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La Buena Reader

La Buena Vida Property Owners Association Newsletter

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The La Buena Vida Property Owners Association, Inc is incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas as a non-profit corporation, and granted powers of administering the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for La Buena Vida.

From the President

It has been a very busy year to-date – both on a business and personal standpoint – and as such our “summer” edition of the newsletter is a bit late. That said, your Board has been working hard to maintain the beauty of La Buena Vida, address owner needs and suggestions, and perform some improvement projects as well. The Architectural Committee has approved construction for one new house scheduled to break ground shortly, as well as a several other improvements as submitted by home owners. Progress on other items is reported in the following pages.

Note that besides maintaining the La Buena Vida grounds and facilities, the Board’s “agenda” for the coming year is typically driven by suggestions from owners – most of which are raised and discussed at the Annual Meeting. So you are highly encouraged to attend this meeting, and contribute to the success of the neighborhood.

Another purpose of the Annual Meeting is to elect Officers for the coming year (albeit the majority of the balloting is done prior to the meeting). After five years of serving on the Board – and the last three as your President – I am taking a break. Gayly Opem has kindly volunteered to be on the ballot for Association President in 2014. This will also free up my time to concentrate on Architectural Committee duties.

Finally, as always, if you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact any one of us - the LBV POA Officers – either by phone or email. Our contact information is listed in the sidebar to the left. We enjoy hearing from the Association members, getting suggestions, feedback, newsletter-worthy information, pictures, etc., and are sincerely committed to improving our neighborhood.

Annual Meeting Notice

It just seems like yesterday that we met at the Scharck’s house for the 2012 Annual Meeting, but the 2013 Annual Meeting of the LBV Property Owners’ Association is less than three months away. It will be held at 2 pm on November 16 at the home of Bob & Gayly Opem, 21 La Buena Vida Drive. Please mark this date on your calendar now, and plan to attend. In addition to conducting official POA business – this has been a great opportunity to meet other property owners and the Board.

Currently, there are no proposed amendments to the Restrictions. However the Annual Meeting is important for sharing ideas and recommendations among the Board and property owners. Last year there was a very productive, open discussion of assessment level, marina development and dockside rules, island plantings, and trespassing that became the focus of the Board’s effort and work plan in 2013.

This meeting is also used to elect the Board members, which have terms that expire on December 1. A Proxy/Ballot will be mailed out in October. **Due to recent State law changes, it is very important that you return this ballot to officially elect Officers.** Please contact POA secretary Jeanne Hunter if you have questions.

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Architectural Committee Report

In late May, the Architectural Committee approved plans for the Marable home (Patrick and Eve) to be constructed on Lot 35 by Hardesty Builders, Inc. (Bob – and Kari – Hardesty are also LBV residents). The temporary electric pole has been set, foundation location has been flagged, and construction should start soon.

Regarding other projects, in February the Committee approved plans for a privacy wall to be constructed at the Cameron residence, 4 La Buena Vida Drive (Lot 44). Wall construction and stucco are completed, and painting is next. In April, the Committee approved plans and specifications for a pool at the Becker residence, 28 La Buena Vida Drive (Lot 20). That project is complete, and David is enjoying his new pool!

Members of the Architectural Committee have also fielded questions from two other Lot owners preparing to submit plans. If you are a property owner contemplating building, or have any questions regarding improvements, please feel free to contact Michael Zotzky or any of the other Architectural Committee Members.

Proposed Fiscal 2014 Annual Assessment

At the 2012 Annual Meeting, there was a discussion of assessment level, and owner concern about the fluctuation of fees over the years – as high as \$1,600, and as low as \$1,200 per lot. Last year, the Association undertook some capital projects – the largest of which were installing master valves to enhance the sprinkler system, and upgrading (LED) front entrance landscape and flag pole lighting – which required dipping into the reserve funds. At the 2012 meeting, the Board suggested that an assessment level of \$1,500 to be appropriate long term for LBV, to fund some identified capital projects and a reasonable reserve for “unscheduled” events. However, as the Restrictions only authorize a 10% increase without a vote from the property owners, the 2013 assessment could only be raised to \$1,400 per lot.

Based on actual and projected expenses for the current fiscal year, it appears that Association finances will roughly break-even in 2013. Considering expected costs for next year – the Board approved a 2014 Assessment level of \$1,500 per lot at the August Board Meeting. Detailed financial information for fiscal year 2013 and projection for 2014 will be presented in the Annual Meeting in November.

Welcome New Neighbors

Two La Buena Vida lots have changed ownership since the last newsletter was published. David and Lynda Fanta of Sugarland, Texas purchased Lot 23 in December 2012. Bruce and Dorinda Ellingsworth of Colleyville, Texas purchased Lot 30 in 2013. Welcome to the neighborhood and we hope to see you at the Annual Meeting!

Association Website

Just a reminder that all of the “official” La Buena Vida documents – such as bylaws, restrictions and policies – as well as the newsletters, are posted on the LBV website at www.lbvpoa.com. If there are any other items you would like to see included on the website – or even better yet, have pictures for us that are relevant – please contact one of the Officers.

Marina Improvements & Dockside “Rules”

As reported in the December newsletter, our work on the sprinkler system revealed that the water spigot at the marina is actually tapped into a sprinkler trunk line, downstream of the anti-siphon valve. While it is unlikely that any ground water could flow back into this section of the pipe, we advised marina slip owners not to drink this water.

In April, a plumber was contracted to add a hose bib connection at the marina area to supply potable water to the owned slips. A City of Rockport permit was finally obtained for the water meter at the marina, and the plumber has completed the work and a new hose bib was installed. In May, the City of Rockport inspected and approved the plumbing. The next step is to extend the water line to the fish cleaning stand and the boat slips. Installation of additional lighting at the fish cleaning stand is also planned. All of these improvements should be completed prior to the Annual Meeting.

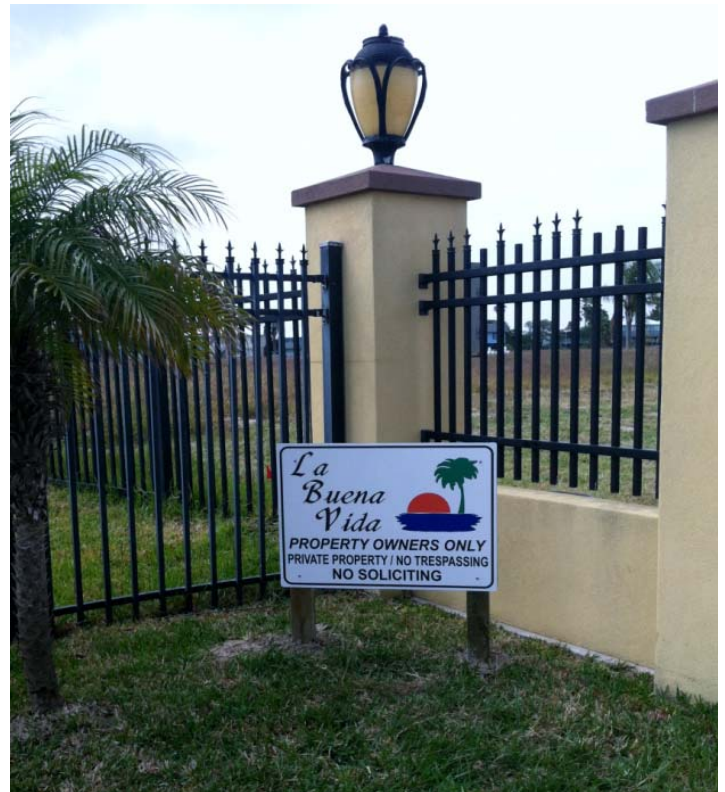
The “owned” slips will also be power washed soon, and sealant applied to preserve the wood. This will be funded by the Marina Assessment fees collected in 2013. This work is also planned to be completed prior to the Annual Meeting.

Finally, at the 2012 Annual Meeting, a “draft” version of Dockside Rules and Regulations was also reviewed and discussed with owners in attendance. The Dockside Rules and Regulations were developed by the Board in an attempt to promote safety and comfort for everyone using the marina, as well as protect private and common property. These rules are standard for all marinas – public and private – including Key Allegro, Cove Harbor, and others. No objections were cited, nor were any changes or additions recommended. Notice and request for comments was also provided in the December newsletter. No additional input was received, and the Rules were approved by Board vote in the January 2013 meeting. The Rules have also been filed with the County Clerk, Aransas County (as required for POA regulations), and are posted on the POA website: http://www.lbvpoa.com/LBV_MarinaRules.PDF

Addressing Security and Trespass

As discussed in the Annual Meeting, in the past year there has been an increase in people fishing at the marina, or on private lots, that are not lot owners. Michael Zotzky contacted the County Attorney and the Constable to understand what can be done to keep use of the neighborhood exclusive to its owners. To enforce “no trespassing” laws, there are specific requirements for private property signage. Additionally, there has to be a complaint form filed by a LBV Officer. This allows the Sheriff or Constable to remove unauthorized visitors. If they come back a second time, they will be cited for criminal trespass.

You might have noticed that in April, there were signs installed at the front gate, the marina, and on the islands. The Board actually put a lot of thought into these, trying to limit the visual impact, but at the same time satisfy the legal requirements. (Note that if you drive thru some of the other waterfront developments, you will see similar versions of the signs, which indicate this issue is not unique to LBV.) A complaint form can be signed by an LBV Officer relatively quickly, and the Constable and Sheriff offices have phone numbers for the Officers. One law enforcement officer thanked the Board for installing the signs, as it makes it easier for him to do his job. Additionally, trespassers have since been removed on several occasions.



*“No Trespass” sign at LBV front entrance.
Photo courtesy of Jeanne Hunter*

If you see unauthorized activity at the marina or on private land, please contact the Constable or the Sheriff. Constable Doc Thomas can be reached on his cell phone at (361) 463-1789, or Sheriff Mills (361) 729-2222. Both of these individuals have been very attentive to the needs of the community, keeping the area safe, and have been guests at our Annual Meeting in past years. Please tell them “thank you” when you see them.



*"No Trespass" sign at LBV marina.
Photo courtesy of Jeanne Hunter*

Emergency Addresses

Following up on requests from the electric company and the phone company for the La Buena Vida entrance address, Jeanne Hunter researched how street addresses are assigned, and worked with the Aransas County Tax Appraisal office to assign street numbers for the front entrance and marina area. These are added to the Global Information System (GIS) used by official emergency response teams. The new street addresses are as follows:

Front entrance - 3399 HWY 35 N, Aransas Pass, TX 78336
Marina area - 22-A La Buena Vida Drive, Aransas Pass, TX 78336

A small sign to display the address number 22-A has been erected at the marina. The entrance sign should be installed shortly. It is suggested that you record these addresses in case of emergency. (Maybe store them in your cell phone "notes".)

Island Landscaping

At the 2012 Annual Meeting, there was a discussion about the appearance of the lake islands, and the possibility of replacing the palm trees that were originally on the islands. Bob Hardesty stated that the big island in front of his home has water and electric available. The Board agreed to research the possibility of some plantings on at least this island.

Jeanne Hunter and Gayly Opem attended a seminar hosted by the Aransas County Master Gardner's on the topic of native plants. The seminar was presented by Dave Ilfrey with Native Dave, a local consultant with expertise on re-establishing native plants. In February, the Board authorized a small expenditure for consultation with Dave Ilfrey. Jeanne, Gayly and Dave met in late February, walked some of the wetland area, and viewed the islands from the Hunter backyard.

Dave identified several Chinese Tallow trees in the wetlands areas. These trees are on the invasive list, and he recommended they be removed as soon as possible. (These have since been removed by the LBV maintenance crew.) In addition, Dave warned that in several areas the turf grass is beginning to creep into the designated wetlands, and should be removed to guarantee that the turf grass does not overgrow the wetlands entirely.

Dave felt we could improve the appearance of the islands with some landscaping, but warned against planting mature trees. He provided a list of recommended plants, and a drawing of a possible planting design for the big island. Plants need to be young, so that the roots become accustomed to the salt water environment as they mature. The Board agreed to authorize the removal of the Chinese Tallow trees and research a removal plan for the turf grass issue.

The next step is to determine if water and electric is available on the big island, as no planting should be considered unless we can insure the proper amount of water is available for new plants. If water is available, the Board voted to continue working with Dave for a final design plan, plus obtaining the native plants which will be included in the design plan. The initial consulting fee will be waived if we proceed with the final design plan.

In April, the maintenance crew verified that the big island does have an electric cable from the island to an area behind the main gate to Phase II, but it is not connected to any power source, or meter. There is a water line that is visible on the island, but has not been located on the land side. Additionally, we have contacted the developers, but there are no drawings available that depict this line. Due to the drought, additional investigation has been put on hold for now. In the winter, there will likely be less vegetation in the Phase II area to deal with, and we will try to locate the water line.

Other POA Business – Fireworks

At the 2012 Annual Meeting, Kari Hardesty brought up the possibility of using the lake area for a 4th of July fireworks display. She proposed including City by the Sea and Bahia Bay residents and asking for financial contributions from both neighborhoods. Meeting attendees were supportive of the idea, and the Board vowed to follow up and research the legal concerns and costs.

In January, Jeanne spoke with the CBTS Board regarding fireworks for the neighborhoods for the 4th of July. The CBTS Board is not interested in supporting fireworks in the area because they have a ban on fireworks. Additionally, LBV liability insurance does not endorse (i.e., cover any damage from) fireworks. The Board agreed to table this suggestion due to the potential liability issues, cost and drought conditions.

Water Restrictions

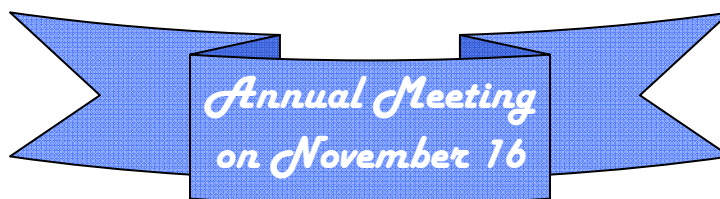
LBV has water service provided by the City of Rockport. Rockport – as well as Aransas Pass, Port Aransas, Corpus Christi, etc. – have put in place restrictions on water usage, to address the drought conditions. La Buena Vida residents are currently able to water two days per week. (Which day depends on your street number.)

Prior to summer, the LBV maintenance crew performed a complete review of the entire sprinkler system. In addition to inspection and replacing broken heads, they mapped the system, revealing a total of 775 sprinkler system heads. Commercial entities – like the Association – are allowed to water on Tuesday and Friday. The LBV system is currently programmed to run two cycles on Tuesday. If conditions warrant, a Friday cycle will be added.

Board of Director Meetings

The Association Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month. All meetings are open to property owners of La Buena Vida, with the occasional exception of executive sessions. The meetings typically start at 4:30 pm, but specific date and time is subject to change - especially as each of us also deal with business travel. So please contact Jeanne Hunter in advance if you wish to attend a Board meeting.

Save the Date



Please Mark Your Calendar Now!




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We're on the Web!

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About Our Organization..

The La Buena Vida Property Owners Association, Inc (the "Association" or "POA") is incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas as a non-profit corporation, and granted powers of administering the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (these "Restrictions") for La Buena Vida. The purpose of the Restrictions is to preserve the natural beauty of the property, to encourage attractive improvements which are harmonious and compatible, and to enhance the quality and economic value of the community and each lot therein.

The Bylaws of the Association govern the election of the Board of Directors of the Association, their term of office, and meetings, powers and duties. Each owner of a lot in the La Buena Vida subdivision is automatically a Member of the Association, with one vote per lot. Members elect all Directors for a term of one year.

LA BUENA VIDA POA

c/o Jeanne Hunter
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Aransas Pass, TX 78336

