

May 2023 NEWSLETTER
Official website: Fontana-Estates.com

Fontana Estates Community Homeowners Association, Inc. Orlando, FL 32820

President: Dr. Telka diFate Vice President: Joe Rybarczyk

Secretary: Bill Bell Treasurer: George Kriss

Board of Directors

Edilma Alvarado Beverly Hamilton Thanh Ngo

Dear Homeowners of Fontana Estates,

As summer and school vacations quickly approach, please remember to look around you and enjoy the many festivals in the area. It is time for more beach visits and outside activities. **Safety is of the utmost importance so please always be aware of your surroundings.** Take the time to always lock your cars and do not keep anything valuable in them. Turn on alarms to your homes especially when not home. Toll Bro. installed the wiring so that all homes can have in-home wired security. Keep outside lights on at night and ask neighbors to watch your home when away especially if you are expecting packages.

Please be responsible owners and check the website for updates, schedules and important information. It is meant to save the HOA time and money so that we do not have to mail out many newsletters.

At the same time **hurricane season is upon us as of June 1st and runs through November.** You can access important facts on our official website with information to help you be prepared at: **FONTANA-ESTATES.COM** under the Hurricane section. Be proactive. If you go away on a vacation, please remove objects that can move in high winds anchored down or put indoors. Know that your Board is on task preparing for this season. We are planning to have more guest speakers for the community on some of these topics so check the website calendar for updates frequently. **As part of our Neighborhood Watch Safety Program the sheriff has made numerous recommendations. Please review our website with his informative video.**

By living in this luxury, gated community we all have responsibilities to live by including the rules, covenants and bylaws. The covenants/bylaws outline much of this information. All owners and residents should have a copy of them. You can also ask the management company on how to get copies. Be aware that it's about 120 pages. It is the residents responsibility to follow county regulations and laws too. The HOA Board are owners just like you, but we are all responsible for following them. Toll Brothers submitted the covenants/bylaws to the State and County for approval. And that is what we have here. Without them and other rules there would be chaos.

Recently the BOD's asked all owners to vote on making some changes to the covenants and it was voted down. So that leaves all of us with following them as they are. That is part of the Board of Directors job with the assistance of the management company. As a corporation we also have to seek the advice from legal so that everyone is treated equally. This is part of corporate business.

Taking pride in your beautiful, upscale community is commonplace especially when you purchased here with the expectation that everyone would continue to do so. The Board is responsible for all of the common areas, and we do our best to provide those services on a

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regular and consistent basis. At this time, we have good vendors that provide the services needed and within budget. Only when something is not planned for do other expenses upset that budget. We have had this happen recently with fence repairs and landscaping. Some of these topics will be discussed at the next meeting and include but not limited to: harassment issues, covenants, rules and policies. Residents need to understand that the Board is a very diverse, responsible, conscientious group that handles the common areas. Please do not take it upon yourself to try to do this. The proper procedure is to contact Board members or the manager at Associa, Kris Perez. A few residents are not following this process and as a result have cost the HOA to spend unnecessarily thousands of dollars of your money.

Here are a few reminders and helpful information that residents seem to ask frequently:

- Irrigation dates and times along with fertilizer standards are on the county website. The county oversees those laws. It is each owners responsibility to abide by them. The HOA has nothing to do with this.

Unfortunately, there are 1-2 residents who report owners who irrigate at times not on the schedule. Please ask them to stop it is not very neighborly.

- Garbage pick-up is by the county. They have laws/regulations for that too. Please put cans out no sooner than the evening before. This also includes bulk trash and yard debris. Keep this yard waste out of sight until pickup since it becomes unsightly leaving it out by the curb for a week. Please put the trash cans away on the same day they are emptied. If you are away, please ask a friend or neighbor to assist.

- Your landscaping is each owners responsibility especially when it affects your neighbors. Having invasive weeds is a concern since they spread to many other yards too. This includes weeds growing in the driveway. Please be conscientious. **If you take care of all of these issues the management company won't be sending you letters, and everyone wins. It saves the community money too. The Managers job is to do drive arounds monthly and mail out letters.** Every gated community has this, and it has been the policy here at Fontana Estates since it opened. Please just follow the directions in the letter. Contact the manager who sends the letter especially when you complete the violation. Do not ignore these letters.

- **Trees that have branches hanging over the sidewalk and street need to be trimmed above 8 ft. No one should be walking on the sidewalk and get hit in the head with branches.** This only takes minutes to solve with clippers so please help. Edging around the driveway and property adds to the manicured look of Fontana Estates.

- Keep sidewalks and driveways clean of algae, stains, rust etc. This usually needs to be done yearly or at most 2x per year. Having a sealant helps in keeping the driveway cleaner longer.

- Some of the things to keep maintained on the outside of your property include but not limited to: house clean and painted, roof clean. • Mailbox to be clean and painted. It also needs to be totally upright. If it is shifting please get it repaired.

- **Up to date ARC application are needed for any outdoor changes. The application could take up to a month to be process so plan ahead. Owners must wait for ARC approval before starting any changes to the outside of your property.** This includes but not limited to: any tree removal or front yard tree implantation; window replacement; additions to the home or property; patios; fences; large area of sod replacement; gutters; major outside landscaping changes; screened in areas and more. **When in doubt just fill it out.** ARC applications are on the website. The system we presently have was improved and established back in 2019 and it

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works very efficiently so please follow the rules on the form. Prior to that the management companies handled this process, and it was totally inefficient, ineffective and did not work.

- Please put the dates that **HOA fees are due** into your cell phone calendar so that they are paid on time. They are due **January 1st, April 1st, July 1st and October 1st**. These dates have been the same since the start of the HOA community.
- Auto repairs are not to be done on property.
- No parking on streets overnight. Contact Board for any special circumstances.
- **Do not give out gate passcode. DO NOT buzz people in that you do not know.** This usually happens late at night, and they could be unwanted trespassers.
- **If strangers are walking the neighborhood and knocking on doors call the police.** We have a sign out in front of the community that we do not allow soliciting. You have to give a description of the person to the police so taking a photo of the person is beneficial.
- **The back wall belongs to the HOA. Please turn your irrigation away from the wall. The chemicals in the water damage it.** Recently we had the wall cleaned, repaired and repainted. This should last many years. Trees should not be hitting the wall either. Please trim them. At this time if residents damage the wall, they will be held responsible for paying for the repairs.
- Keeping the outside of your house clean of rust and algae will delay having to paint it. **The color book for the community is at Sherman Williams on East Colonial Drive.** Colors must be chosen from that book. You also have to pick a different color than your next-door neighbors. The color book is also posted on the website and the Board has a copy that can be borrowed.
- If you keep the irrigation off of your sidewalk and driveway you won't have to clean them as much.
- Please use fireworks outside of the community. • For safety, please turn on outside lights at night. Turn on security systems when not home. • Please do not litter and pick up any trash left behind especially near the ponds. This is especially true after certain holidays like July 4th and New Year's Eve.
- Signs are posted concerning the alligators in the ponds so please do not go near these areas.
- **Speed limit is 25 mph.** It really is upsetting to see residents speed through the community when it really only saves you 20-30 seconds to drive safely.
- Outdoor decorations are always enjoyable to see for various holidays and seasons but please remove them in a timely manner once the holiday is over.
- **It is really hospitable to let neighbors know if you are having a large gathering with many cars parked on the street. Please do not block other driveways making it difficult for them to back out and contact the BOD's if any other cars stay over-night.**
- Please ask someone to check your property if you go away. If it is not a resident, please let someone here know so that the police are not called for a trespasser.

All owners and residents need to be aware that the information being provided in this newsletter and on the Fontana Estate website are official. Any other source of information being sent to you does not represent the facts about Fontana Estates and should be regarded as false, misleading and opinionated. The community has a few naysayers who do this and think it's okay. It's not. The Board is aware of unauthorized emails, postcards and letters being sent to the residents here. But, as you know, there is no return addresses or name on them. As a result, many owners are frustrated that they are on these mailing lists and don't want to be. Unfortunately, homeowners contact information was obtained illegally and should not be used. If you know these individuals, please let them know they need to stop.

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Be part of the solution not the problem with issues affecting the community. The board members are very upbeat positive individuals that make educated decisions on behalf of the entire community. But we have a few naysayers. Some of these individuals just cause problems if they don't get their way. Some of these people also do not plan on living here long term. In fact, they have talked about selling or renting their homes. These negative individuals are affecting the well-being of the community. They don't want to understand that this community is a Florida Corporation. It is run effectively and efficiently with the Board that understands the real concepts of an HOA.

This is bully behavior and worse. Remember them in school? **Bullying is defined as a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying can take the form of physical contact, words, or more subtle actions. In recent years, you have seen cyber bullying, which has occurred over emails, social media and digital platforms and is often used to spread gossip and rumors, which can harm not only individuals reputations but the reputation of the board and community.** That is exactly what a few individuals are doing here in our community. It is not the Board members. In fact, the Board has reported numerous times that that these few individuals are harassing the Board members. Some of these bullies run for the BOD's too. This is not okay. It is up to other Homeowners to stop this. If you want to know information, just ask board members and/or check the official website. These naysayers pretend to be your friend but do friends behave this way or pressure friends into believing false information? All of these actions are intentional and deliberate. This conduct is unhealthy for any community. It is a form of harassment and is becoming more aggressive and threatening.

Some of the individuals that are selling you this negativism are salespeople. It's their job to be persuasive at any cost. But this cost is jeopardizing the place we live. They won't stop until you tell them to. They are not lawyers, accountants or law enforcement, yet they dispute what the professionals for the HOA say. Some do not attend meetings but none contribute anything to the community as volunteers. Being negative all the time is not healthy. If you accept these actions, you are contributing to the problems facing Fontana Estates. **The Board has had an HOA attorney as a guest speaker, the financial manager and the Associa branch President and a sheriff also. Yet the naysayers dispute what all of these professionals had to say. These negative people are wasting everyone's time and your money. One would think that if you live in a first-rate luxury community that residents would act it, but some don't.** For those of you who don't play this game we thank you. You are also the people that appreciate the work involved in keeping the community properly cared for and on budget.

Our community is made up of a very diverse group of people from over 17 countries and many US states. We have owners in many age groups with very different experiences. There is unity in diversity and the more residents here that embrace that the nicer it will be to associate with each other and the calmer the environment will feel.

If you have been contacted by an Orange County representative concerning any violations, please contact a Board member asap. Some residents had complaints filed against them by another homeowner. Numerous violations were unfounded accusations. There are still 3 more residents who have been put in this situation. Facts can be supplied to you if you step

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forward. The individual doing this complaining has also run for the Board for many years and lost. The type of individual that harasses Board members and neighbors is wasting taxpayers money, by having a county inspector come out and investigate. This person is not fit to be on any Board or HOA committees.

If you see people walking the community taking photos or videos or they ask to go in your yard to do so, please object to it. This is contributing to the problem too.

As homeowners here we have the right to freedom of enjoyment. The right to live in a community without being annoyed, harassed or interfered with. This is especially true when Board members are conducting HOA business and we do that on a daily basis. You see us walking the community helping make sure that projects run smoothly. It's called helping your neighbor and being neighborly.

Common Area issues: 1. In the last year the Gazebo was defaced; 2. The pedestrian gate locks were broken; 3. Black aluminum fences being pushed over and broken; 4. Illegal pot smoking in the gazebo.; 4. Walking a dog must be on a leash in common areas along with picking up after them. Dog manure has been found at the park and this is not pleasant for the children that play there. All of these issues have been addressed by the Board.

Looking for volunteers to check the park area for any issues, clean off spider webs from the play equipment and check for any changes. Also, looking for volunteers to be on Beautification/Activity Committee. Contact Board members. Please report any issues to BOD's to help identify common area problems and get repairs. The sooner these things are reported the sooner we can these items fixed. By damaging common areas that means expenses that were not planned for. These funds come out of your pocket.

It's safe to say that not everyone will agree on decisions regarding their homes or neighborhoods. Some individuals feel frustrated. However, when a few owners get frustrated here and don't get their way, in this luxury gated community with covenants and bylaws, they get aggressive. Then tensions get high, disrespect follows, plus angry outbursts and downright aggression erupts. This has been inflicted on the Board members and some neighbors for doing their job. This isn't healthy for any community. These few individuals refuse to work cooperatively in an adult manner.

Agenda for Board meetings are always listed on the official website before meetings. This is the general Agenda used. Since the HOA is a corporation, the meetings are conducted by following State of Florida laws that includes a code of conduct. Next general meeting is, June 9th, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. by zoom. You can access all zoom meetings from the official website calendar at FONTANA-ESTAES.COM

1. Call to Order

2. Certification of Quorum

3. Proof of Meeting Notice

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4. Reports:

- **Secretary's Report**
- **Treasurer's Report**
- **Presidents Report**
- **Vice President Report**
- **BOD's Reports**

5. Unfinished Business

6. New Business

7. Open Forum: Homeowners wishing to discuss specific topics related to what was only on the agenda today must raise their hand to specify and will have up to a max. 3 minutes to speak.

8. Administrative Issues:

- Date of Next BOD Meeting: TBD
- Location of next BOD Meeting: TBD

9. Adjournment

Know your BOD's: Vice President Joe Rybarczyk- Is an original homeowner here at Fontana Estates. As a very active Board member overseeing the landscaping. When trees go down, irrigation isn't working, ants are in the park then Joe is there to assist. He works closely with vendors to solve these issues. Joe is available to attend many vendor meetings and give vital input. This is key to being the Vice President of the Board.

Secretary Bill Bell- is an Army veteran and has been an insurance litigation representative for many years. Bill is an original homeowner here at Fontana Estates and brings great experience to the Board concerning legal issues. His knowledge of the laws for litigation and reviewing contracts is important in helping the community.

George Kriss -Treasurer, is responsible for actively reviewing the financials with the HOA President Telka, monthly. We will be seeing over \$6,000 in CD interest after the 13 months. These funds will go into the Reserve Account that is used for permanent, long-term maintenance of the community infrastructure. George is also an original homeowner here at Fontana.

Beverly Hamilton is originally from Guyana and worked there in the Defense Force within the office of Chief of Staff for 7 years, plus 2 years in Parliament in administration. She also was an important member of the Ethnic Relations Commission to help mediate with racial relation issues. While living in NYC Bev was a Registered Nurse (RN) in the OR and as a Nurse Care Manager. She worked extensively during the COVID-19 pandemic until her recent retirement. Bev has an in depth understanding of the workings of a corporation and the community and has

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been a great asset to the Board. She works hard and has participated in numerous educational on-line seminars for the HOA and has attended many vendor meetings.

Thanh Ngo is an original homeowner here and has a Master's degree in mechanical engineering and worked at NASA for 20 years. Presently, he works for the Defense Dept. overseeing contracts and has worked for them for the last 11 years. He is very helpful as a BOD in reading contracts, making decisions and has an in depth understanding of the workings of a corporation and the community.

Mimi Alvarado is a great listener and provides terrific advice especially in financial areas. Mimi was in Business Administration as a manager for a finance company in her native country Colombia. She has been living in the United States for more than 25 years.

Dr. Telka diFate-The president is responsible for coordinating with the Board members concerning matters pertinent to the HOA. She does not make decisions unilaterally; everything is done with Board approval and involvement. She liaisons with our management company to update them on community issues and concerns. Telka has spent literally hundreds of hours doing this and many other jobs for the HOA. She also spent over 20 hours involved in depositions on behalf of the HOA. She meets periodically with all our present vendors and works tirelessly locating new vendors and interviewing them, so the community gets the best vendor at the most reasonable price for new projects. In a typical month she will field hundreds of emails and will attend several online seminars concerning HOA legal and maintenance issues. She makes sure all committees finish their work in a timely manner. She takes emergency calls day and night. She works with our treasurer, George Kriss, to manage our finances and create a yearly budget. She makes sure that the HOA conforms to the laws of Florida, Orange County and St. John's Water Authority which are a tangle of regulations. Telka also corresponds with the neighboring communities about common concerns. The term 'president' should really be CEO. This is a corporation, and she treats it like the organization it is. All this and she still finds time to plant flowers and cut branches in the common areas not to mention help do plantings for senior citizens in the community. She also has over 30 year's experience as president of various non-profits, worked as a PA in surgery and was an educator of children with disabilities.

Be part of the solution in making our community function as a pleasant place to live, not part of the problem. We can have differences of opinions and ideas, but we should be able to express these ideas in a calm and polite manner. Hostility, bullying and harassment is not acceptable.

All homeowners have the opportunity to work together for a common goal, to keep our community at the luxury level that we all bought into as a Toll Brothers community. Many thanks to so many that do since this promotes positive civic engagement for those that want to participate. But it is the volunteers that help run the community so please cooperate and follow the covenants and policies already established. It makes everyone's job run so much smoother. We save tens of thousands of dollars by helping when the call goes out looking for volunteers especially with keeping the park clean, Beautification/Activity groups.