



# The Harbor Pointer



Monthly Newsletter for Harbor Pointe Residents; Titusville, FL

June, 2013

## The Spring Floods



**Ceiling of apartment 3-803. The burst hose sprayed the walls..**

First came the March Water Feature in Building 7, which caused a shutdown of the water system for the entire complex, about which more on Page Two.

Then on May 6, things got serious. Apartment 803 in Building 3 suffered a ruptured washing machine hose, and the apartment flooded.

The flood in 3-803 sent water to the adjoining condos as well, both below and to the left and right sides.

3-803 has been unoccupied for some time. The property is distressed. The flood was discovered by another unit owner.

Two water abatement firms were called in immediately, but damage was nonetheless extensive.

Water soaked the cork underlayment that is a feature of Harbor Pointe construction. The cork quiets footsteps on the tile that covers it. But when flooded, it helps break up the tile or wood flooring above it. The water ran over the tile and into and under the wooden baseboards, soaking the bottom few inches of wall-board, and damaging same.

In all, the flood did an estimated \$30,000 damage to 3-803 alone. It also purportedly damaged 9 other units to the left and right of 3-803, and below it, down to the third floor level.



**In flooded condos, soft flooring and baseboards are removed, holes are drilled in the walls to remove water trapped inside them. Photos courtesy Harry Holmgren.**

Compounding difficulties : a few units had changed their locks without notifying the Association, and management's pass keys would not work, so the damage in those apartments was increased by the time required to finally gain entry. **Please see key article on Page 4 and hose article on Page 6.**

## The Harbor Pointer

Hi. This is the first edition--the pilot, if you will--of an electronic newsletter for HP residents that we hope to develop into a regular institution. The newsletter will appear bi-monthly, and be sent to most residents through their E-mail address. As we improve, we intend to cover events, including HP Board and various club doings, and Titusville and Brevard goings on that may be of interest to residents here.

We will truly welcome your contributions, be they an article or a letter, with the caveat that they are subject to your editor's ideas on concision, accuracy and good manners, and to his relentless slashing pen. I hope to hear from you.

Thanks and regards,  
Tom Creecy, Editor  
[tom@factorycat.com](mailto:tom@factorycat.com)

## **MAINTENANCE MATTERS**

### **The Roof.**

Our buildings have “foam” roofs, styrofoam-like stuff that is about a foot thick, laid atop the reinforced concrete that makes up the top of each building. The foam was bonded in place in a two part process akin to the melted Velveeta and White Bread sandwich many of us remember from times past.

Foam was selected by our builder because:

1. Unlike more conventional tar-and-paper, foam doesn't blow off the roof in a severe tropical storm.
2. Foam is much more insulating from tropical sun than other roof materials.
3. Foam is cheap!

### **Downsides:**

1. Certain species of tropical birds are fond of it, and like to nibble it off the roof.
- r2. Improperly laid down--and doing it right is tricky--it can fail in several interesting ways.

Unfortunately, the downsides have prevailed in our case; we have had many more roof problems than originally anticipated. The roofs needed attention just four or five years after Building 7 was built, and all four of them were repaired three years ago and again this year. The last repairs, however, cost only \$2,700, and gave us an extended warranty, now good--theoretically, anyway--for eight years on labor and material.

Since that time, one of the repairs has itself failed--Building One suffered giant bubbles which, if punctured, would have caused leaks. These have since been repaired, so Building 1, the newest of the four buildings, has had the most roof issue. The three towers are also under scrutiny, and will undergo roof repairs this year that vary with the building.

### **The “Water Feature” in Building Seven.**

Although since overshadowed by the Great May Flood, the water supply for the four buildings feeds through the first of these to be built, Building 7.

On Sunday, March 17, pipes, tied together with a collar that had been undertightened some years before, worked themselves free of each other, thoroughly sprayed the utility room on the ground floor, and did a fair job on the G2 garage. The water supply to buildings 1, 3, 5 and 7 was shut off, ruining the Sunday morning tranquillity of many. An emergency plumbing service was called in, and within about four hours, water supply was restored. However, weeks later, some units still suffered from air bubbles in the system.

The Board believes all residual problems have since been licked. However, if you think different, please contact Harry Holmgren at [hsq781055@aol.com](mailto:hsq781055@aol.com), or by cell at 443 926 3123.

### **The Elevators**

The towers each have high speed cable-operated Otis elevators, two per building. Building One has a single, hydraulically-operated Thyssen-Krupp elevator.

The Otis company was contracted to repair all seven elevators, and has apparently done a fine job on six of them. But the Thyssen-Krupp job still has issues, five years after construction was completed, with Building 1 residents likening its predictability to that of a pinball machine. The Building 1 elevator has successfully trapped two residents over time, as well as Board Member Harry Holmgren, who now believes the stories. The Board has come to the reluctant conclusion that the Otis/Thyssen divide might be akin to the Ford/Chevy one, and that elevator repairs are best left to the brand specialists who built them.

A rumor circulated that the elevators in the towers were unfinished, that their wall surfaces were covered in “Masonite,” an underlayment material, ready to receive a formica finish that was never chosen. Apparently, this is not the case. The finish the elevators show the world is a final finish and was chosen by someone, at some time. It just looks like Masonite to the untrained eye.

### **Lobby Tile**

According to some early residents, the tile in the three tower lobbies was really attractive when new. Most people weren't here to see it, and so, however politely, disbelieve. Lovely it might once have been, but the lobby tile has mucked-up considerably, and now looks like something that deserves to be stepped on.

Building One's tiles, white and non-porous instead of green and porous, seem to have resisted reality much better than those in the towers, and are doing fine. For the towers, new tile is in the offing, tile that will cover a total of some 1,900 square feet of lobby and elevator floor. The selection process has to consider resistance to wear, to chipping, to slip-and-fall, to absorption of dirt and chemicals that messed up the original selection of rather open-pored tile, and the sentiment of the 206 be-towered condo owners. Cost has been mentioned once or twice as well. Stay tuned.

### **Fluorescent Bulbs**

We have about 360 fluorescent bulbs, mostly in the garages and utility rooms. Federal law has mandated more efficient, safer bulbs, necessitating a new style fixture. Our ploy is to replace the fixtures one at a time when the ballast inside it goes bad.

## **MAINTENANCE MATTERS**

### **The Great Toilet Flap**

Over the last month we have changed out toilet flappers in over 45 condo units but our latest water bill shows that our water consumption is still too high.

To check your toilets please stop by the office or ask Wayne for a packet of water tablets provided by the City of Titusville to test your toilets. If your toilets are found to be leaking – contact the office ASAP.

### **Security Cameras**

Security cameras improve on a constant basis, while perps, the people they're designed to catch in the act, improve steadily in sophistication as well.

To stay ahead of the adversary, the Board thinks it a good idea to add additional cameras to our complex, specifically rooftop units that can survey the water-sides of the four buildings, and also eyeball the marina.

The new cameras are sharp enough to allow identification of the perp as individual, not just to let us know we've been perped.

**The Board will schedule a public workshop to determine the best system.**

### **Marina Gate.**

The entrance to the marina now has a full height, hard to climb-around gate. Your square pass key will work it. An enhanced lock for the gate is under study.

### **MEET THE FOLKS**

Board Members, newly installed as of April 1, include four members from the 2012 season, and the return of a previous President and longtime participant .They are:

President: Bill Van Engelenburg

Vice-President: Harry Holmgren

Treasurer: Bill Dickinson

Secretary: Carol McDonald

Director: Dan DeVoss

Regular Board meetings, open to the public, are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month.



### **The Jolly Rover.**

The Board has hired **Jonathan Hurley** as a “rover”, a gent who looks out for thugs,vandals, and parking miscreants, and takes appropriate action in response (calling the police, or giving a ticket, depending). He works evenings. Hours vary. Our camera system (see related article below) helps him see everywhere at once.

### **Titusville Developments**

Robin Fisher, the Brevard County Commissioner, spoke at the Activities Committee’s Saturday Breakfast May 18. Among the topics Mr. Fisher covered:

#### **The Miracle City Mall**

While a definitive report cannot be made yet, the hope is that a high quality \$70 million development will be built on the site of the shopping center that formerly had J.C. Penny as anchor. Mr. Fisher called this project “more important than a life and death matter”. While many stores are interested in moving into this mall “no one wants to be the first”--they want to see what the other stores will be doing before sign-on. The development would require an approximate \$6.5 million bond issue by the city, but would result in about a half million per year in added tax revenue.

#### **Sand Point Park**

Construction on improvements to the park across the street from us will begin in mid-June. It will add fill to the low points that flood during rain storms, and add paved parking.

Mr. Fisher noted “we have to change the idea that a resident must leave Titusville whenever he wants to do something.”.

## WE NEED YOUR KEY!!!

Did you change your locks? If so, unless you give the Condo Association a copy of your key, your apartment cannot be entered to benefit you in case of emergency--such as the May flood.

The Condo Association rules require that a key be kept for each apartment by the Association, and that residents allow such emergency entry. Originally, the doors were all keyed to allow entry via a master key. Note that if your apartment is the one causing the flood, your door will be opened with the large steel mallet the association reserves for non-compliant doors.

If you have a question or concern, please contact your building's Condo Association Safety Rep.

## Condo Association Safety Reps

Each of the four buildings has a Board-appointed volunteer rep from among the residents whose task it is to see that basic safety regulations are upheld in your building. You may consult them on such safety questions as the washer hose replacement campaign. The reps are:

Building 1: Harry Holmgren	443 926 3123
Building 3: Walt Covington	321 383-9742
Building 5: Harry Holmgren	443 926 3123
Building 7: Bill Dickerson	321 267 7399

## Boatlift Background for Landlubbers

The rich ecological stew that is the Indian River is an ideal environment for its resident barnacles, who enjoy attaching themselves to untreated, stationary boat hulls. Their baroque-shaped bodies quickly cover the immersed hull surface, which, now bumpy instead of smooth, slow the boat, raising fuel consumption in power boats, and, presumably, wind consumption in sail boats.

The best way to keep barnacles off the hull of your boat is to keep your boat out of the water when it is not in motion. This can be accomplished by parking your boat on one of those black plastic floating mattresses, or by lifting your boat out of the water with the aid of something nautical people, with their creative flair for language, call "boat lifts".

Boat lifts come in two types, of which the cheaper, and therefore more interesting is the "beam lift". These, however, include beams, which look, well, beamish, and, if positioned in the wrong place, can make entry and exit from the boat difficult, even hazardous.

The "beamless lifts", on the other hand, are more flexible in where they can be located, and are less visible but cost more.

## MARINA MOTIONS



### ***A Beamless Boat Lift. Boat Lifted.***

Harley McDonald, who heads the Marina Committee, noted that all but three of the boat slips have been sold, and that there are now six boats residing in our docks.

### **Beamless Boat Lifts Or Build Your Own Pilings**

Many owners are interested in installing boat lifts, contraptions which are mounted on pilings. Reversing itself, the Board has decided that boat lifts can be mounted on the marina's own pilings, but provided the lift and its configuration meet several requirements intended to maintain safety and aesthetic standards. Requirement specifics are in process of development.

Beam Lifts, the less expensive of the two types, should not be mounted in a way that interferes with entrance/egress from the boats. Unfortunately, the marina's pilings are exactly the wrong height for supporting such lifts. This pretty much dictates, according to Harley, that either Beamless lifts, the other type, be used in conjunction with marina pilings, or that new pilings of suitable height be installed by owners who favor the Beam-type lift.

8000 pound capacity lifts, suitable for most smaller boats, cost between about \$9000 and \$13,500 installed. Lifts beyond that capacity will require new pilings in any case, as their requirement would exceed the capacity of the marina's own pilings.

### **Launch Dock for Kayakers Feared Lost**

Our builder's CEO, Mr. Kohn Bennett, offered to **give** the Association a boat slip provided the association can find a way to install a floating dock in it so it can be used free-of-charge by residents to launch their kayaks.

Unfortunately, this can't be done, Harley said, without a 2/3 majority vote of unit owners, because the project would cost more than can be spent (about \$9000) without voter approval. Unless a way forward can be found, Mr. Bennett may rescind his kind offer.

## **OUR TOWN:**

### **Windover Man: Older Than We Are!**

The oldest human remains found on the North American Continent were found just around the corner, in Windover Farms, a real estate development in Titusville. It has been called one of the most significant archeological sites ever uncovered.

The remains, of some 168 individuals, surprisingly intact, were buried in a peat bog, over a 1,200 year period. The oldest remains are about 7,300 years old.

**An extensive Windover Man presentation can be seen at The Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science 2201 Michigan Avenue Cocoa, FL 32926 321-632-1830 [bmhs@brevardmuseum.org](mailto:bmhs@brevardmuseum.org)**

The skeletons were well preserved because of the characteristics of peat. In addition, remarkably well-preserved brain tissue has been recovered from many skulls from the site. DNA from the brain tissue has been sequenced. The collection of human skeletal remains and artifacts recovered from Windover Pond represent among the largest finds of each type from the Archaic Period.

Windover is a small pond, about a quarter-acre in area, that has held water continuously since sometime between 9000 and 8000 BC.

As the sea level was considerably lower 7,000 to 8,000 years ago than it is today, the pond originally sat above the water table, and was filled only by rainfall and runoff from the surrounding land. At that time the pond had a relatively thin layer of peat under a thin layer of water. The subsequent rise in sea level raised the local water table, and in more recent times the pond has been fed by groundwater as well as rainfall.

At the time of this discovery, the pond had a thick layer of peat, with five strata described by the archaeologists who excavated the pond. The peat in the center of the pond was covered by 6 feet of water.

The site was discovered in 1982 when work began on building a road across the pond in a new housing development. A backhoe operator noticed several skulls in the bucket of his machine. The sheriff and medical examiner determined that the burials were not recent. The developers, Jack Eckerd, (of Eckerd Drugstore fame), and Jim Swann, halted construction at the pond and called in archaeologists. Radiocarbon dating on two bones excavated from the pond by the backhoe, paid for by the developers, yielded ages of 7,210 years and 7,320 years respectively, establishing the importance of the find.

The developers changed their development plans in order to leave the pond intact and donated \$60,000 worth of pumping equipment to drain the pond for excavation.

Funding to excavate the pond was acquired in 1984. Only half of the pond was excavated, with the remainder left undisturbed for future investigation.

These early Floridians, it seems, resided in a kind of sedentary hunter-gatherer-fisher community. The sheer number of burials showed that these people were not constantly on the move, as hunter-gatherers typically are. Analysis of organic remains in the bog revealed a rich surrounding ecosystem, which offered plentiful resources and allowed them to stay put for a time.

The occupants of Windover hunted animals, fished, and gathered plants. They used bottle gourds for storage, which comprise the earliest evidence for vegetable container storage discovered in North America. Animal bones and shells found in the graves indicated that the people ate white-tailed deer, raccoon, opossum, birds, fish and shellfish.

The average height of adult males was 5 feet 9 inches (175 cm). Adults of both sexes exhibited a high incidence of osteoarthritis. Some skeletons showed wounds that were likely the cause of death. Some of the Windover people lived into their 70's.

Children and teenagers were buried with more grave goods than were adults, indicating the high value placed on children.

Many artifacts that were deposited with the bodies were also preserved. Archaeologists at this site were able to recover a total of 86 pieces of fabric from 37 graves. These included seven different textile weaves, which appeared to have been used for clothing, bags, matting, and possibly blankets and ponchos. Numerous other artifacts, such as atlatls and projectile points, were also found at Windover.

In late 1984 the archaeologists discovered that brain tissue had survived in many of the skulls. At least 90 of the recovered bodies had brain tissue that survived, due to the preservative effects of the peat. The state of preservation of the brain tissues indicated that the bodies were buried in the peat within 24 to 48 hours after death. This preservation allowed researchers to sequence DNA from the brains.

The DNA tests made some observers conclude these "Indians" were of European extraction. Others doubt that, but affirm there is no biological affiliation between these early Floridians and modern Native American groups.

## NEW WASHER HOSES, The Gift That Keeps On Giving



***The hose in 3-802 that, by bursting, got the whole insurance industry talking up and down the East Coast.***

If you're like most of us, your house is already over-filled with stuff. You don't need any more of it, but you certainly want to preserve what you already have.

That's why you should give **NEW BRAIDED STAINLESS STEEL WASHING MACHINE FILL HOSES** to your significant other the next time a birthday or gift-requirement holiday comes up. Use them to replace the cheap-and-sleazy, time-expired Builders' Grade rubber hoses with which your washer is now equipped.

You should know that the water supply to your washing machine is always on--unless you shut it off. When the water is connected, and should one of the two hoses fail, water spews forth--lots of it and really fast.

The rubber hose that came with your washer either has an expiration date printed on it--or says "replace in five years". These hoses are not lifetime-safe!!!! Yours has expired. You should **RIGHT NOW** replace those out-of-date rubber hoses with a set of **REALLY ATTRACTIVE** stainless-steel-braided washer water feed hoses can save your apartment, and those of your neighbors, from flooding. And not flooding your neighbors' apartments will help you maintain the popularity with them you already enjoy.

A mere twenty bucks or so buys a new set of stainless long-life safety washer hoses at **Lowe's** or **Home Depot** or **Ace Hardware** or **Amazon.com**. (Amazon has the biggest selection, including a variety of hoses with the elbow flange that makes the hose lie flat, allowing the washer to stay close to the wall--advisable in some installations).

And replacing them is fun and easy. The hoses unscrew just like a garden hose.

## **EDITORIAL :**

### **Reactivating Our Democracy**

Here's how it works now: Some residents or Board members come up with an idea. It's worked out. People like it--but not all people. The ones who don't like it, to stop it, declare it a "Material Change".

Under the rules of our Condo Association, a Material Change cannot be made without a 3/4 majority of the residents voting in its favor--owners representing 157.5 of our 210 condo units. Getting this many people together is practically impossible at present, since most residents don't have time to attend meetings about lobby colors or how many umbrellas should grace the pool area, so nothing gets changed at all.

This may satisfy the people opposed to the proposed change, but may not represent the real Will of the People.

So here's the pitch: In future, when such a proposal is made, the Board would bring the vote to the residents via an electronic ballot sent to each and every recorded resident's e-mail address.

It might say something like:

***The Board proposes to install a shade-creating structure in the pool area. It will add 1,600 square feet of shade at high noon. It will cost \$16,000, an amount which will not require us to raise monthly fees. We've attached a drawing, and details of the structure.***

***Please let us know how you feel about this. Your questions are welcome. A ballot will be sent to your E-mail in one week. It must be returned by March 15.***

***Yours truly,***

***The Board.***

Then comes the ballot:

***On issue 123, Shade Structure for the Pool Area, please check one below and E-mail by return to us.***

\_\_\_ ***I oppose this measure.***

\_\_\_ ***I favor this measure.***

As a resident, you would then write in your secret Harbor Pointe password, click on the appropriate slot, and E-mail the vote back by return.

You would already have registered your E-mail address (or addresses) with the Condo Association, which determines that the vote came from your computer, while the optional password shows that the voter is you, and not your kids, who being aged 6 & 7 might elect to spend all the Association's money on candy.