



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to our Bel Mare owners and residents. I hope that you all had a wonderful Holiday Season. I have been your Board President for one full year. Many planned and some unplanned events happened during 2021. The ride was bumpy but with the guidance of your capable Board and Management team, all events were managed.

As your President, I must state that I was disappointed in the level of involvement from our owners related to the overall operations of our association. This is YOUR home; YOUR Association; YOUR investment. I ask that you choose to get involved in creating the vision and outcome for your investment. Your Board of Directors work diligently to do what they feel is right to maintain the fiscal wellness of this Condominium Association. They budget properly, provide oversight on issues that may arise, and try to maintain a vision for the owners. These are not easy tasks.

There are approximately 15-20 owners who regularly attend Board Meetings and provide input. That means 10-15 units out of 124 are represented. Therefore, I am disappointed. Our Association is blessed to have a plethora of very smart owners who have provided leadership and innovative ideas during their careers. Bel Mare certainly could benefit from this treasure-trove of knowledge. Please GET INVOLVED.

Below are dates and information which I hope you will use during 2022. Please put these dates on your calendars. I would love to need to rent chairs in order to seat all who would choose to participate in the governance of your Association.

### Board Meeting Dates for 2022:

**January 26, 4:00 PM      April 12, 4:00 PM      July 26, 4:00 PM**

**October 18, 4:00 PM** This includes the Board Meeting, Budget Approval, and Special Membership Meeting.

**December 7, 5:00 PM** Annual Meeting

**Bel Mare Committees:** Event Planning; Landscape; Strategic Planning; Finance; Maintenance; Design and Aesthetics; Security, Policies and Conduct; and Fining

Each committee may contain five members. If you wish to become a member of one of these committees, please use the sign-up sheets that will be provided at the desk in building 1. Your board will announce the committee members at the January 26 Board Meeting.

Thank you, in advance, for choosing to GET INVOLVED.

Respectfully, Keith Grady, Bel Mare Board President



### Management Office

Mon.—Fri. 8:00 am—4:30 pm  
941-729-5891

Toni Giliberti, Property Manager

Marie Sargeant, Asst. Property  
Manager

### Maintenance Office

Mon.—Fri. 8:00 am -4:00 pm

Peter Fehr, Maint. Supervisor

Keith Krusch, Maintenance Tech

Emergency Phone number for  
after hours is 1-800-337-5850

### Guard House

Mon.—Fri. 1:00 pm -10:00 pm

Sat.—Sun. 8:00 am -10:00 pm

# LADIES BUNKO IS BACK!

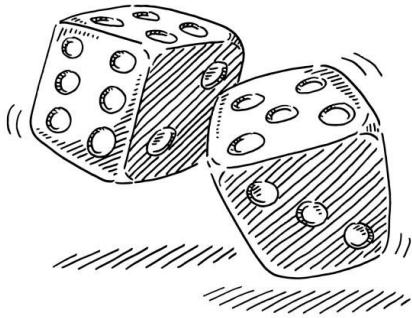
Lets get back to all the fun we had pre-COVID.

Ladies Game Night is back with BUNKO.

Tuesday, January 25th 6-9:30pm

Hosted by **Joyce Horton and Deborah Sperry**

All you need to do is to bring your own drink



BUNKO is a simple dice game that's fun and easy to learn. It will only take a moment to get up to speed, so bring your own drink and come on out to enjoy Ladies Game Night again!



## BEL MARE SPOTLIGHT

### BUTTERS the BUNNY

Butters lives with John and Mary Cropsey. He moved to Bel Mare in the spring of 2020, but has been a part of the Cropsey family for 8 years. Butters is a 10 year old harlequin rabbit who was rescued from a breeder situation. Sadly, Butters lost his partner early on before his adoption by the Cropsey's and was severely depressed. He has since recovered and is now a very happy, refined and distinguished rabbit who listens every-day to classical music. Upon his arrival here at Bel Mare, Butters had to adjust to the downsize,

as he was used to his own room. But he has found his own space in the spare room where he has his litter box and if his humans are not indulgent enough with treats, he will call out with his own bell! Butters doesn't care much for the view, but has embraced the leisure of the Bel Mare lifestyle, relaxing, eating and socializing when neighbors come to visit!



# Neighborhood News



## **BEL MARE HOLIDAY DECORATING**

The building lobbies, social rooms, front gate and other common areas are decorated beautifully for the holidays. A big thank you to **Patti Brown** for coordinating the decorations and volunteers to accomplish this much appreciated task.

Assistance will be needed and appreciated on **Sunday January 9th** at 3:00pm. The decorations will have already been taken down, but help will be needed to pack them and get them to the appropriate storage areas.

For questions or more information, please contact Patti Brown. [pbrown4883@aol.com](mailto:pbrown4883@aol.com)

## **Welcome New Neighbors**

### **October**

- 2-201 Bill & Carol Kirk
- 2-301 Gary & Karen Chadwell
- 2-304 David & Jean Penrod
- 1-403 Steve Abernathy

### **November**

- 1-504 Rebecca Mallari & John Laughner
- 2-403 Todd & Lisa Zimmerman

### **December**

- 1-506 Tony & Lori Jaber
- 1-1001 Guy & Joan Arkut
- 2-501 Jeffrey & Mary Conwell
- 2-904 Timothy Halligan  
& Jaqueline Hine



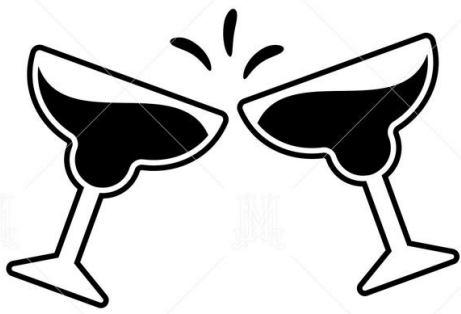
Do you play  
**BRIDGE?**



CREATED BY VECTORPORTAL.COM

If you do and  
would like to play  
here at Bel Mare,

Contact: Michelle Bencini  
[michellebencini@gmail.com](mailto:michellebencini@gmail.com) or  
Christine Winsler  
[christinewinsler@gmail.com](mailto:christinewinsler@gmail.com)



**HAPPY HOURS ARE BACK  
AND  
PLANNED FOR BEL MARE,  
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**



On Friday, December 3rd, **Fred and Deb Sperry** hosted the Bel Mare Mingle Jingle. Over 50 people attended! Toys and cash donations in the amount of \$1,280 were collected for the Mount Carmel Resource Center. Thank you Fred and Deb for a fun evening and thank you Bel Mare residents for your generosity!

Mark your calendars for these upcoming gatherings:

January 1st—New Years Morning Pie Party

hosted by Eric and Patti Brown

February 4th—Italian Night hosted by Connie and Ron Vitori

March 4th—hosted by John and Mary Cropsey

April 1st—hosted by Bob and Sandy Fladry

May 6th—host needed!

Contact Connie Vitori 631-896-3445 with any questions or to sign up!

# COMMITTEES OF BEL MARE

## **Finance Committee Report, submitted by Morris Bencini**

Year to date through October 31<sup>st</sup>, we are \$81,000 behind our P&L budget with an expected year-end negative variance totaling \$110,000. As noted in the previous newsletter, this is mainly due to the negative impact on our property insurance caused by our previous carrier going insolvent back in late April. In addition, the continuing labor shortage and inflation have caused price increases and additional budget variances in our pool maintenance contract as well as several building repairs and general maintenance items.

We have also experienced an increase in water and sewer charges in 2021. Through October, we are \$20,000 over budget in this category. Discussions regarding water saving measures are ongoing and we request that all owners / renters regularly check their fixtures for water leaks including running toilets. We estimate we have used over 1 million gallons more than normal this year. In addition, all owners need to be aware that originally installed water heaters are now 15+ years old and should be replaced. We have had several water damage problems in 2020-21 including fires and leaking/broken toilet pipes. All fixtures inside the units are the owners' responsibility and proper care and maintenance will help prevent damage to your unit as well as neighbors below you.

We are continuing to liquidate the investments in CD's representing part of our reserve cash. We have two CD's maturing in January and February of 2022 that will be liquidated and used to fund the remainder of the water proofing and painting contract. The final CD matures next June. As interest rates start to climb again, we will be revisiting our investment strategy with UBS to maximize our interest yield and minimize the impact on reserve funding for future dues.

## **Maintenance Committee Report, submitted by Morris Bencini**

The Maintenance Committee has continued to monitor the progress of the water proofing and painting project since it began. The work has been progressing on schedule with building 2 estimated to be completed by late February. The west, north and south faces have been completed as well as the amenity level (walls and planters) around building 2. The original contract totaled \$1,074,000 and we are currently expecting to have the work completed for approximately \$92,000 under budget. This is due to the scope of stucco and concrete repairs being better than originally expected.

In addition, the committee has been reviewing and analyzing recommendations by Karins Engineering regarding the membrane and tile failure of certain lanais during the water proofing portion of the project. The contractor and the engineer's inspector initially detected 4 lanais on the west face of building 2 that have defective structural integrity (ie. delamination) and may cause future leaking and water damage if not corrected. Due to the long lead time in ordering replacement membrane, we have asked the contractor and engineer to "sound" all the remaining lanais and determine how many additional units are damaged and require replacement. The committee is awaiting the engineer's report. We will analyze the recommendations and propose a scope of work to the Board. We expect a final determination in early January.

This additional work will be treated as a change order to the painting contract and be funded from our structural reserves and no additional assessment will be necessary at this time.

Finally, two additional projects have been started in conjunction with the painting project. The wall caps on the roof of each building were noted to have been improperly installed and are considered a major cause of water intrusion both under the roof liner and into certain penthouse units. These are being replaced with proper membrane lining and a new metal cap installation to ensure that all known water proofing issues have been addressed.

In addition, damage caused to the roof liner due to the noted water intrusion and improper maintenance over the years was detected. We hired a roofing inspector and a water detection company last spring to determine the extent of the damage and to provide a cost estimate to repair. Sutter Roofing provided a cost estimate totaling \$20,000 to repair the roofs of both buildings that will extend the life of the current roof systems for another 5-6 years. Building 1 repairs have already been completed and the building 2 repairs will commence once the painting is completed and the swing stages are removed. We expect this to be completed in March before the next rainy season begins.

# THE PALMETTO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Bel Mare Condo Association, President, Keith Grady

The Palmetto Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is a Florida Legislature approved dependent entity of the City of Palmetto and is charged with removing and mitigating blighted conditions (defined by the State) in the CRA designated area. The CRA is funded by a portion of our tax dollars and all the monies used to finance CRA activities are locally generated, CRAs are not overseen by the state. *All revenue goes directly to the city of Palmetto, not into the general operating funds of Manatee County. The Palmetto CRA currently receives approximately \$5 million annually. Any funds received from the CRA area must be used for specific redevelopment purposes within the area, and not for general government purposes.*

Why is this important to all of us? **The Riviera Dunes Community contributes approximately 70% of the revenues that go into the CRA.** We are approaching the planning cycle for earmarking and targeting the usage of these funds. This planning cycle covers the next 5 years. Our ideas must be in this plan to become viable. *It is important that the residents of Bel Mare and Riviera Dunes become active in generating ideas for the use of these funds so that our community and surrounding areas may benefit from their usage.* We need your suggestions documented before March 2022. I plan to develop and communicate to you a method for accumulating these ideas so that they may be forwarded to the CRA Board.

The activities and programs offered within the redevelopment area are administered by the CRA. The Palmetto City Commission and Mayor act as the CRA Board of Directors. Jeff Burton, a Florida Redevelopment Association certified redevelopment administrator and its current president, is the Agency's director. The CRA is responsible for developing and implementing the redevelopment plan that addresses the unique needs of the targeted area. The plan includes the overall redevelopment goals, as well as identifying the types of projects planned for the area. Examples of traditional projects include streetscapes and roadway improvements, building renovations, new building construction, flood control initiatives, water and sewer improvements, parking lots and garages, neighborhood parks, sidewalks and street tree plantings. The plan can also include redevelopment incentives such as grants and loans for such things as façade improvements, sprinkler system upgrades, signs, and structural improvements. The Palmetto redevelopment plan is a living document and is currently being updated to meet the changing needs within the redevelopment area.

**Please start thinking of ways that we may enhance the City of Palmetto and the Riviera Dunes community and be on the lookout for announcements of Town Hall Meetings where we will discuss and share our ideas.**



## The Manatee River Holiday Boat Parade



The Manatee River Holiday Boat parade was held on Saturday, December 11th. There were just over 30 watercrafts participating in the event, one of the largest in recent years. Viewing sites were from the Green Bridge Pier, the Riverhouse Waterfront Restaurant, along the Bradenton Riverfront and at Pier 22 Restaurant. For more information about more upcoming Bradenton events, visit [www.cityofbradenton.com/events](http://www.cityofbradenton.com/events) or [www.realizebradenton.com](http://www.realizebradenton.com)



THE POPULAR  
RIVER REGATTA  
IS BACK IN 2022!

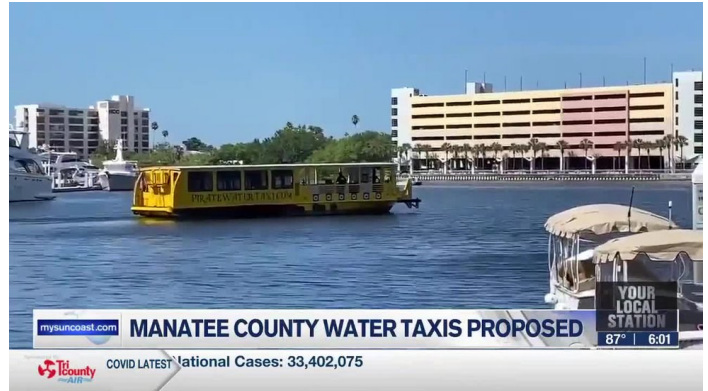
The Bradenton Area River Regatta, Manatee County's largest and FREE civic event, resumes February 12, 2022.

This popular event takes place right outside our neighborhood on the Manatee River! Although this years schedule of events is not out yet, in the past it has been action packed with activities such as: speed boat races of various classes of boats, live music, fireworks and other entertainment. Special kid zones are set up and lots of food and drink stations! Check [www.bradentonarearegatta.com](http://www.bradentonarearegatta.com) for a schedule of the events.

## LOCAL WATER TAXI COULD BE STARTING THIS SPRING!

Read more at: <https://www.bradenton.com/news/business/article256555761.html#storylink=cpy>

A water taxi service linking Anna Maria Island and the twin downtowns of Bradenton and Palmetto could start as soon as this spring. “Our office is working real hard to start some type of water taxi service in the spring,” Elliott Falcione, executive director of the Bradenton Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.



A water taxi would benefit local residents as well as visitors. Visitors to the island would not need a car, given the availability of a free trolley and tram, as well as bicycle rentals. A water taxi would provide an easy way for island visitors to see the sights on the mainland, including museums, restaurants and shopping districts.

Local residents who wanted a day on the beach or who have a beachside job would have an alternative to driving. Hours of service and fares have yet to be announced.

## PARANORMAL CIRQUE



You have certainly noticed the big circus tent in front of our buildings! Well, it is the Paranormal Cirque presented by Cirque Italia.

The show dates for our area is January 6-17. There are various show times and seat prices vary. This show is recommended for adults, so check it out before taking the grandkids!

The web site has a short video sneak peek, so you can see what you are getting into, as well as show times and ticket prices.

[www.paranormalcirque.com](http://www.paranormalcirque.com)

As editor of the Bel Mare Quarterly Newsletter, I am always looking for fun and interesting information to include. If you have ideas, pictures or articles for submission contact me at [christinewinsler@gmail.com](mailto:christinewinsler@gmail.com) The next newsletter will be published in March for distribution on April 1st!



## Birds of Bel Mare:

### The Weird-looking Duck Near the Fitness Center

by  
Valerie Biebuyck



of

You're walking down the path toward the Fitness Center for your morning workout routine and thinking about activities that will occupy the remainder of the day (grocery shopping, going to a dentist's appointment, complaining to Toni about something). Suddenly, a big, weird-looking duck appears next to the path bordering Lake Bel Mare. It's round, stocky body is mostly black with a few speckles white. The neck and head are mostly white speckled with some black. The face is covered with red, lumpy skin instead of feathers. "Yikes! Where did that come from? What is it?" you ask.

Well, it probably came from one of the ponds across the street in front of the Convention Center. Or maybe from a pond over by The Homes or The Hammocks. And what is it? It's a Muscovy Duck. A weird name for a weird-looking duck.

Wild Muscovy Ducks are native to Central and South America and live in forested habitats near water. The word "Muscovy" may have originated from London's Muscovy Company, founded in 1555, which transported these ducks to England and France. They were domesticated by indigenous populations long before the arrival of Christopher Columbus, perhaps because their meat has been described as tasting like roast beef. (Only two species of ducks have been domesticated: the Muscovy and the Mallard, and almost all varieties of domestic duck derive from the Mallard.) The Muscovy Ducks we see here in Florida are "feral." That means that they escaped from the places they were kept as domestic animals and established stable populations in the wild. Texas also has a large feral Muscovy Duck population. They can be found near ponds such as those at Riviera Dunes, the Bradenton Area Convention Center, parks, and golf courses.

Muscovy Ducks have webbed feet like other ducks, but they also have strong claws for perching in trees. This seems improbable given their size and distinction as the largest duck in North America. Males are about thirty inches long and can weigh up to fifteen pounds. Females are about half that size, duller, and have fewer facial lumps (called "wattles").

Muscovy Ducks nest in large cavities of mature trees. The female may use the same nest throughout her life. She lays 8 – 15 eggs, defends the nest, and raises the Muscovy ducklings on her own. The young use their sharp claws to climb out of the nest when they are ready to fledge.

They are omnivores and eat both plant and animal foods including water lily seeds, mangrove seeds, insect larvae, spiders, crustaceans, small fish, and reptiles. Bel Mare's visiting Muscovy Duck often grazes along the shore of Lake Bel Mare. Wild Muscovy Ducks are wary of humans, but feral populations can be quite tame. The one near our Fitness Center actually approached me when I slowed down for a closer look. He probably expected an offer of food.

Muscovy Ducks don't quack like other ducks. They are usually silent but when they do vocalize, the male makes a hissing sound and the female makes a quiet croak. When you go to the Fitness Center, if you are approached by a hissing, large, black-and-white duck with a lumpy red face, don't be alarmed! It's just a feral Muscovy Duck visiting Bel Mare.