



ORANGE BLOSSOM GARDENS
PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

BULLETIN
SEPTEMBER 1990

Jean Tuttle, Editor

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2

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Refreshments	ELEANOR DUDEK	753-2684

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NOTE: Appointments have not been made as yet to the following committees: Negotiating and Publicity.

Any member who is interested in serving in the future as a member of any standing or special committee is invited to contact the President of the Board or any member of the Board of Directors.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of any organization; and we are doubly appreciative of the fact our volunteers are retirees who are giving up some of their leisure and activities time to help us!

3

MESSAGE FROM P.O.A. PRESIDENT EVA HAWKINS

The Hawkins family had a lovely summer. We were privileged to attend our grandson's graduation and the wedding of our granddaughter.

Now the summer vacation period is drawing to a close and it's back to the business of the Property Owners' Association. Your Board of Directors has been working in between their vacations.

All of you, I'm sure, remember the picketing. The decision to do informational picketing was our last effort to try to resolve our grievances short of court action. We stopped picketing when court action was instituted.

Going to court was the final step after 18 months of attempting to negotiate our grievances by every other peaceful means. All this while we were fighting off management's repeated attempts to take over and control the P.O.A.

You remember the buy-back of your membership? Then there was the buy-in effort and the constant media assaults.

Before the last election, when management sponsored their hand-picked slate, Mr. Schwartz lauded the idea of a Property Owners' Association working with management. That idea quickly bit the dust!

Do not be lulled; management has not given up on their desire to exercise control over the Property Owners' Association. It will be interesting to see the direction they take this year.

As long as management cannot control our organization, we are going to fight to protect the rights we do have under our restrictive covenants and to try to

get back those services and benefits management has already taken from us.

This is what we are hoping to accomplish through our law suit. We want a judge and jury to define just what our rights are under the covenants; and we want reparations for the monetary losses we have incurred because of loss of services. For example: trail fees, R.V. storage fees, and charges to participate in bocce leagues, etc.

We also would like to have the aforementioned judge and jury rule on the deceptive advertising which was used to induce us to buy our homes. In the long run, it is not only money but principle we are fighting for. Doesn't anyone keep their promises anymore?

Since Mr. Schwartz took over sole control of OBG in the mid-eighties, the maintenance fees have gone from \$69 per month to \$89 per month. Management had no qualms about raising the "cap" to \$89 and, when the traffic will bear it (without losing sales to nearby parks), rest assured they will raise it again.

This after charging for some of the services we enjoyed under our maintenance charges. Things such as free R.V. storage, no trail fees, cable TV, trash/garbage pick up, and league play in Bocce, shuffleboard, etc. (without calling them tournaments and charging entry fees).

Removing these benefits increases management's profit factor and, don't be fooled, Orange Blossom Gardens is a very profitable business.

2 - PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The P.O.A. is not against management making a profit; but we do feel that the millions paid per year in maintenance fees could provide all of the benefits we previously enjoyed and still allow for considerable profit to the developer. If management only uses our maintenance fees to cover the recreational areas and the common ground within the park, there is ample profit.

Who knows what will happen if we do not forcefully follow through and make management live up to the promises made to us when we bought our homes at O.B.G.?

There will be nothing to prevent the trail fees from going beyond the current \$120 per year (Mr. Schwartz said there is no cap on this fee). Our overnight guests played the executive course free and now pay for Hilltop and cannot play Silver Lake. Parking R.V.'s and boats was free and the current cost could escalate!

Action now against the wrongs already committed is aimed at preventing such further abuses. Think about it! I don't know how the recreation department could call what I do in the swimming pool a tournament, but could they charge us for pool use? How about charges for your friends and family to use the pools?

Don't be fooled - if there is a way to get away with it - management will do it!

In addition to our suit, we have a lot of serious business to take care of this year. We will be proposing changes to our bylaws to protect our group from a renewed effort by management at a take-over of our P.O.A.

PLEASE, if you are interested in YOUR P.O.A., make sure you are a paid up member so you can vote.

We also have elections coming up and to vote your choice in those elections you must a paid up member. This is going to be an interesting year.

I would personally like to extend my thanks and heartfelt gratitude to all of our members who joined us on the picket line. Your conduct was exemplary even in the extremest of conditions.

Our September meeting will be held in the tent because of the remodeling of the recreation hall. Chris Jayson, our attorney, will be our speaker. Seating may be limited so plan to come early.

Thank you for all of your messages of support. It only reinforces my feelings that Property Owners' Association members are the "silent majority" and will not allow our freedom and independence to be jeopardized. We will be heard.

Eva M. Hawkins

EVA M. HAWKINS
President

5

PART I OF THE REPORT OF THE BYLAWS COMMITTEE

When the P.O.A. re-organized under Chapter 723 last year, it was necessary to amend our bylaws to conform to the provisions of the law.

We did so under the guidance of our attorney at that time. We were advised to live with the revised bylaws for one year to determine which areas needed future revision.

Before the new bylaws could even be adopted, we learned we had taken no precautions to protect against the take-over attempt mounted by O.B.G. management in their effort to render the P.O.A. ineffectual!

But for the support of the P.O.A. membership, our organization would now have no more legal status to represent residents than does the C.I.C.

Thus, the major revisions of the bylaws to be considered at the Annual Meeting of Members in November will be to correct this naive and trusting oversight.

A proposed amendment to Section 2, Article XVI (Nominating Committee) will provide for the **eligibility for nomination to elective office to be expanded to require membership in the P.O.A. for no less than one year.**

Effective immediately, by the unanimous action of the Board of Directors meeting as the Executive Committee, **new memberships and membership renewals will be accepted no later than October 1st each year.**

A proposed amendment will incorporate this policy into the bylaws by

adding Section 3 to Article III (Membership) and amending Section 2 of Article XIII (Voting Membership List).

An amendment to Sections 2 and 3 of Article XVII (Board of Directors) is being proposed to provide for election of members only to the Board of Directors **with the selection of the corporate officers to be made by and from the membership of the Board.**

This change would in no way deprive the P.O.A. members of the opportunity to choose officers as candidates for these offices will be known, and the one-year term of office would remain unchanged.

Adoption of this amendment would result in only three vacancies to be filled each year, beginning in 1991.

Except where applicable, it would be necessary to delete references to the "election of officers" and to the "four officers" as they now appear in the bylaws.

Section 4, Article XVII, should then be amended accordingly to provide for the **officers to be elected** at the first monthly Executive Committee meeting of the Board held after the November election results are known and affirmed; to provide for the **announcement of election results**; and provide for **notification to the park owner** of the name and address of the newly-elected president.

Part II of the Bylaws Committee Report will appear in the October bulletin. Presentation and discussion of all amendments will take place at the October meeting with adoption at the November meeting.

NOTICE OF SEPTEMBER P.O.A. MEETINGS

Please accept the following schedule as your notice of September meetings.

- 6 - 9:00 a.m. - **Liaison Committee**
Lady Lake Community Building
- 14 - 9:00 a.m. - **Executive Committee of the Board of Directors**
1707 West Schwartz Boulevard
- 19 - 7:30 p.m. - **Board of Directors**
to be followed by a
Meeting of Members

NOTE: Due to the renovation of the O.B.G. Recreation Club House, the September 19 meeting will be held in the tent in La Plaza Grande.

The September 19 meeting will be the last at which new members and membership renewals will be accepted at the period prior to the meeting.

Come hear what our attorney has to report and stay for coffee and rolls afterward.

NEW PRIMARY VOTING LOCATION

Pursuant to notice from Emogene W. Stegall, Supervisor of Elections for Lake County, we will be voting at a different location this year for our First and Second Primaries.

We will vote at the former hardware store at 106 La Grande Boulevard for the First Primary (**September 4**) and for the Second Primary (**October 2**).

This change is due to the remodeling of the Recreation Club House, but management plans to restore its use in time for the General Election on November 6th.

TO ALL NEW RESIDENTS:

Welcome to Orange Blossom Gardens!

If you have not already met your Property Owners' Association Liaison Officer, please make yourself known to him/her. Your liaison officer can provide you with information about the history, goals and activities of the P.O.A.

We hope you will join us at our next monthly meeting which will be held in the tent on Wednesday, September 19th at 7:30 p.m.

Christopher Jayson, our attorney, will be speaking to us.

Eva M. Hawkins

EVA M. HAWKINS
President

A MOST IMPORTANT PRIMARY

Residents of Orange Blossom Gardens have been exceptionally diligent in exercising their right to vote in every election.

Some people have been known to skip voting in a primary because they regard it as unimportant.

The **September 4th primary**, however, is very important because it calls for the **election of two judges:** a Circuit Court Judge and a County Judge. These candidates will **not** appear on any future ballot.

It is the first time in many years that judges have been challenged for their seat on the bench. You won't want to miss this rare opportunity to vote for the election of judges!

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

I am a firm believer in the old saying that "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." Therefore, I am not going to try to change the minds of those who take the time to read this.

In view of all that has transpired in the past few months, however, it is my fervant hope I can give you some worthwhile thoughts to ponder.

Contrary to popular belief, members of the P.O.A. have as much appreciation as non-members do for the beauty of O.B.G. and for all the activities available here.

For a good many of us, the P.O.A. was in place long before we moved here. It was, in fact, organized 15 years ago.

Some of us joined due to past experience with the benefits and protection offered by membership in a property owners' association.

Some residents joined due to past experience with unfair treatment at the hands of unscrupulous developers in other parks.

Still other residents joined due to concern over some problems which were developing in O.B.G.

Property owner associations are organized for the purpose of maintaining the status quo of the community and to prevent changes which would alter property values and/or lifestyles.

From its inception, the P.O.A.'s sincere and primary objective has been to promote and maintain a cordial working

relationship with O.B.G.'s developers for the betterment of the community.

It was a worthy goal and should have been attainable, but it takes two to cooperate!

Instead of meeting the P.O.A. halfway, O.B.G. management has used every means at their disposal to create an atmosphere of fear and distrust of the P.O.A.'s purpose and intentions.

I can understand why our non-golfers might resent the trail fee issue, especially with the threat of an increase in their amenities fee if the trail fees were discontinued.

I can understand why some residents might have resented the picketing and, also, why some are leery about going to court.

I'm puzzled, though, why residents who disagree with the stand we were directed to take by our membership have not attended P.O.A. meetings to have a voice in decisions made there!

In other words, have you contributed to a solution or have you been a part of the problem by not getting actively involved?

I realize it is easier to criticize than to participate; but you have been attacking an organization that is committed to protecting the interests of all residents - - even the critics!!

Have you thought about who will take a stand in your behalf if you do not support the only group with your best interests at heart?

12

IMPORTANT DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER 1st

By the unanimous action of the Board of Directors, new memberships and membership renewals must be received no later than October 1st each year.

OCTOBER 17th

The following events are scheduled for the October 17th meeting:

1) The Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates for the election to be held at the November meeting.

2) Following presentation of this slate, the meeting will be declared open to nominations of eligible members from the floor.

3) A preliminary draft of proposed amendments to our bylaws will be submitted for discussion.

NOTE: Part I of the Report of the Bylaws Committee appears in this issue. Part II will be in the November issue.

REMEMBER: Members must show a current membership card to be admitted to the annual Meeting of Members on November 21st. **YOU MUST BE A MEMBER TO VOTE!**

END OF HURRICANE SEASON??

September is considered to be the last month of the hurricane season. Even so, residents would be wise to be prepared for the possibility of an extended season.

Stock up on all supplies. Plan your evacuation route. Keep advised of a storm's progress. Pets are not allowed in public shelters, so plan ahead.

NOVEMBER 21st

If you are a member in good standing by October 1st, you will have one vote (per household) on the following:

a) Adoption of proposed amendments to the bylaws.

b) Election of eligible members to the Board of Directors for the existing vacancies.

c) Adoption of a proposed budget to be submitted as a projection of anticipated expenses for the 1991 fiscal year.

d) Possible increase in the membership fee beginning in 1991 if funds are needed to meet the adopted proposed budget.

NOTE: Members may vote in person or by proxy. Use of the proxy will be explained, a list of candidates will be provided, and a proxy form for your use will be published in the November issue of the bulletin.

LIGHTNING KNOWS NO SEASON!

It is said more people are struck by lightning in Florida than in any other place in the world! Some people live to tell about it, but the death rate is very high.

Please exercise extreme caution when there are thunderstorms in the area. Know what to do if a companion has been struck. Quick action could save his/her life!

Let's take a walk down memory lane!

Why? Because the P.O.A. (Orange Blossom Gardens Property Owners' Association, Inc.) is 15 years old this year!

One of the ways we plan to celebrate our 15th anniversary is to relate the origin of the P.O.A. and the accomplishments it has enjoyed to date.

Did you know that not too many years ago only the very rich could afford to winter in Florida? But, with the advent of the single-wide mobile home (or trailer), the idea of escaping the cold weather months became affordable to other retirees. Many other retirees! So many, in fact, the mobile home park was born of necessity.

Historically, many of these parks were owned or operated by unscrupulous persons whose only thoughts were to take monetary advantage of the retirees in every conceivable way.

One way they found to do this was to increase the monthly lot rental by outrageous amounts any time they chose and to attach fees to some of the necessities of life.

Another common practice was to sell the park grounds for shopping malls and other types of new developments, making it necessary for retirees to re-locate at considerable expense.

Eventually, as you might expect, the retirees revolted against such unfair treatment and formed home owner associations.

Thus it was that a handful of O.B.G. residents met in mid-1975 to determine the best course of action to take to ensure they had a voice in matters affecting their retirement community.

Believing they would find strength in unity, they formed the original P.O.A. in November 1975.

A number of people who were responsible for taking this important step still reside in Orange Blossom Gardens and still are members of the P.O.A.

Their legacy to us was the original objective of trying "to promote the goodwill and friendship of all residents" and "to support the residents and developer in the formation of a community that would be a source of pride and benefit to the residents."

This objective became the main thread in the tapestry of each successive set of officers and volunteers. The only change has been to expand our objectives to embrace the changing needs of our community.

You might be interested to know that, in the beginning, the P.O.A. annual dues were \$12.00 per person. They were reduced to \$6.00 per person in 1980 and further reduced to \$6.00 per household in 1985.

In those early years, O.B.G. was in the first phase of development under the partnership of Messrs. Schwartz, Saks and Tarrson, and it consisted of Units One, Two and part of Three.

Perhaps you didn't know these units, plus portions of Units Four and Five, were (and still are) located in Lake County. Mr. Schwartz became the sole owner in 1983, and the remainder of O.B.G. (through Unit 13) was annexed as a subdivision of the Town of Lady Lake in 1984.

We hope you enjoyed the first leg of our memory lane journey and will join us for the rest in future bulletins.

BLOOD DRIVE POSTPONED

We regret the blood drive planned for September has had to be postponed until further notice.

This would have been our third drive this year, and it will be re-scheduled as soon as the Recreation Club House is again available.

Carol Etherton, our Blood Bank Chairperson, has received awards she will be presenting to the following residents as frequent donors:

Dorene Barrows
Charles Bradshaw
Teresa Suprenant

New residents may not be aware of the purpose of our Blood Bank Program. It is an arrangement we have with the Leesburg Blood Bank whereby units of blood donated by O.B.G. residents are credited for our use and made available, when needed, to O.B.G. residents and employees FREE OF CHARGE.

If you choose, you may go directly to the Leesburg Blood Bank and make your donation, but we sure you tell them to credit us for it. Otherwise, you may watch for the announcement of the date of the re-scheduled drive.

OUR PRAYERS ARE NEEDED

Let us all be mindful of the plight of our fellow Americans and others who are trapped in the Middle East confrontation.

Let us combine our prayers that a war can be avoided and that our embassy personnel, our servicemen and the hostages will be able to return home unscathed.

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR LEGAL FUND

Now that we have instituted court action as the last step to resolve our grievances with O.B.G. management, we need to resume consideration of the need for funds to cover court costs and attorney fees.

We appreciate the fact some of our members chose to wait until we had actually gone to court to make a donation; but the time has come and we need your financial support as much as we need your moral support.

Please send your donation today to our Treasurer, Dorothy Morehouse, 1640 West Schwartz Boulevard, or you may give it to any member of the Board.

ERIC GROETHING APPOINTED TO BOARD

As announced in the May issue of our bulletin, the Board of Directors regretfully accepted the resignation of George Lounsbury as one of the members elected to a two-year term last November.

At the June meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board, the remaining members voted to appoint Eric Groething to fill the vacancy.

Welcome aboard, Eric! Your zealously in behalf of the P.O.A. will long be remembered!

In accordance with P.O.A. bylaws, an appointee to a vacancy does not serve to the end of the unexpired term. He or she serves until after a member has been elected to the vacancy at the next annual meeting in November, election results have been affirmed, and the oath of office has been administered to the elected member.

The Board of Directors of the Orange Blossom Gardens Property Owners' Association, Inc. meets with members in the Recreation Club House at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the nine (9) months of September through May.

All meetings - - except the Annual Meeting of Members held in November - - are open to all residents of The Villages of Orange Blossom Gardens, Silver Lake and Country Club Hills.

Only members in good standing are admitted to the November meeting at which members vote to elect members to the Board of Directors and to adopt amendments to the bylaws, if any have been proposed.

The Board of Directors meets as an Executive Committee at 9:00 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month at 1707 West Schwartz Boulevard.

The Liaison Committee meets at 9:00 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month at the Lady Lake Community Building.

The dates of these meetings are listed below from September 1990 through August 1991.

	<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>Executive Committee</u>	<u>Liaison Committee</u>
Sept.	19	13	6
Oct.	17	11	4
Nov.	21	8	1
Dec.	19	13	6
Jan.	16	10	3
Feb.	20	14	7
Mar.	20	14	7
Apr.	17	11	4
May	15	9	2
June	--	13	6
July	--	11	4
Aug.	--	8	1

Any changes in dates of meetings of the Executive Committee or the Liaison Committee will be noted in future issues.

MEMBERSHIP and 1990 DUES

As the legal representative of property owners under Chapter 723 (The Mobile Home Act), we cordially extend an invitation to all property owners (Units 1-13) to join the Orange Blossom Gardens Property Owners' Association, Inc. (P.O.A.)

ALL RENEWALS ARE DUE JANUARY 1st EACH YEAR.

You may send your check or cash to:

DOROTHY MOREHOUSE, TREASURER
1640 West Schwartz Boulevard

Beginning in 1990, our custom of pro-rating dues to new members at 50¢ per month will apply only to new residents who join during the year.

Remittance also may be made to any officer, board member, or liaison committee member listed on the bulletin cover.

The current rate of \$6.00 per calendar year per household will be due from all other new members and for membership renewals.

You may also pay your dues at any P.O.A. meeting.

If paying by check, please make it payable to the O.B.G. Property Owners' Association.

Please complete the following form and include it with your payment (whether a new membership or a renewal).

MEMBERSHIP FORM (please print)

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Unit _____ Phone 753-_____

I (we) hereby consent to membership in the Orange Blossom Gardens Property Owners' Association, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 723 (The Mobile Home Act).

_____ New _____

_____ Renewal _____

_____ Reinstated _____

Signature(s)

FOR P.O.A. Amount paid \$ _____ by _____ cash _____ check _____

USE ONLY Membership card issued _____ yes _____ no _____