



# BURNT STORE LAKES

PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

100 MADRID BOULEVARD, UNIT #212

PUNTA GORDA, FL 33950

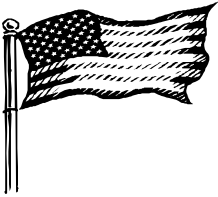
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## NEWSLETTER MAY 2009



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we move from the winter season into summer, your community faces considerable challenges as well as opportunities. The current economic crisis affects Burnt Store Lakes as well as many other communities. Our 2008-09 assessments are at a current collection rate of 92.6% as compared to 2007-08 of 95.8% at year end. 151 properties are currently unpaid for this fiscal year. You may have noted that some of the properties within the community have been neglected due to foreclosure or abandonment. The price we pay as residents and lot owners is poorly maintained properties. Fifty-nine (59) properties are in some stage of foreclosure; 32 residences, 26 lots and 1 condo unit. Your Board and office staff are taking aggressive steps to alleviate this situation.

The first step in the process is to recognize which current assessments are unpaid. Next, the office checks the County records to verify ownership and determine status of the property. Once determination is made, a lien is filed to ensure recovery of monies owed to the Association. This is a tedious process, complicated by new legislation that requires a waiting period and registered return mail to go out before filings begin. The next challenge is to ferret out and determine responsibility for neglected maintenance on the property. The Association does everything possible to get lawns cut and overgrowth removed. In some cases, the Board has assumed a minimal degree of maintenance; the charges borne by the Association and lien placement on the property for recovery with interest. To do any less would invite blighted conditions to get worse. Be mindful that blighted property affects all property values, both improved as well as vacant lots.

Since our last newsletter, the community has addressed the potential installment of underground electric service delivery (removal of overhead electric lines and

poles). An ad hoc resident committee spent over 4 years of volunteer time researching the feasibility of such a project. Some have criticized the Association for not taking a more aggressive role in promoting the project. We must understand that the BSLPOA is a 'Property Owner's Association' and as such is limited in scope regarding certain endeavors. The Association did sponsor a public meeting so that information could be received and opinions could be voiced. Also, in conjunction with Charlotte County Department of Public Works (DPW), the Association mailed an opinion poll so that all property owners could return their opinion via postcard expressing their feelings on the measure. The DPW was involved due to the fact that a 25% discount was offered by Florida Power & Light (FPL) provided the project is funded through a municipality. In this case the proposal was to be funded through an MSBU (local, non-ad valorem tax). The opinion poll tallied by DPW did not garner enough support to go forward. Instead, FPL will now move forward with a "hardening" project to make overhead service more reliable. We have been told that this will require larger, more numerous poles along certain feeder streets within the community to ensure the reliability of service.

The improved entryway at Cape Horn and Burnt Store has been completed from a Public Works standpoint. This is not a new project, but the final phase of a project started several years ago with the roundabout traffic control on Cape Horn. The next phase: landscaping, lighting, irrigation and new signage will follow. One aspect of this project will be trees from a County grant. Getting the trees has been a slower than normal process due to County procedures, but involves some landscaping at no direct cost to the Association.

Your Board and office staff have had many challenges during the past months. Their goal has been to make Burnt Store Lakes a friendly, attractive place to live. In addition to municipal water & sewer, this com-

munity is served by Sallie Jones Elementary, one of the better rated schools in the area.

As this economic crisis subsides, we want to ensure that Burnt Store Lakes is in a good position to benefit from an improving economic climate and as being a good place to live.

On a personal note, I want to thank this Board and the two former Boards on which I have served. They have always had the best interest of the Community as a first priority. In addition, thank you to the Committees that support this community with all of their hard work on maintenance, landscaping, forward planning, lake water quality, architectural review, drainage, safety & preparedness, and social events. A special thanks goes to Neighborhood Watch. Their presence has had a positive effect that we cannot quantify. The office staff deserves a big thanks for their patience and professionalism when dealing with problems that arise. When you see any of these neighbors, take the time to say 'thanks'; I know I will.

Jim Brown, President  
Board of Directors

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Nearly half way

through our fiscal year, it is gratifying to report that the overall financial picture of the Burnt Store Lakes POA is indeed healthy. As of the end of March, the Association had a cash position of over \$538,000. The day to day and month to month costs of operating and growing as a 'property owners association' is no small task and our expenditures are proof of that. We take so much of what we have here in the Lakes for granted, and until one takes the time to seriously review and understand a multitude of activities, projects, and associated expenses of our neighborhood, the budget and on-going expenditures may at first be overwhelming.

On a monthly basis, operating expenditures for our Association average some \$30,000. How is this possible? Consider the fact that through our annual dues we pay for all the mowing of the vacant lots and greenbelt areas and right of ways, we have electrical costs for aerating our lakes, we have expenses for monitoring, maintaining and improving the quality of our lakes, we have costs involving the drainage areas, park maintenance and repairs, and all of the various expenses associated with the office, including rent, equipment, postage, printing, insurance, telephone and salaries etc. At first glance, what appears to be a fairly simple operation is actually an

incredibly complex, multifaceted business machine.

For the most part, the BSLPOA members are prompt to pay their annual Association dues when the invoices are sent out in the fall. Without these prompt payments it would indeed be difficult for the Association to operate effectively. At the present time, we still have approximately \$86,000 in uncollected dues. Be advised that this amount includes some not yet received dues for 2008-2009, but also delinquent dues from previous years as well. Our staff are actively involved with trying to contact these property owners in an attempt to collect payment of same and have a good success rate. Our Association, too, is a victim of the economic and foreclosure crisis. Unfortunately, like so many areas, our neighborhood is seeing its share of vacated and foreclosed properties and one of the consequences of such, is the non-payment of the annual assessment. As your Board, we have a realistic understanding of the financial tragedy some of these property owners are experiencing and we understand that in many of these cases, association dues simply may not be available. The Association is willing to work with these situations, confidentially, on an individual basis.

We are pleased to report that over the past few months, we have moved the Association's accounts to Regions Bank. A portion of the Association monies were deposited into a regular checking account while other monies were deposited into a higher interest money market account and CDs. As the CDs mature, those funds will be transferred into the checking account to cover normal operating and reserve expenses. The end result of this is that our Association funds have the opportunity to grow at a fairly attractive percentage rate until such time that they are needed for bill payments.

The Burnt Store Lakes property owners are being well served by their elected Board, for these Board volunteers take great responsibility to ensure that your Association dollars are being protected and utilized to the fullest potential.

Jim Thiel, Treasurer



## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is tasked to review all new home construction and exterior aesthetic changes to homes in Burnt Store Lakes. Aesthetic changes may include house or driveway color, additions, pool construction, irrigation and fencing. The

ARC closely follows the guidelines set forth in the Deed Restrictions and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. Your new home or addition construction plans must be reviewed by ARC prior to submission to Charlotte County for permitting. The office will assist you in expediting the process and provide guidance with the County process. The Burnt Store Lakes community is 25% built out with 458 homes.

Fred Boland, Director



## BEAUTIFICATION & ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

This committee of hard-working individuals is co-chaired by Bob Carlson and Ron Norsell and meets monthly at the Park. The purpose of this committee is to respond to improvement suggestions made by property owners and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the visual and aesthetic qualities of the common areas of our community. Common areas are designated by BSLPOA for the use and enjoyment of property owners and include the lakes, greenbelt and park.

Priorities for this committee involve a master plan for the park—to include water and sewer at a future date as well as a budget for seasonal plantings at the roundabouts and entry. The Cape Horn entrance to BSL remains an on-going project as the Association waits for the County to complete the design for irrigation, lighting and landscaping at the newly widened entrance. A new sign is planned to enhance the appearance of our community and its completion should coincide with the completion of the landscaping and lighting at the entrance.

Finally, the old kiosk was relocated to the entrance of the Park and is in compliance with deed restrictions and the Florida Sunshine Law.

Rob Hancik & Marion Jinkens, Directors



## COMMUNICATIONS

Communications, specifically, the Community Information Network (CIN), is going into its second year. Initiated by Steve Steidel, who has graciously agreed to remain as a liaison for the committee, this network is designed to relay important information to the community. Hopefully, more and more residents and property owners are becoming acquainted with this valuable tool.

The months of January, February and March saw no urgent notices. There were Notifications of business topics such as the Open House scheduled for April 14 in conjunction with the monthly board meeting, the public hearing on underground electric service delivery, and planned neighborhood watch meetings. One social Grapevine message was sent regarding the St. Patty's Day potluck hosted by the Welcoming Committee.

The new resident **Directory** is scheduled to come out in July with updated emergency and other important area telephone contact information. If you would like your information printed in the Directory, or if you wish to have your name, address and email removed from the Directory, please contact the office at 941-639-5881 or email your request to [office@bslpoa.org](mailto:office@bslpoa.org). **Information must be received by May 31, 2009.**

Marion Jinkens, Director



## COMMUNITY STANDARDS

The deed-restricted community of Burnt Store Lakes was established in September 1972. Development of the single-family lots began in the early 80's. As a result, and twenty years after the deed restrictions were written, the Burnt Store Lakes Property Owners Association was incorporated in October 1992. The Association, as defined in the Articles of Incorporation, was organized for the purpose to "carry out all of the duties and responsibilities imposed upon it by the aforementioned Declaration of Restrictions: including but not limited to maintenance of the common areas, providing for the maintenance of the lakes, and entryway and other such duties and responsibilities incidental to the property".

We can hope to improve our community through aesthetics as well as capital improvements, but it takes the cooperation of "all who signed on" to the responsibility of purchasing in a deed-restricted community.

The following represents issues addressed by your Board of Directors during the past six months:

Vehicle/Parking violations	12; all resolved
Trailers/RVs	6; all resolved
Boats	1; resolved
Landscaping	34; 7 unresolved
Fences	4; 1 unresolved
Trash receptacles	7; 2 unresolved
Miscellaneous	7; all resolved



## LAKES REPORT

We continue to treat our waterways against undesirable weed growth and hopefully enhance the growth of desirable flowering plants. Further, the aeration system is being maintained quarterly and seems to be functioning very nicely. Since the aeration was updated, we have continued to see an increase in the oxygen levels of all lakes.

Our lakes management contractor has been treating the lakes with a larvacide in our never-ending battle to control the midge fly population. The first treatments began on the first of March and will conclude during the first two weeks of April. We are seeing some signs of progress and plan to repeat this practice again later in the year.

We have had reports of good spawning activity for bass and bluegills. In addition, some snook are beginning to show themselves. We have even had a report of one redfish being caught.

As you know, we encourage 'catch and release' of any game fish that you may catch; in the same sense, we ask that you remove any and all non-native species that you catch. This would include tilapia and snakehead fish. The Florida Wildlife Commission suggest we remove those particular fish by spearing, hook and line, or netting. Further information about these invasive fish and their negative effect on our sport fish is available in the free fishing regulations booklets at any sporting goods retailer or the tax office.

Scottie Pitser, Fred Boland & Bob Lilley, Directors

## FY 10/1/08-9/30/09 ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS

The Annual Assessments determined at the Annual Meeting were billed no later than October 31, 2008 and were due upon receipt. Interest accrual began December 1, 2008 and a lien was placed against all past due assessments April 6, 2009.

Due to changes in Florida law, procedures for billing and lien filing have become much more complicated. Costs associated with collection of past due fees and resultant lien filing and legal fees have risen dramatically, and are likely to increase the budget for next year by almost \$15,000. As this cost is shared by all members of the Association, it is important to avoid this situation with timely remittance of your payment.

Next fiscal year, we hope to have a system in place that allows for debit or credit card payment of annual assessments. This convenience will promote timely collection of all assessments.

## DRAINAGE & MAINTENANCE



Clean up and maintenance of Bear Branch Creek from east of Cape Horn to Stork Lake in the area of the park was begun during March. This effort removed many years of dead trees, heavy brush, vines and pepper trees and is considered residual hurricane clean up as well. The reduction of a fire hazard area has further resulted in a greenbelt that can be accessed as a pleasant place to walk and observe nature in our own back yard; another benefit to maintaining good drainage and greenbelt areas in our community.

Efforts to maintain the Bear Branch Creek area west of Cape Horn will continue over the next quarter.

Bob Lilley, Director



## SAFETY & PREPAREDNESS

The Safety & Preparedness committee is seeking new members to serve as we build an emergency preparedness resource team and check list. The goal is to have the ability to identify not only key members of the community who are able to assist in the event of a natural disaster, but also to identify those who are medically at risk and in need of assistance. One or two members of the team may act as a liaison to county officials and/or the Board of Directors. If you have first aid, CPR, EMT or other skills valuable in an emergency, or mechanical

or construction related abilities, please contact Fred Boland or Bob Lilley.

It would also be helpful to enlist the owners of emergency equipment such as generators, ham radios, battery operated radios (to assist oxygen dependent folks) in the event that power is down for many days, or tools such as hand or chain saws available for use in the event of downed trees or limbs. Equally important is knowing who will benefit from services. If you, or someone you know, might be in need of assistance in the event of a disaster, you may provide the Committee with your name and contact information.

The S & P committee will meet at 6:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Park.

(Safety & Preparedness & Neighborhood Watch meetings will be held in conjunction with one another for the purpose of relaying or sharing information between the two groups. The two groups will remain separate.)

Fred Boland & Bob Lilley, Directors



## WATER RESTRICTIONS

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) declared Phase III Extreme Water Shortage conditions, one level below Critical and is requesting a **10% voluntary reduction in all water use.** The once per week schedule applies to **ALL PROPERTIES** and **ALL WATER SOURCES**:

If your address or house number ends in:  
0 or 1 Water only on Monday  
2 or 3 Water only on Tuesday  
4 or 5 Water only on Wednesday  
6 or 7 Water only on Thursday  
8 or 9 Water only on Friday

Personal vehicle washing is restricted to once per week: Tuesday for even numbered addresses, and Wednesday or Sunday for odd numbered addresses. Any hose used should have a shut-off nozzle. **Report violations to CCU at 941-764-4300.**



## RENTAL POLICY

Thank you to all property owners for submitting your rental registrations! Occupants are now able to receive newsletters and other community information and we are happy to welcome new residents to our community. As a reminder, maintenance of the property and

adherence to the deed restrictions is the responsibility of the property owners. Please contact the office if you need additional forms or information. \*\*\*All "For Rent" signs must meet the same requirements as "For Sale" signs. The maximum size allowed per Deed Restrictions is 6" X 8". Experience has shown that larger signs do not produce larger results, and as people drive through the community, they become experienced with looking for and locating appropriate signage. Thank you for your cooperation in meeting this standard.

Board of Directors

## BRAZILIAN PEPPER TREES

The State of Florida designated the Brazilian Pepper tree as a foreign, invasive plant species to be eradicated. In 1996, the Association initiated a project to remove the species as it formed an impenetrable jungle, reducing the quality and quantity of beneficial plant life in many locations throughout the community.



Dale DeKraker has started work at the island on Ibis lake to once again remove the noxious pepper tree species from this area. His care and attention to the environment here are to be commended as he and his team carefully remove the trees and improve the native species habitat.

Our appreciation goes out to Dale DeKraker and Paul Garrett. Thank you, gentlemen, for your efforts.

Board of Directors



## Neighborhood Watch

The Neighborhood Watch is seeking additional members as the eyes and ears of the community. The February meeting at the Park was a great turn-out, and **meetings will continue to be held at the Park, and are scheduled for the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m.** Matt Butcosk was introduced as the new Chairman, replacing Dave Prins. Matt can be reached by email at [mbutcosk@embarqmail.com](mailto:mbutcosk@embarqmail.com). Please email him with your interest to become part of this valued and necessary team. The Neighborhood Watch operates under the guidance of the Charlotte County Sheriff's office and follows their recommended format. Meetings are intended to be casual yet informative.

Neighborhood Watch and Safety & Preparedness meetings will be held in conjunction with one another for the purpose of relaying or sharing information between the two groups.

Fred Boland & Bob Lilley, Directors

## RESIDENTIAL CURBSIDE SOLID WASTE SERVICES

Provided through Charlotte County, solid waste removal occurs once per week. Each Friday, in our community, trash, recyclable materials, and yard waste are picked up by Waste Management. All trash placed in the cart provided by Charlotte County must be bagged to prevent trash from blowing around. All carts should be placed curbside by 5:00 a.m. on your scheduled day, at least 5 feet away from the mailbox and other containers. Since you are held responsible for the trash carts, avoid putting them in the street where the cart could be damaged by passing cars. Should you require a different sized trash cart, you may request one by calling 941-629-1106.



In accordance with Deed Restrictions, trash receptacles must be stored out of sight after trash removal has occurred. **PLEASE** remember to store your trash cans either in the garage or behind your enclosure shield everyday.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

### Location has changed!

Board of Director meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at our new office location: 100 Madrid Blvd, Unit 212 (behind Bank of America).

The 6:00 p.m. meetings are open to all property owners. You are encouraged to attend; your presence is welcome, and your ideas and input are appreciated during Open Forum.

Board of Directors



## SAVE the DATE!

Your Holiday party committee has listened to your requests for a facility closer to the Lakes, beef added to the menu, less costly drinks and better service.

This year, our party will be held at Portobello's Restaurant in the Burnt Store Marina on **Saturday December 5, 2009**.

This is an exciting venue as it is close to home, has an inviting atmosphere and a comfortable environment. The committee has negotiated half-priced "well"



drinks all evening, with two bartenders. The menu of Prime Rib, Grouper and Chicken Marsala should meet the variety of tastes. The committee is hoping for more participation this year, and asks that you pencil in the 5th of December on your calendar and be available to wine, dine, and dance with the finest!

Karen Bishop, Committee Coordinator



## DID YOU KNOW?

In 1790, the first census was taken by U.S. Marshalls on horseback and counted 3.9 million people. Census 2000 counted more than 280 million people.

Presently, workers are using hand held computers equipped with GPS to increase geographic accuracy. Census workers will verify mailing addresses and may ask whether there are additional living quarters on the property.

The census, a count of everyone living in the United States, is mandated by the U.S. Constitution and conducted every 10 years. All information collected is protected by federal law. All Census Bureau employees—including temporary employees—take an oath for life to keep census information confidential. Any violation of that oath is punishable by a fine of up to \$250,000 and five years in prison.

Census workers will be in our neighborhood to verify address and geographic locations in preparation for the 2010 Census to begin next year.

## ANNUAL MEETING

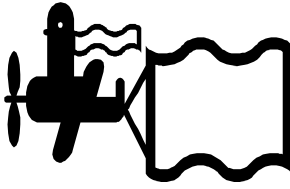
The BSLPOA Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday October 17, 2009. Beginning at 8:30 with breakfast pastries at the Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, the meeting is an opportunity for all members to vote on the upcoming fiscal year budget and incoming Board of Directors. Three openings will be available as Jim Brown, Rob Hancik and Scott Pitser will complete their terms. Mark your calendar, we look forward to seeing you there.

\*\*\*A volunteer sought to organize the Annual Picnic held immediately after the meeting. Please call or email the office if you are interested in helping.\*\*\*

The Nominating Committee will begin seeking Candidates for Director openings in June. Please come forward with your interest to serve our community. You may provide the office with a short biography, or provide your name for a member of the Committee to contact you. We look forward to meeting you!

## ADVERTISE

Upon the request of many, the office has looked into the cost of offering advertising in our newsletter.



We are happy to announce that advertising will be made available, on a limited basis, for the November Newsletter. Space allows for 20 business card sized ads to be run in black & white for a nominal fee of \$35.00. Advertising space is available on first come, first paid basis (limit 20) through September 1, 2009. Please contact the office by phone or email for additional information: 941-639-5881 or [office@bslpoa.org](mailto:office@bslpoa.org).



## HURRICANE SEASON

### APPROVED NAMES FOR 2009

ANNA	LARRY
BILL	MINDY
CLAUDETTE	NICHOLAS
DANNY	ERIKA
FRED	ROSE
GRACE	SAM
HENRI	TERESA
IDA	VICTOR
JOAQUIN	WANDA
KATE	

## PICTURES

### WANTED



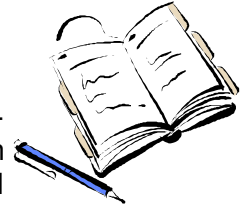
Staff are seeking pictures of areas in Burnt Store Lakes to put together into a collage for display at the office. Please bring in any pictures you are willing to part with that depict either lovely scenery, people or the stages of development the community has passed through over the years.



## VEGETATION DEBRIS

Waste Management will pick up your bundled vegetation waste on Fridays. You must pile it on the roadside next to your driveway. It WILL NOT be picked up from the vacant lots. Please call ahead if you have larger than usual amounts of debris.

## RESIDENT DIRECTORY



The new resident Directory is scheduled to come out in July with updated emergency and other important area telephone contact information.

If you would like your information to be printed in the Directory, or if you wish to have your name, address and email removed from the Directory, please contact the office at 941-639-5881 or email your request to [office@bslpoa.org](mailto:office@bslpoa.org). Information must be received no later than May 31, 2009.

Board of Directors

## TEMPORARY WAIVERS

Please contact the office for a form requesting temporary permission to place a trailer, boat or RV in your driveway for a few days. The Waiver is time-limited to 21 days ( no more than 3 consecutive days) per year. Please remember that all vehicles, trailers and/or boats are NOT allowed to be parked on vacant lots or in the County right of way.

## POTLUCK PICNICS

The season for hosting Potluck Picnics is almost over. From June through September, the weather is usually too hot. However, the Park is available if a host is available! I am here full-time to assist anyone who is planning a Potluck.

We still have the month of May open—if you are interested in providing the main part of the meal—can be hotdogs and hamburgers—please let me know and I will do the rest. Celeste & Sandy will be hosting a “Chili Cook-Off” on June 14th. Bring your favorite chili recipe for all to sample and vote for. Prizes will be awarded, but most important is the notoriety and prestige of having the best darn chili in BSL!

Burnt Store Lakes has a fabulous park with many improvements for all of our enjoyment. You might even choose to have a private party there. If you do, please contact the office for a reservation.

Karen Bishop, Potluck Coordinator

**BURNT STORE LAKES  
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
100 MADRID BLVD, UNIT #212  
PUNTA GORDA, FL 33950**

**“PRSR STD”  
US POSTAGE PAID  
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PERMIT #245**

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Visit the website Information Center for the latest Notifications.

\_\_\_\_\_office@bsipoa.org

Facsimile: 941-639-3120

Telephone: 941-639-5881

100 Madrid Boulevard, Unit #212, Punta Gorda FL 33950

*Effective December 1, 2008*

**NEW OFFICE LOCATION**

