



Spring 2017 Avail only via email. Save or print to cherish forever.

COOL SANDS

Newsletter for Owners at the Sea Shell



What a view! Photo taken in April from a SS condo owner's Cessna T210 @ 1600'
Note the controversial sand in Big Pass that Lido Key wishes to abduct for beach replenishment.

Another high season behind us..

No major issues. Happy guests. A huge thanks to our staff for their attention to increasingly higher expectations of visitors. Great job, gang. We probably set new world records in the rubbish and recycling department over Spring Break.



Shown:

Your man in on the street Paul Bitigar demonstrating the aftermath of a successful dumpster dive.



Change in Gate Security!

The annual gate code change is occurring again after the high season. How can you possibly ever remember the new code? It is the year backwards. Effective June 1 the new code is the year 2017 backwards or 7-1-0-2. Please make sure you notify your renters, contractors and update any written instructions you distribute. Tough question—what will the code be next year? Don't place your bet yet...Ah hah...we might have more tricks up our sleeve.



To Key or Not to Key while on Siesta Key

Technology has really changed how many things are done in our lives. One of them is Smart Home technology and door locks. The days of mechanical keys for resorts, hotels and commercial properties are ending with new affordable technology with higher security and reporting control. What has been standard for better hotels is now trickling down to vacation rentals. We have been investigating various systems to bring Sea Shell into the modern times. Unlike an electronic wifi or programmable lock you might install on your personal residence, providing this for 48 units has a few more challenges. We are honing in on a possible solution that will work well for those on the rental program as well as those owners who do not participate.

A universal solution is needed that will give individual owners access and control, but also provide a master method for instant access in case of an emergency. What are the emergencies? Our history has shown these have been plumbing issues primarily with dishwashers that flood units below, water heaters breaking, shower drains coming apart. Of course we can't rule out a fire, medical emergency, accidental lockouts and probably the absolute worst of all—a natural gas disaster—a guest may have had baked beans for dinner and the place needs aired out as those in a nearby unit have keeled over from fumes.

According to Florida condominium statute, the Association must have access to a unit in the event of an emergency. This is to protect the good and welfare of the entire building for everyone's sake. Having instant access in an emergency does not mean trying to track down an owner who may be on a fishing trip or another watching icebergs break off in Antarctica to find out what a code might be or obtain special instructions as to how to enter the unit. Access is needed right then and NOW by our onsite staff.

This is one reason there is a master key plan. Big plumbing leaks have happened on more than one occasion. It is critical to identify the source and stop it before even more damage occurs. Yes, this is the joy of multi-story condo living as compared to your single family home. Because of the liability on the part of the condo association to do its best to minimize damages that may occur in the event of an emergency, any owner who interferes with the Association ability to protect others from damages can be held liable. One mission of the Association is to protect the value of everyone's property and also be diligent to minimize claims. The Association has the legal right to enforce this and it is for everyone's best interest. If any Owner has installed something other than the standard master key plan lock, please contact the office immediately to discuss an access plan to avoid individual owner liability.

Maria and some of your board members have been investigating lock systems that offer flexibility but with the tracking and control desired. Here is something for you to check out: www.pointcentral.com. Go through the website. This may not be the final answer but it will show you where we are headed. It is a keyless keypad system designed for larger properties. It can also be used for beach access, pool access, vehicle gate and more. Along with the lockset hardware, compatible smart thermostats are available that can save everyone \$\$\$. An integrated energy control and lock system can pay off.

Several other systems such as Assa Abloy use prox reader fobs, bracelets or credit card size cards. In the next month or two we hope to have narrowed the solution options. Investigating and obtaining quotes all takes a lot of time to mix in with the rest of the day to day operations. These systems generally are not a 1x

purchase as management is needed, and most are cloud based with a per door subscription fee so choosing the right solution takes analysis.

Pass the Heinz 57

With the high season upon us and a beach redo plan not yet determined some quick action was needed to meet the needs of visitors who don't like ordering City Pizza every night. Here is the new grille area created by our staff.

One owner asked why we didn't add gas to the two grilles. This is not an easy task since only the gas source is at the pool area for the heater, and the pavers would have to be removed the length of the building to bury pipe. Besides the installation expense there is the added safety hazard and more. Those who wanted to BBQ have never minded lighting up a little charcoal. Building this 2nd BBQ area was economical, attractive and done in short order with our amazing Comrade in Chief of Maintenance Mr. Paul Bitigar. Throw that guy a fish...that he can grill on the grille.



Washers and Dryers

We obtained quotes, evaluated commercial models and purchased additional coin machines. We now have (2) new of each on Floors 3,4,5 and (2) older on Floors 1 & 2. We have lots of capacity to wash those boxers, briefs and swim suits. Guests will still have to send their tuxedos out to the cleaners.

Welcome Harry Restrepo-- Groundskeeper

Say "Hey" to the newest member of our team. He will be assisting with grounds maintenance, cleaning and repairs.



Internet connection speeds—there is now ample bandwidth coming into the building and shared so that there is reasonable commercial access in each unit. Even with all of the smartvts and streaming, complaints by guests were few and far between. Unless an owner wanted to spend an additional \$50-75 per month on his/her dedicated line to his unit to get the same speed he might have at his home, the solution at hand is better than most luxury hotels and better than any similar condo along Siesta Key. The DOCSIS 3.0

cable modem system is the same technology used by major cable companies. The modems being used have a built in wi-fi router and that connection speed suffices for 95% of rental guests. However, if an owner wanted to purchase his/her own separate megapower wifi router (which could be stolen) for use with the wireless portion of the internet connection from the cable modem, that can be done but generally speaking there is no need for this. The password etc must be set up and indicated. If an owner does this on their own, the office may not be able to assist not being familiar with various router brands.

SSVR Marketing

Sea Shell Vacation Rentals is the internal rental program that assists owners in not only renting their units, but also takes care of repairs, cleaning, filing local taxes and about 30 other things to make our lives easier.

Providing hassle free management and obtaining rentals are two of the goals. We have begun an entire new **MARKETING** effort to improve rental days and get the word out on Sea Shell. We recently hired a web marketing firm and are completely redoing our website in both form and function. Presently, RNS booking software hosts the information used on each unit.



However, by hosting our information on our site, we receive better search results having multiple units appear, not just the RNS link. The other benefit of our website redo is to make it smart phone and tablet friendly. In its current state, it is easy on a computer, but hard to use on mobile devices. People are more mobile than ever before.

Additionally, advertising money from the SSVR budget is being spent on web marketing and we are driving traffic to our site. We recently started a periodic informational email blast to all previous guests —not to overwhelm them with junk mail, but to call attention to important items of interest around Siesta Key, with a reminder we are here to help with accommodations. As of March 2017, we had a dismal 282 Facebook followers. In April we now have over 1200. This is all due to marketing. We hope to double this.

Updating our Condo Declaration

Looking for input and a few good men and women

Have you actually tried to read our condo declaration written in early 70's and amended umpteen times? It's worse than reading War and Peace. We will soon retain our Association attorney to provide an updated rewrite to meet all of today current jargon as well as reflect signs of the times. A committee is needed to make suggestions, and work on the drafts. Once a final draft is completed, it will be presented to all Owners for comment, and then a vote to ratify its

acceptance. Do we have a few people to help out with this? If so, raise your hands! The pay is phenomenal. Please contact Maria if you can help out on this important project. Several things need updated to bring us into the current century like that part about each condo has an assigned private hitching rail for their horse. Our goal is to have this complete by the next



Sea Shell Archive Photo
Signing of our declaration.
Sitting in front row Joe Vegliante, Estelle and Paul Debbane. Walt Leyser, Richard O'Leary

Owner's Meeting. Maybe we will get there, maybe not.

Pulling teeth is easier than finding reliable available subcontractors

PLUMBING UPDATE—

Instead of doing the main stack relining only as was the original plan, a more comprehensive total drain line replacement was decided upon to encompass both verticals and laterals. We analyzed, obtained multiple quotes, checked references, and decided on who we wanted to tear out walls, remove ceilings and replace every inch of iron pipe in our building with new PVC. This was slated to begin in mid-August—well folks... it looks like it isn't going to happen this year. The company we had decided upon to do the job right, without destroying the building and doing it in short order became booked in the meantime. Most condos do their big projects in the same slow time of the year August through November. Our project is quite extensive so it needs to be started on time and finished on time with a capable crew. So—let's hope no more cast iron pipes crack in the meantime and this will be scheduled to start for August 2018.

ROOF UPDATE—West side

Ditto... With the Florida building boom in full force, quality sub contractors are hard to find. The company that previously redid half of our roof is totally buried in work until end of year. We are seeking other bids. Our preference is not to put this off, and complete the work in the traditional driest months of the year this fall.



The Case of the Mysterious Stinky Package

A package was shipped to the office in advance awaiting a family member to arrive. After a couple days the office really started stinking. Bad. Really bad. According to staff, it was like a skunk walked in and camped out. The named recipient arrived a few days later and claimed the package. In the days following, an unmistakable aroma of something burning filled the air around the condo as the

scent wafted from balcony and parking area as reported by guests. For some unknown reason, dozens of dolphins started leaping in joy from the ocean, manatees came to the beach and told jokes to swimmers. Later that week the 7-11 store ran out of potato chips, beef jerky and ice cream. Crescent Grocery was raided of all pretzels and chip dip. Who could have possibly consumed all of this? Could it be the recipient of that one parcel shipped to the office? Now here's a great idea—whether medical or not, let's avoid sending packages of pot to the front office. No...you can't make this stuff up.

**got The
munchies?**

What to do on a rainy day?



Drum Circle Distillery—maker of Siesta Key Toasted Coconut Rum (and 2 others)

Even if you are not a rum drinker, you really might want to try this. Go online and google the many awards. The distillery offers tours daily and located in an industrial park off 301 near the SRQ airport. It is a really interesting story how this tiny little Sarasota start-up company has won the major worldwide Rum competitions. You can buy the award winning brew at Total Wine and others in the area. It is worth a shot straight up.

Buying a new TV?

We have a special hotel-like cable system that allows the association to save a considerable amount per month and provide “no-cable-box-needed” digital TV as well as provide internet to all units without an extra charge. Since a converter box is not needed, the TV itself has to change channels. Stick with Samsung as this brand has quality tuners. Stay far away from Westinghouse, Element, Vizio, Toshiba, Seiki, Deiki, or Docki, etc.. The QAM tuners in bargain TVs and also special promo models made exclusively to put on sale at big box stores are terrible. The Samsung TVs have the best tuners and are consistently working well. If you have a TV with a cheap tuner, you would then need to buy a converter box that has a good tuner.

Recap: Samsung, LG--GOOD. Deiki, Docki--BAD.



We are all big shots

Our ownership is comprised of successful people who are small business owners, executives, lottery winners, and members of the royal family who are in hiding. Many are used to getting their own way. And since everyone happens to own condos on the #1 beach in the USA that itself is pretty cool. But even more interesting—some relatives of owners are even bigger big shots than the big shots. And for some reason rules that apply to everyone else for a designated good purpose may not apply to the bigger big shots of the big shots. Most actual big shots know they don't have to act like a big shot since less is more, unless of course they had a lot of free samples from the Drum Circle Distillery. In that case a bigger shot is better.

Please ask your guests and relatives to please obey the limited rules we have and treat our staff with respect. This applies to not parking in emergency fire lanes, fair use of beach chairs during peak season, returning the shopping and luggage carts to the bottom level when done, keeping rowdiness to tolerable hours, plus multiple other things which occur. Believe it or not, there actually are reasons for things which they may not be aware of. If someone is doing something they should not be doing and are asked not to the problem is on their end not our staff.

Shopping and luggage carts---

Note to everyone and especially those owners who have 3rd parties clean their units....

These carts are not for your cleaning crew use or for your contractors to use when remodeling. They are there for 1 purpose only—for guests to use transporting their luggage and groceries to the units. They are never used by the cleaning company hired by the rental program and they certainly are not for use by 3rd party cleaning companies either. Please advise your cleaning people to stop using them immediately. Also, please advise anyone cleaning your units they are not permitted to leave piles of dirty linens on the walkways. It is a trip hazard and looks bad. Ask them to leave the dirties inside the unit or take them immediately to their vehicle. A big thanks from the safety squad.

Office security



We replaced the age old sliding doors between office and pool and now have far better protection from hurricanes and crooks. Of course the little kids with sunscreen now press their noses on the tinted glass to see what is inside. We are modernizing the front office with an alarm system panel with more door contacts, a smoke detector tied to the system. It is pretty inexpensive to do

this and much needed. Soon we will replace the major weak link that is the hollow interior door between the ladies shower room and the front office. Someone could enter by the pool using a key, and once inside the building just stick their fist through the hollow door to the office. A solid door and alarm will provide better security. So will timed access locks and codes.





April 14. Spring Break full house. This photo was sent to us from a dolphin swimming in the gulf and inhaling guest fumes from the stinky package. Taken with his waterproof GoSmoke camera.



Thanks to all owners in your support with the condo association. If you see a board member or staff please tell them thanks as there generally is a lack of recognition. If you have a constructive idea please advise our office staff. If you could see day in and day out the myriad of things handled by Maria, Paul, and others to protect your investment you would be amazed. When I am in the office or go over discussion items the amount of details to be dealt continually is pretty incredible. Often 6 things are happening simultaneously and someone is on the phone to boot. All this is

mixed in at same time of helping visitors. When everyone cooperates it is much easier to run the building. Self-serving actions and requests just waste time. Just ask "What if everyone did this all the time?" We have one of the most well-run associations on the beach and we all should be proud of that. Thank you all.

Your 2017 Board Members: Russ Weaver, Larry Leyser, Steve Sidwell, Larry Thompson, Rick Briggs

We will keep you posted as things come up. Have a great summer! If you would like to help out on the condo declaration update now is the time to sign up. Thank you.



Rick Briggs

President

Sea Shell Condominium Association