



*Your
Community Resource*

The Woodlands Word

October 2025

The President's Report

Larry Dobias



As Rivendell members enter the fall season while holding out hope that there will not be any hurricanes this year, there are two issues we should be considering.

This is the time of year when the budget for 2026 is under review and the financial impact on the individual homeowner. A budget workshop is planned and if we can get everything scheduled, it will be held at the clubhouse in the Cottages on Tues Sept 30th at noon. All will be welcome to participate in the process as the Board considers comments relative to potential changes. There

are some minor increases in the proposed plan and the possibility there may be rollover funds to offset the increases.

Another issue is the election of new Board members for 2026. At this point in time, some of the experienced Board will be leaving management and there will be as many as three seats available. There are many folks in Rivendell who have the experience and expertise to manage the community in an ethical and fiscally responsible manner. If you have the time to dedicate your guidance to continue the progress made in the past several years, consider participating as a future Board member.

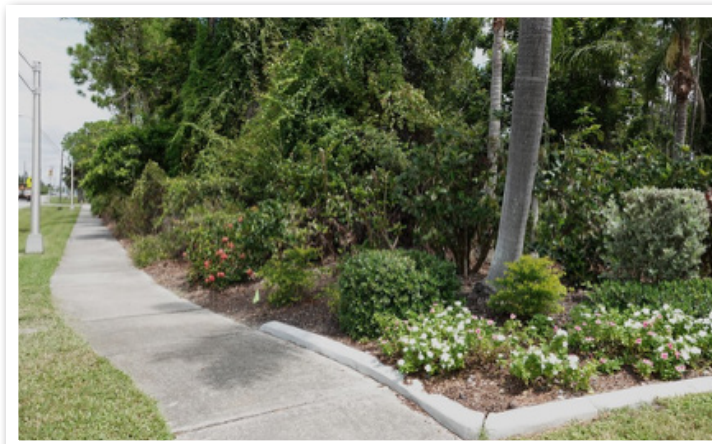
Welcome Fall!



Thank You to our Maintenance Volunteers

by Nancy Dobias

Did you notice that Greg Volack had his "Merry Band of Maintenance Volunteers" once more have been out along the Old Venice entrance to Rivendell, working to clear back more of the vegetative encroachment onto the sidewalks?



Now the kids walking to school or anyone else using those sidewalks no longer have to zig in and out to dodge any of the offending overgrowth. In addition, drivers coming out of Rivendell are provided a better line of sight to bicyclists/pedestrians coming at them.



These same workers have also been involved in bringing some "order" to the plants that anchor the white fence along Old Venice. Lots of weeding, vine removal and raking had first done and then the fencing was cleaned so its white color wouldn't be so dingy, but as is anything in Florida, it's a never-ending battle....



The "Merry Band of EXHAUSTED Maintenance Volunteers" must live for a day of rain so Greg can't come a'knocking on their door but until that happens, many thanks goes to PETER DAIGNAULT, CAROLE MYLES, MIKE NASH, and GREG VOLACK for all the work that has been accomplished for Rivendell.



Rivendell Book Group's Pick for October

On Monday, October 13th at 7:30 pm, the Rivendell Book group will be discussing *Orbital: A Novel*, the 2024 Booker Prize winning novel by Samantha Harvey. This book explores the lives of the crew on the International Space Station over a single day, reflecting on the astronauts' reflections on Earth, their own lives, and the human condition as they orbit their home planet.

Vivien Cruz will host the group, and Judy Sokal will lead the discussion. In future months, the group will be reading *Mrs. Plansky's Revenge* by Spencer Quinn, *The Worlds I See* by Fei-Fei Li, and *James* by Percival Everett. If you would like more information about the group, contact Lesley Glick at lesleymg8@gmail.com or Adele Kellman at adele.kellman@gmail.com.



Second Rivendell Ladies Luncheon Group Starting

Thanks to Helen McClure who has volunteered to organize this activity, the Social Committee will sponsor a Tuesday Ladies Luncheon Group. They will be meeting on the second Tuesday of the month, starting at 12:30 pm on November 11, 2025.

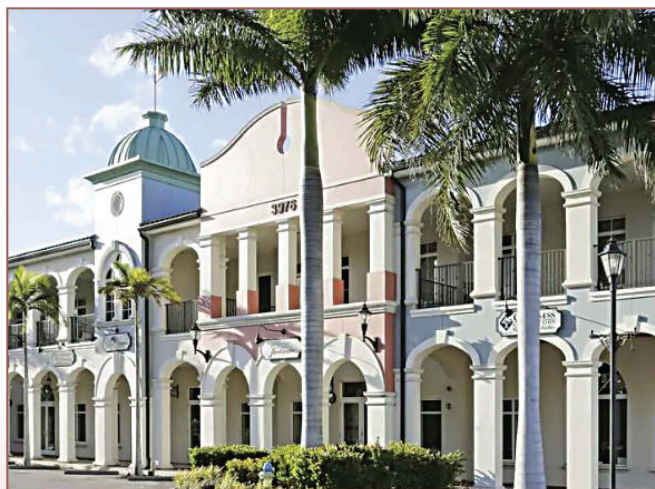
The first luncheon will be at Tripletail Seafood and Spirits in the Landings Shopping Center at 4870 S Tamiami Trail. To facilitate scheduling, the luncheon group will be limited to 16 attendees, and you will need to sign up with Helen by November 4th.

You're welcome to sign up for both a Tuesday luncheon and a Wednesday luncheon (held on the fourth Wednesday of most months), but if the Tuesday luncheon fills up, preference may be given to new members to give more people the opportunity to attend a luncheon. This popular activity is an ideal way to meet your neighbors in the community!

To reserve for the November luncheon or to put your name on the mailing list about upcoming Tuesday luncheons, please contact Helen McClure at mcclurenash@gmail.com.

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Best of Venice Winner for 2024



Best of Venice

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Board Certified Hearing Instrument Sciences
American Conference of Audioprosthology

Next month will be the voting for Best of Venice. As a small business owner this is one of the few ways we can feel honored for being in business. If you can please vote for your favorite local businesses. You can go to the website YourSun.com/BestofVenice to give a shout out to us.

I want to say thank you to everyone who voted for us in the Best of Venice awards from Venice Gondolier. I appreciate all the support and everyone who took their time to vote for us.

Your support and continued encouragement resulted in us being awarded Best of Venice, multiple titles and multiple years as both winner and finalist, Reader's Choice multiple years, and Small Business of the Year.

I am proud to have consistently offered service that is recognized by you and honored to receive so many awards over the years that our wall of awards has expanded onto another wall. Thank you for entrusting me with your hearing, I am glad I earned your respect.

Every day I hear stories about how hearing problems have interfered with enjoying life. I've always had one mission, to help everyone who comes to me to hear their best and engage in life.

Eighteen years ago, I opened my own office and chose to treat all my clients as if they are family. Twenty-two years ago, when I chose this profession, I was inspired by my mother MaryEllen. She was already wearing hearing aids due to ear surgery. Back then I was new to the industry and was not fully aware of how technology worked. As my ability grew, I noticed that the aids my mother wore were not the best for her needs. She was very social and would benefit from better technology. I was able to help her hear her best for her level of activities so she could have her best life.

If she was still with us today, I know she would be celebrating with us and all the people who have been able to engage in their own life with more ease and better understanding.



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Social Committee Needs Volunteers for New Events

The Social Committee functions with a small group of volunteers, and without the help of residents of Rivendell our activities would not happen. Below are two ideas we think would be worthwhile to sponsor in our community if there is sufficient interest.

If you are interested, and willing to volunteer to start one of these activities, please contact Maria Ilioff at miIioff85@gmail.com.

Men's Breakfast Club

The current Social Committee has all female members, and we regularly consider having a breakfast club for Rivendell men. Note: we already have a regular luncheon for women, and this could be a men's luncheon instead of a breakfast. But we need someone to coordinate this activity, a very popular one in other communities.

The responsibilities for this post include selecting a regular date, time and restaurant for monthly meals, coordinating with the Social Committee (which promotes events in the Woodland Word), and serving as the contact person for questions and sign-up for each event. This role can be held by one or more volunteers.

Rivendell Trivia Team

Many local communities have trivia teams that compete in local venues that hold a trivia night. If you are interested in forming a team at Rivendell, please volunteer for this post. The call for trivia participants would be publicized by the Social Committee, but the rest of the job (coordinating team events) would be done by you. Without a volunteer, this activity will not occur.



Halloween
OCTOBER 31

Social Committee Events for October 2025



Offered WEEKLY: Ladies Walk 'n Talk. Meet at the Rivendell Pool. Contact Lesley Glick at Lesleymg8@gmail.com or (973) 219-5839 for more information and if you'd like to be added to the Facebook Walk 'n Talk. Dates and times of walk will change depending on the season.

- ☐ Monday, October 13th, 7:30 pm. Book Group. For more information, contact Adele Kellman at (908) 464-7003 or Lesley Glick at (973) 219-5839.
- ☐ Thursday, October 2nd, from 1 to 4 pm. Bridge Club. To join, contact Barb Loe at (651) 398-2256.
- ☐ Thursday, October 16th, from 1 to 4 pm. Bridge Club. To join, contact Barb Loe at (651) 398-2256.
- ☐ Wednesday, October 22nd, Rivendell Ladies Luncheon at Millie's. For more information, contact Mirinda Roy at miriroy@aol.com.
- ☐ Monday, October 27th, from 2 to 4 pm. Mah Jongg. To join, contact Maria Iliof at (607) 427-4192.
- ☐ Monday, October 27th – Remember to sign up for the Potluck dinner at Maria and Greg Iliof's home on November 1st. Contact Maria at miIiof85@gmail.com
- ☐ Thursday, October 30th, 9:30 – 11:00 am at the Rivendell Community Pool. A Global Gathering with your Rivendell neighbors (see description below). For more information, contact Heidi at heidicookwest@gmail.com

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Puzzle from <https://www.printable-puzzles.com/>

(solution on page 14)

A Rivendell Global Gathering!

Have you noticed all the neighbors we have from so many different places? Whether you are from the States or abroad, here's an invitation for you! It's an opportunity to meet and share global flavors, tastes, cultures, conversations and experiences!

When: Thursday, October 30th 9:30 – 11:00 am

Where: Rivendell Community Pool

Rain Date: Thursday, November 7th 9:30 – 11:00 am

Come to share and talk about where you are from, your travel and cultural experiences, and your future bucket list destinations. If you are new to Rivendell, come to meet more of our neighbors. If you are learning English, this could be a good place to practice your skills and to learn more about our area, too. May this gathering bring new connections and friendships for all in our part of the world!

Please bring a small plate of goodies for others to share as well as your favorite morning beverage. Paper plates, cups, napkins and utensils will be provided.

To join this fun event, please respond to Heidi at heidicookwest@gmail.com by Oct 9th. If you cannot attend but would like to hear about future events, please contact Heidi to join her mailing list.

Upcoming Dinner Events

More home-hosted meals and several restaurant gatherings are in the planning for future months. If you join one of the two mailing lists (or both!), we will be soliciting your suggestions for these events.

If you are interested in joining the potluck meals (currently anticipated for November 2025, February and April 2026), please send an email to Maria Ilioff at miIlioff85@gmail.com to be sure that you get a reminder of upcoming dinners. We are also looking for volunteers to host or help with these dinners – please consider this if you have enjoyed them in the past.

Several restaurant meals, called variously "Dining Out" and (last year) "International Dining" -- are also being planned, with the first one expected in early December. To be sure that you are kept informed about these dinners, and to offer your input about scheduling and restaurant venues, please send an email to Adele Kellman at adele.kellman@gmail.com.



Interested in learning more about the LEADING LADIES OF SARASOTA?

Join us on Wednesday, November 19 at 10am when Sarasota's past comes to life in an informative and entertaining way on this historical 90-minute city trolley tour. The tour is led by costumed guide, Kathryn Chesley, as she plays the parts of Mable Ringling (wife of John Ringling), Marie Selby (wife of William Selby and Philanthropist), or Bertha Palmer (Rancher and Developer) on alternating tours.

Find out what Sarasota was like 100 years ago through the eyes of each of these impactful women during the time they lived here. See the historical places in Sarasota and learn about its key development. Each week's air-conditioned tour features a different leading lady founder and focuses on her unique contributions to Sarasota."

Cost: \$55 plus tax and tip.

There is free parking, and carpooling from Rivendell will be available.

Note: This event is NOT limited to women or Rivendell residents so bring your significant other and friends!

Space is limited, it usually sells out so register as soon as possible.

Contact Maria Ilioff for more information and to sign up at miIlioff85@gmail.com or 607-427-4192.



A Cry for Help! – Would You Recognize It?

By Terry Siemsen, CERT

(The following is a fictional scenario – but is very real across our world!)

Imagine you are in a store, busily shopping with a companion. A young person near you, one that's with an older adult, makes eye contact with you and seems to have eyes pleading to be noticed. You see this, you poke your companion, and they too take notice. The young person looks away, looks down at their feet and their hand is behind their back. Slowly, their hand makes an open palm with their thumb across the middle of their hand. Then this person closes their hand, making essentially a fist with their thumb enclosed. You look at your companion who whispers, "I think that's a cry for help – first the open hand and then the closed hand." We make eye contact once more as the young person looks back at us and I nod my head. We walk quickly to the store cashier, describe what we had just seen and ask the cashier to call 9-1-1!

This type of "cry for help" is getting all too common in our society. Amber alerts, human trafficking, the most vulnerable being abused and taken advantage of. Would you recognize the signs? If you saw the sign and understood, would you take the next step and assist in getting help?

The graphic of the "cry of help" added to this story is a simple hand gesture to memorize – and one to teach our children and grandchildren. It may one day save their lives!

Then too – we don't often hear of "elder abuse" but it too is all too real. Memorize these two hand signals and it may one day save your life!



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Memories Of A Teacher....

By Nancy Dobias

Being a high school teacher, you meet all kinds of kids and one young man I'll always remember is one who skipped my class and took a zero on the assignment for the day.

Generally, kids who skip school or class will get their parents to cover for them by writing an excuse saying the child was sick so the student can make up any work missed.

Well, this particular student stood in front of me and told me he was sorry but he didn't have an excuse. I reminded him that he still had a day to bring in the excuse and I could still accept his work. He said that wouldn't happen because he had cut my class. He then apologized for cutting my class and said he knew I wouldn't be able to accept his work.

So why was this particular student memorable? He lost an easy 10 points by my not being able to accept his homework that day, so that couldn't have made him memorable.

What then could have made this student so memorable?

Well, from my point of view, it wasn't what he lost, but what he **GAINED**.

Yes, on that particular day, this young man gained a world of respect in my eyes when he stood before me and presented no parental excuse for his behavior but instead accepted the consequences for his behavior.

Fortunately for him, we did not have a test or quiz that day. As it was, his grades were high enough that a loss of 10 points was not going to be significant, but what was significant was how much that student jumped in my respect for him that day. If he ever needed a recommendation, I knew I could write a glowing one for a student who was so truthful, who valued his personal honor and integrity so highly.

He may not have been an A+ student, but he certainly was a good one. He was a likeable student who loved to learn and who was intrigued by challenging assignments. I remember him as a shy student who tended to pick a desk near the back of the room but that never meant he wasn't attentive. I figured he just didn't think he had the material things needed to fit in with the "in crowd" of our school and maybe he thought sitting in the back might help him better fade into the background. Whatever the case, he had one of those "light bulb" kind of smiles, a voice that may not have been as loud as others, but he was engaged and participating to the nth degree and he was a joy to have had in class.



I don't remember why he skipped school that day and ended up cutting my class. I guess he just needed a break. It was spring time, the school year was closing down, and he either went fishing or just went downtown to hang out, but why he skipped was not important.

What was important was how this young man handled the aftermath. When he stood before me telling me he was willing to accept the consequences for his actions, that said the world about the kind of man he would become. He didn't make excuses, he didn't try to justify his actions. He apologized for skipping my class. He accepted the consequences.

I don't know whatever became of him...whether he went to school, joined the military, or what. I hope what happened was good since this was a young man who didn't start at

the same point with the same advantages as other children, but from where he did start and with what he did have, he was such a pleasure to have known and to have had in class and what a wonderful student and individual he was.

May he and other students like him always have doors open to them and a lifetime of happiness and success awaiting....

**CHECK YOUR
SMOKE ALARM
MONTHLY**

*If you can't reach it
ask someone who can.*

It could save your life!



Maintenance Committee Report

September 15, 2025

Mark Giordano, Chair

Committee Members: Chuck Pertile (Board Liaison), Dave Cook, Larry Dobias, Kevin Humbert, Carole Myles, Greg Volack, Cathy Bishop (Horticulture Consultant), Chris Miller, John Krebsach. Helpers: Peter Diagnault, Jonas Meyer, Jeff Young, Dennis Bowman.

At our meeting the following amenities were discussed. The **Facilities Management Plan (FMP)** format is used: The **FMP** continues to be updated.

Landscape Management:

1. Truscapes is performing the weekly turf mowing and trimming.
2. Truscapes applied weed killer, turf and ornamental fertilization and weeded.
3. The MC cleaned up debris and trimmed along the fence on Old Venice Road.
4. The MC continues to rake up and collect for disposal fallen limbs and palm fronds throughout the community.
5. Rogelio Landscaping performing monthly maintenance at the entrances and islands throughout the community.
6. The MC trimmed bushes and cleaned up debris on the north side of Rivendell Blvd and Old Venice Road.
7. Dead Xoria were replaced on Rainbow Point Way islands.
8. Received a bid from ASAP Fence and Gates to remove 2 sections of fence and install equipment access gate on Rivendell Blvd to access the Common Area along the Cottages ROW. \$ 1,250. Completed
9. The MC repaired curb and added topsoil backup on corner of Oak Preserve.
10. Truscapes performed insect, fungus and turf weed inspection and treated where applicable.

Tree Trimming:

1. Green Topps trimmed 1 large Pine and removed 2 dead Pines on Mallard Marsh and trimmed 1 oak on Golden Pond.

Irrigation System:

1. TruScapes conducted the August inspection and replaced faulty irrigation heads throughout the community.
2. The MC repaired controller 10

Community Pool and Clock Tower:

Community Pool Pump Room:

1. Southwest Pools performed the weekly pool servicing and troubleshooting low flow issues.

Roadways:

1. The balance of the roadways throughout are not scheduled to be resurfaced this summer, but in 2026 by the county. They will use Reclamite, instead of conventional asphalt.

Sidewalks:

1. The annual list of sidewalk slabs that need replacing by the county for 2025 was developed and submitted to the county for repair and they started repairs.
2. Cleaning of Common Area sidewalks is being evaluated. Seeking bids, Fall project.
3. A new concrete sidewalk and possible relocation is needed from Rivendell Blvd to the Banyan Tree. Project on hold for further discussion.

Street Light Poles:

1. Nostalgic Lamppost's conducted by monthly service and inspection.
2. The MC replaced bulbs at Crescent Park

Holiday Lighting:

Playground, Gazebo and Benches:

1. Board approved 4 new benches to replace rusting metal benches; and in Rainbow Point Park to replace faulty concrete benches. Completed by MC.

Pine View Path

1. MC will be receiving estimates on repairs and eventual resurfacing of the path.
2. Green Topps bid \$11,000 to clean up and trim trees along both sides of the path. Completed

Drainage System:

1. The need to replace flowthrough drainage frame and grate at Golden Pond is on Rivendell. The MC receiving a bid from Rick Richards.

(Continued on Pg.11)

(Maintenance Committee continued from Pg.10)

Rivendell Gardening Club

1. The gardening club was formed to help care for flowers and small plants throughout the community's Common Areas, in addition, to creating different gardens and to provide some TLC to the new plantings. Although under the purview of the MC, the Gardening Club would work independently to enhance the community's landscaping. All those interested contact Cathy Bishop at Cbutton99@icloud.com
2. Current Members: Cathy Bishop, Lisa Gardner, Mary/Cao Lecoeuche, Carol McDonald, Helen McClure, Mike Nash, Lesley Sachs, Ellen Sagalov, Dana Schroeder, Margaret Williams, Mary Kay Barton, Charles and Jean Gayre, Long Nguyen.

Next MC Meeting is October 14

The Maintenance Committee is always looking to expand its membership to assist in overseeing the numerous amenities that require attention. The goal is to keep Rivendell the beautiful community that it is. The committee meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Cottages. Prospective members could familiarize themselves with the MC duties by reviewing the Facilities Management Plan (FMP) published on the website. Anyone with questions and/or wishing to join the committee, please contact Mark Giordano at (845) 656-6411 or email mjg283@gmail.com.



November Potluck Supper

The Social Committee will be hosting the first Potluck Supper of the season at the home of Maria and Greg Ilioff (920 Scherer Way) on Saturday, November 1st from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. Please join us for this event: it's a great way to meet your neighbors, old and new, and to enjoy a delicious meal.

Paper products and plastic utensils for eating and drinking will be provided, and guests are asked to bring one of the following to share: an appetizer, a main dish, a side dish (a starch or vegetable), a salad, or a dessert.

If you are planning to attend, please contact Maria at milioff85@gmail.com or (607)-427-4192 so that she can coordinate the offerings. Also, if you are willing to lend a warming tray or food warmer, please let Maria know. We would prefer you contact Maria by Monday, October 27th (to help her get a headcount of diners), but will welcome last minute sign-ups, too. Attendees will be given the number of expected diners 4 to 5 days in advance.

We're looking forward to spending a lovely November evening with our Rivendell neighbors!



CRACK-BAM-DOT! Who Wants to Play Mah Jongg?

Are you a *Beginner Plus* Mah Jongg player? If so, we invite you to join our newly formed group! Please note: This group is not for intermediate or advanced players—or for complete beginners, either.

What We Mean by *Beginner Plus*:

- ☐ You've played at least 15–20 games with other people (not just robots).
- ☐ You're comfortable setting up the game and understand the basic rules.
- ☐ You have beginning to intermediate strategy skills.
- ☐ You're familiar with the 2025 National Mah Jongg League card.
- ☐ You may play a little slower and still make the occasional mistake—like discarding a tile that could replace a raked joker—and that's totally OK!

Our focus is on having fun while improving our game. We welcome players who enjoy the process of learning and growing together.

Game Details:

- ☐ Day: Mondays
- ☐ Time: 2:00–4:00 PM (Please arrive a few minutes early to be set up and ready to start on time.)
- ☐ Location: 920 Scherer Way
- ☐ Start Date: Monday, October 27

We play by National Mah Jongg League rules using the 2025 card. If you have a Mah Jongg set, please bring it along. You're also welcome to bring friends who are at the Beginner Plus level.

We look forward to seeing you there! To join, please contact Maria Ilioff at 607-427-4192.



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Have you always wanted to learn how to play Mah Jongg (MJ) but didn't know where to start? Now's your chance! We're excited to offer an opportunity to learn this classic game through four beginner friendly classes taught by an experienced player and instructor. You'll learn: the basic rules and tile types, how to read a Mah Jongg card; an understanding of the mechanics of the game; and strategies and common mistakes to avoid.

Total beginners are welcome -- no experience needed. Spaces are limited. We hope to begin instruction at the end of October or the beginning of November.

Please contact Maria Ilioff for more details and to sign up: 607-427-4192 or milioff85@gmail.com.



April's Ice Cream Social

In recent years, the Social Committee has sponsored an Ice Cream Social in April when community members gather in Crescent Park for "quiescently frozen delights", games and prizes. It is a fun, popular event, especially for families and kids.

So far this year, we are without a volunteer to coordinate the activity (other volunteers help run the event and share the work). **Without such a person, the Ice Cream Social will not occur.** The process (including items to be purchased, quantities, and freezer space needed) is in place from our prior staff, reducing the time needed to complete the required tasks.

If you are willing to take charge of this event, and work with the Social Committee (which offers the support and advertises the event), please contact Maria Ilioff at miIloff85@gmail.com



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