cover your plantings, remember, do not use any type of plastic cover! Plastic will do more harm than good to your plants/shrubs. It traps the cold temperature beneath the covering. The best covering? Old bed sheets.

OUTDOOR DECORATIONS



If you're one of the residents who like to do outdoor decorations, keep this in mind. ValleyCrest's detail crew should be in our neighborhood

sometime before the Christmas Holidays but after you have done your decorating. The crew tries to avoid cutting or disrupting any lines, especially electrical but accidents do happen and ValleyCrest is not responsible for any damage.

When planning where things will be displayed, lines run and connections made, make them as obvious as possible to the detail crew.

**THERE WILL BE NO ISSUE OF OUR
CIRCLE REPORT IN JANUARY. NEXT
ISSUE WILL BE FEBRUARY, 2008**

WHAT's COOKING ?

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The cooler temperatures are close at hand. This month our "What's Cooking" recipe is a thick and creamy, rich cheese flavored soup. If you have a recipe you'd like to share, send it to:

cottagenews84@yahoo.com



Hearty Cheese Soup

1 1/2 cups cubed peeled potatoes	1/2 cup water
1/4 cup sliced fresh carrots	1/4 cup sliced celery
2 tablespoons chopped onion	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules	
1/2 teaspoon dried parsley flakes	"dash" of pepper

1 1/2 teaspoons all-purpose flour	3/4 cup milk
1/4 pound process cheese (Velveeta), cubed	

In a small saucepan, combine the first nine ingredients (**listed above dotted line**). Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10-12 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

In a small bowl, combine flour and milk until smooth. Stir into the vegetable mixture. Bring to boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat to low; stir in cheese until melted.

Yield: 2 servings

CHRISTMAS, DID YOU KNOW

- ...That the most popular cookie left for Santa Claus is Oreos?
 - ...That Holiday egg nog was once made from beer?
 - ...That the first person to have a lighted Christmas tree wasn't Thomas Edison but one of his workers, Edward Johnson?
 - ...That in 1670 people thought the sugar in candy would keep children quiet, so pieces of bent sugar called "canes" were given to kids in church during the long Christmas service?
 - ...That the first known singing of carols was in 13th century Italy as St. Francis of Assisi led songs of praise at Christmas?
 - ...That the very first Christmas trees were actually oak?
 - ...That the custom of cards at Christmas didn't gain popularity until the industrialization of the printing industry in 1840?
 - ...That the first designing and printing of cards in the United States started in Roxbury, MA in 1874?
 - ...That, according to tradition, stockings were hung to catch coins thrown down the chimney by St. Nicholas?
- And finally, "Rudolph" was actually the result of an advertising gimmick by Montgomery Ward in 1939, and not as many believe, a song written for Gene Autry.

OWNERS - RENTERS NOTE

With the real estate market seemingly on hold, there has been an increase in rental activity in Florida and in Rivendell along with that trend. It has led to some questions and issues that have not been addressed in a while, so they are being summarized here.

Rivendell deed restrictions limit rentals to not less than one (1) month and not more than twice per year. That means no short term rentals. The concept was based on this being a residential, not a transient community. Rentals are subject to regulation by Sarasota County if done on a short term basis and could be subject to local sales and bed taxes as resort condominiums are.

There has been some discussion lately about who should be held responsible when someone who is renting a home in Rivendell violates the Deed Restrictions. The answer is simple. The owner of the property is responsible for following the rules. That means the owner may ultimately get a fine for repeated or extended violations even if the owner does not know of them.

There is a form available for notifying the management company when one rents the property and it serves several purposes. One, it alerts the company to the fact that notices should be sent to the owner at the proper contact address. Two, it alerts the company and the board to who and what they might expect to see at the home. And three, it confirms that the owner and renter are both aware of the rules and that the owner reaffirms his or her understanding of them and the responsibility associated with them. When one is planning to rent, this form should be filed with the management company.

With that said, what happens when a resident leaves a car out overnight on the roadway, fails to maintain the exterior of the house, allows damage to go unrepaired or allows trash to accumulate in the yard, etc. ?

The most likely answer is that the owner gets a violation and will contact the renter and clear up the problem. However, if the renter does not correct the situation, the owner will be the one to receive the next notice and ultimately a fine if that is determined to be appropriate. If there is no form on file for notification, the problem could get quite bad before the owner gets a chance to correct it.

We hope this clears up some of the questions that have come up over renting during the past year or so. If there are other questions, please feel free to review the deed restrictions, contact the management company for clarification or check the Rivendell Master Association website. Username: **owner** Password: **osprey1** Use all "lower" case

INTERESTED ?

The Nominating Committee is working to provide a list of three (3) owners who would be willing to serve on the Rivendell Unit #1 Neighborhood Association Board of Directors. The length of the term will be two (2) years.

Any owner is eligible to be a board member. If you have an expertise you feel would be an asset to the community or would just like to "get involved", the Nominating Committee would like to hear from you.

If you answered "yes, I want to help", please submit your name to Bill Straw, Chairman-Nominating Committee.

Owners will be asked to vote for the new board members prior to the annual meeting. Location, date and time of the meeting will be announced after the first of the year.

A HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During this time of year we take the time to reflect on 2007 and what may be in store for 2008. All too often we all get wrapped up in our little world with the "what's best for me" syndrome. Too many times we fail to see, or understand, the potential for the big picture.

However, all this seems so trivial when you look at what's happening elsewhere in the real world. As we all prepare to celebrate the Holidays with family and friends, we must take the time to remember those Americans far from home who won't be spending time with their loved ones and above all, to bow our heads giving thanks to those who made the ultimate sacrifice protecting our freedoms and who will never return.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year to all our friends and neighbors in The Cottages.

Bob Axiom, John Huwiler, Jane Lettich, Carole Myles and
Bill Straw



ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

All activities are held in the Club House unless otherwise noted.

- December 8 - Holiday Party
- December 9 - Holidays Around The World
Christmas Party For Kids
- January 19 - Wine Tasting
- February 9 - Valentine Bingo
- March 15 - St. Patrick's Day Dinner
- April 12 - Breakfast At The Jetty, Nokomis Beach
- May 3 - Cinco de Mayo



Please contact Jane Lettich (966-0856 or jlet@comcast.net) for further information.

KIDS CHRISTMAS PARTY



Several parents have expressed an interest in having a Holiday event for the children, similar to those held in the past. Plans are underway to have this party on December 9th in our Club House.

The theme will be "Holidays Around The World", including a visit from Santa, Kwanza, Noel, Hanukkah, there will crafts, games gifts. etc.

More details will be made available via a door-to-door invitation.

HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS



Ghouls of all ages attended the Cottages Halloween Party on October 31st, hosted by Rosemary and Austin Haley, Justin and C.J. Morrison. After trick or treating door-to-door on the circle, big and little kids alike enjoyed playing games like:

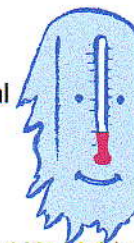
bobbing for apples, musical pumpkin chairs and relay races. There also was a very competitive costume contest.

Party goers included witches, pirates, Minnie Mouse, Scream, and an adorable pumpkin. Even the world famous superheroes, The Incredibles, took time from their busy schedule to make an appearance.

Party goers enjoyed Eyeball Punch and Ghostly baked goods. A ghastly good time was had by all..

WINTER DRIVING

Every winter, and especially during the holiday seasons, many people venture north. During those trips drivers can be exposed to conditions not normal to our area. Without a doubt, a condition far worse than snow or an ice storm is "black ice".



It takes time for snow and hard ice to accumulate and it's highly visible to but black ice can affect driving conditions in a split second. Black ice happens when the ground temperature just reaches the freezing point. A vehicle traveling on what appears to be just "wet" pavement will, in a flash, be on "black ice". Especially when going over any type of bridge. Once on black ice you have no control over the car.

For safety's sake, when driving in areas which may be prone to freezing temperatures, please be aware of road conditions.



BOARD of DIRECTORS & COMMITTEES

BOB AXSIOM - 1ST VICE PRESIDENT, MAINTENANCE

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JOHN HUWILER - VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCIAL

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JANE LETTICH - SECRETARY, ACTIVITIES

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CAROLE MYLES - TREASURER, COMMUNICATIONS

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BILL STRAW - PRESIDENT (Maintenance Back-Up)

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LIGHTHOUSE PROPERTY MGT - (941)966-6844

Contacts: Todd Gates toddgates@mgmt.tv or Kyanne Merrill

CONTACTING US VIA E-MAIL

Problems with Maintenance, Street Lights or Irrigation

unit1maintenance@yahoo.com

News Items or Comments For OUR CIRCLE REPORT

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PLEASE. IF YOU SEE ANY PROBLEM IN THE COTTAGES, REPORT IT ASAP BY PHONE OR E-MAIL. DO NOT WAIT !

OUR CIRCLE REPORT is not responsible for any errors which may alter the original intent of the written material.