

## OYOTES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

OPCC Board member, Bill Engelbrecht, contacted the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) about the coyote issue in the neighborhood. Below is the response from Sarah Helm, Wildlife Assistance Biologist with FWC.

Thank you for contacting Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) about the coyotes residents have been asking about. Coyotes are remarkable in that they can adapt very easily to rural, suburban, and urban environments, and although largely active at dawn and dusk, they can be seen at any time. They are attracted to our neighborhoods by the availability of food, and their main foods are rodents, insects, and scavenged material.

If coyotes get used to getting food from people, they can become comfortable in the area and can become a nuisance. Therefore, it is important to secure all attractants (pet food, garbage, bird seed, fallen fruit, etc.), and to not feed them. Find more tips for securing wildlife attractants here: https://myfwc.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/tips/. You can also scare, or haze, the coyotes away as you see them. Watch a short video about hazing coyotes here. Coyotes are generally not a threat to people and are usually easily scared off. Deterrent products that work even when you are asleep or away include the water scarecrow (motion-activated sprinkler), critter gitter devices, and Ssscat canisters. Decorations that are motion activated can also be very effective, like Halloween screamers, etc.

A very simple but effective scare device for teachers to use is a wildlife shaker- take an empty soda can and tape a few pebbles, washers, or coins inside and keep some by the door so you can shake or throw them at the animals. Make sure to pick them up afterwards so the raccoons cannot examine them and get used to them when you are not outside.

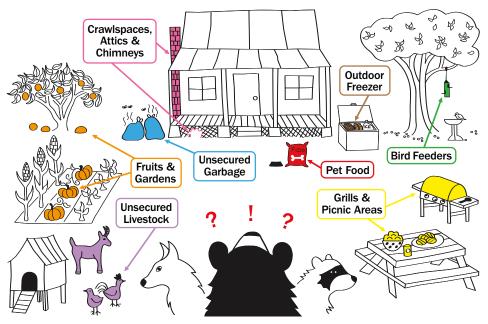
Small pets can be at risk from coyotes. The best way to keep cats safe is to keep them indoors, as outside they are at risk from cars, domestic dogs, disease, coyotes, and other wildlife. When walking small dogs, we recommend walking on a short leash and keeping the dog close to you. Supervise pets when they are outdoors, even while in a fenced yard. Coyotes can climb and jump fences, but generally will not do so if people are present. To prevent digging from dogs or coyotes, fences can be reinforced with hardware mesh at ground level. Fences can also be enhanced along the top with devices like covote rollers or electric fencing.

- FWC Living with Coyotes: http://myfwc.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/coyotes/
- FAQs on nuisance wildlife rules: https://myfwc.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/ faqs-nuisance-wildlife/
- Attractant removal works: <u>a case study in Rhode Island</u>.

If you have any other wildlife questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at our regional office. Wildlife emergencies after hours can be directed to our Wildlife Alert Hotline at (888) 404-3922. I'm happy to assist.

### How Wildlife Sees Your Backvard

Be Aware, Secure These Attractants!



### Keep People, Pets and Wildlife Safe. Secure Your Attractants!

If wildlife can easily find human-provided food on your property, they may lose their natural fear of people, which can lead to conflicts. Identifying and securing wildlife attractants makes your property safer for people, pets and wildlife.

1. Garbage Wildlife is attracted to food smells in garbage. Use wildlife resistant garbage cans or modify existir cans. Consider using garbage caddies. Or, eep garbage cans a sturdy shed r garage until the garage until the orning of pickup

Feed pets indoors. If

feeding pets outside or on a porch, remove

Food stored outdoors

can be enticing for wildlife. Secure

outdoor freezers of

fridges in a closed

garage or instal

the bowls after

feeding.

3. Outdoor freezers & food

2. Pet food

storage

NOR BUT

Free-ranging pets and livestock can be an easy target for some wildlife. Keep livestock safe in a sturdy outbuilding, behind a secure fence, or with electric fencing Supervise your pets while outdoors and



4. Pets & livestock

Wildlife may seek shelter in these spaces. Be sure to patch exterior holes, as small as 1/2 inch, or use mesh to prevent entry. But first, make





#### animals feed at bird feeders. Ever those that don't eat seeds are drawn by the concentration of prey. Bring in feeders

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tahles

outdoor grills and picnic areas can attract wildlife. Clean up these areas or oring your grill into a sturdy shed or closed garage when not i

Food smells on

can be eaten in a day and keep the ground beneath feeders clean

#### ng trees & garden Fruit trees and

vegetable gardens can also attract wildlife. Harvest ripe fruit and remove fallen fruit. Try motion activated alarms or ctric fencing to eating your fruits and vegetables.





7. Grills, smokers & picnic





# **OPCCOA/LRIA** Steering Committee Report

April 20, 2023 / By Randy Rutan

April's meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chairman, Kathy Marko. There was a quorum present. The March meeting minutes and financials were approved. There was no representative of the Joint Landscape Committee present so questions regarding the irrigation issues that resulted in a washout on the Boulevard and concerns about the recent installation of mulch along the Boulevard will be passed along to the Landscape Committee chairman. The line striping and installation of reflectors in the inbound lane just outside the gate has been completed. A review of the 2023 Budget indicates that we are at 24% of the Budget for Gate expenses which is okay. It was noted, however, that expenses for gate building repairs, electric bills and phone bills are higher than they should be. The Gate Staff are still reviewing the revised gate entry policy. An update on the potential purchase of the former golf course property by The Grove Investment Team was provided. They are preparing a flyer to go out to residents regarding the components and cost of a Social Club Membership. That will be followed by a Survey for the residents to participate in. As a way of showing our appreciation of the gate staff, LRIA presented a proposal that the two associations provide snacks for the Gate Staff twice per month. Snacks would include coffee, energy drinks, bottled water, snack food, etc. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be Thursday, May 18 at 6:00 p.m.



## **Submit Your Stories**

Help contribute to your community newsletter!

This newsletter is produced for Loch Rane and Orange Park Country Club. If you'd like to offer content for publication, here's how to get started:

Stories/Photography: Send your articles and/or high-resolution JPEGs to Randy Rutan at randy@ randyrutan.com. Articles should be sent as Microsoft Word attachments that are saved as ".doc" files. Photos should also be sent as attachments not embedded in an email.

The June 2023 Deadline for content: Sunday, May 21, 2023.

About this Newsletter Publishing/Advertising: Sheri@claytodayonline.com

# **OPCC Board of Directors Meeting**

### April 18, 2023 / By Bob McKinney

A great spring day to return to the cabana. Plan to attend in May to get the latest updates of the community news.

The ARC had a very busy session. One paint job, four roofs, one hot tub, one solar project, three tree removals and one fountain were approved. Life will be much easier if everyone would follow the ARC requirements for any exterior work. Compliance will reduce the possibility of an expensive mistake if work is started prior to approval.

One irrigation leak was corrected near the gate.

Our street captains attended a meeting at the clubhouse at the request of the Grove Investment Group, the group that has signed a letter of intent to purchase the golf course property. Discussed was the neighborhood participation in a survey developed by Grove that will provide them guidance about what the communities (Loch Rane is included) would like to see once Grove purchases the land. This survey will be available in hard copy and electronic/ digital formats. Please provide your responses to help guide the future development.

The electrical and roofing work at the community building has been completed. The work needed to correct the settling issues at the building is being addressed.

The new owners of the golf course property are still developing plans, but the event center will be named "The Grove". Membership details are still fluid as is the final official name of the complex. The damaged playground equipment has been ordered. We ask that residents respect the age/size limits of our equipment. The broken piece was never meant for bigger kids use.

The last piece of the pool repair project, the sand filter, is scheduled to be shipped from Michigan on April 21. Once it is on site, the completion will move rapidly. And, once we get the all clear from the county health department, our pools will be open for use.

The updated by-laws are virtually complete and once ready, they will be put out for a community vote. We will be attempting to acquire approval from as many residents as possible to provide the required documents via email/ electronically. The document package is rather large, so any hard copy mailings we can eliminate save you (the homeowners) money. We are focusing on getting approval for the by-laws. The updated covenants, which are almost complete, will be addressed in the future. The documents require separate votes, and we cannot combine them.

The beaver/nutria issues have been addressed and we will be keeping an eye on the fix to see if the problem has been corrected. Despite some recent rains, we are not sure if the drainage/flow problem has been fixed. Perhaps some day we will actually get some measurable rain.

The date of the May meeting will be posted as soon as we have details on the availability of the financial reports.

## 2023 OPCC Board of Directors

Bob McKinney, President 904-375-9554 bobpat4FL@comcast.net

Mark Blakewood, Vice-President 904-838-0961 markblakewood@comcast.net

> Fred Scott, Treasurer 301-535-6264 sgtfredscott@verizon.net

Randy Rutan, Secretary 845-797-7842 randy@randyrutan.com

Quint Bowman Member at Large 904-601-8595 ministerqabowman@gmail.com

Linda Sparks, Member at Large 904-272-4456 ecology22@aol.com

Bill Engelbrecht, Member at Large 904-537-8359 \_\_\_\_\_\_cwejax65@gmail.com

# **Publication Policy**

The function of the community newsletter, "Behind the Gate" is to serve the entire gated community of Loch Rane and Orange Park Country Club and is a product of Clay Today.

Priority will be given to reporting news and activities of the community and other news and events that directly affect the residents. Second priority will be given to articles of general interest as space permits. Articles and photos must be sent to Randy Rutan at randy@ randyrutan.com by the deadline date below. Due to space limitation, all articles are subject to editing.

Letters of opinion must be signed, as well as brief and in good taste. Views expressed are those of the writer and do not express the viewpoint of the publisher, OPCCOA or LRIA.

Acceptance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement or approval of any product or services by the publisher, OPCCOA or LRIA. The publisher reserves the right to refuse advertising that does not meet the standards of the publication.

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# Loch Rane Board of Directors Meeting

By Brian Rogers

The April meeting of the Loch Rane BOD was held on 4/25 and was well attended both in person and online via zoom as the announcement of a Special Assessment vote drew plenty of attention from homeowners.

#### 2023 Special Assessment

The BOD voted unanimously to levy a \$1000 special assessment for 2023 as we continue to make up ground in repairing our aging surface and drainage infrastructure (roads, drains, and ponds) within the community.

Unfortunately, like just about everything else, prices have increased across the board by huge margins, and the cost of materials/labor/construction/etc. have seen no reprieve. The same projects we put off just a few years ago are now being bid at 40% or more for the exact same work and this trend shows no sign of stopping anytime soon.

While we understand there is never a good time to levy special assessments, the estimated costs for these projects are simply not going away or getting any smaller. With the addition of yet another retention pond likely having to be completely rebuilt within the next few years adding to the already 7 figure cost estimates, the BOD saw no other alternative than to levy a 3rd consecutive special assessment to pay for these long overdue repairs.

The terms will be the same as last year offering owners the ability to pay in two separate installments of \$500 each with the first installment being due in June, please be on the lookout for the official statement/bill in the mail within the next week or so.

#### **Retention Pond Repair & Redesign**

BOD members continue to meet with both engineers and contractors to address the issues with all 3 of the Loch Rane owned retention ponds within the community. One requires significant dredging and modification to the drainage weir. Another will require a complete redesign and rebuild. Thankfully getting the designs, permits and approval from SJR-WMD is usually measured in months/years vs days/ weeks and we have a good bit of time to prepare for these unexpected, but extremely expensive projects.

#### **Boulevard Lighting**

As most of you have likely noticed, the new street lights have gone up on the Blvd and they look fan-

tastic. This has been one of the most requested features by homeowners for years, and we are happy to finally see it come to fruition. We hope everyone enjoys a bit more lighting as you drive or walk down the Blvd in the evenings! Kudos to BOD member Gary McMahill for spearheading this entire project from start to finish!

#### **Storm Drain Relining**

The largest expenditure for 2023 will yet again be the relining of storm drains underneath our roads. The BOD voted to approve the bid from ELS (same company that has done the majority of our previous relining work) for \$156,545 to reline 8 additional storm drains for this year. Unfortunately, we will have to wait until later in the year when funds from the special assessment are collected in order to begin this project so the bill can be paid upon completion.

#### **Country Club Property Update**

Hopefully everyone has seen the flyer provided by the potential buyers of the former country club and golf course with their plans for the property should they finalize the purchase. On paper the consensus is that this sounds like a net positive for the community and we look forward to hearing more about it. The potential buyers have stated that they plan to host a "town hall" meeting where all residents living behind the gate would be invited to attend and discuss the project if the sale is finalized within the next few weeks/months. We will be sure to share the information of that meeting when and if it happens!

Also please be on the lookout for a survey that will be distributed to homeowners to get your feedback on their plans, as well as the ability to provide suggestions and input on what should be done with the property. They made it very clear they want this project to have the full support of both Loch Rane and OPCC combined and the more input they get, the better chance they have of reaching their goal.

The next meeting of the LRIA BOD will be held on 5/23 at 6:30pm in the Community Building. All residents are invited to attend!

As a reminder, prior BOD meeting minutes, videos, and financials are uploaded to the Loch Rane website and available for all residents to access at any time! <u>https://lochraneonline.com</u>

## 2023 Loch Rane Board of Directors

Brian Rogers, President rogersbw@gmail.com

**Chuck Bryner**, *Vice-President* bryner@comcast.net

James Hudgins, Secretary james.hudgins@hotmail.com

Gary McMahill, Treasurer mcmahidga@aol.com

Kathryn Marko, Member at Large navynomad@hotmail.com

Marie Bryan, Member at Large marieandbobby@yahoo.com

John Burke, Member at Large jrburke81@gmail.com

## 2023 Steering Committee

Kathy Marko, Chairman Gary McMahill, Member Chuck Bryner, Member Randy Rutan, Member Daniel Butler, Member

The Steering Committee meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the community building. The purpose of the committee is to oversee issues of joint interest in the common areas of Loch Rane and OPCC. Homeowners of both communities are invited to attend. 6

ORANGE PARK COUNTRY CLUB/LOCH RANE

# LADIES LUNCH BUNCH \_

By Marie Bryan

The ladies of OPCC and Loch Rane had our monthly luncheon at Club Continental on April 19 and as usual it was wonderful. I was able to sit at a table that had ladies from both communities.

The food is always delicious. We were served meatloaf, mashed potatoes and broccoli. The dessert was a moist brownie that melted in your mouth.

Conversations were swirling around the great news from the club. Everyone seemed to be all a-twitter and excited about the prospects of what the investor group is planning.



Our last luncheon until fall will be on May 17th. If you haven't attended one please join us. It's a great way to meet your neighbors.

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**Loch Rane residents** who voted to pass the rewrite of the Association's Covenants.

**Hailey** and **Lisa Hatcher** for their many years of service to the OPCC community as street captains. We hope you enjoy your retirement.





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## LET'S RECOGNIZE OUR 2023 GRADUATES

We would like to feature our 2023 graduates in the June issue of Behind the Gate. If you would like to honor one of our neighborhood graduates please email some information about the graduate and a photo to randy@randyrutan.com.



# FUN THINGS TO DO IN MAY

## 05/12 FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY

5 – 8 at the pool parking lot

## 5/17 LADIES LUNCH BUNCH 11:30 at Club Continental

Ladies of OPCC and Loch Rane are invited to join the Ladies Lunch Bunch. Enjoy a wonderful lunch for a cost of \$20/person including gratuity. Each luncheon is hosted by a member of the group and has a theme. Please contact the luncheon coordinator, Frances Smith, to join the group and to get more information. Her phone number is 904-579-3008. If you provide Frances with your information, you will be added to the email contact list and will receive a flyer each month about the upcoming luncheon. These events are so much fun!

## 05/15 WATER AEROBICS STARTS BACK UP

Water Aerobics occurs Monday – Thursday from 9 – 10 a.m. except on holidays. The cost is \$15/month. For more information contact Wilma Miller at 904-553-1407 or wcmil@bellsouth.net.

## 05/20 OPCC NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL

7 – 9 at the cabana

The Socials are a great opportunity to get together with friends and meet new neighbors. There is music and you can request songs. BYOB and snacks to share. Come have some fun!

## 05/26 FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY

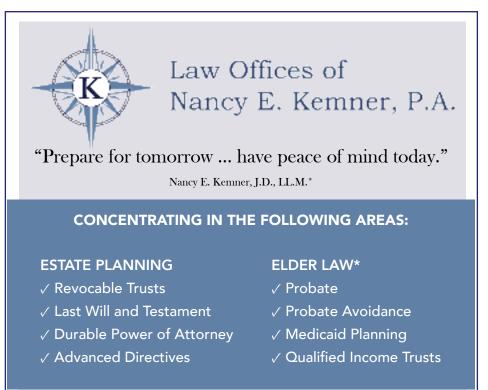
5 – 8 at the pool parking lot

## MEET BRIAN SHELTON OPCC'S NEW STREET CAPTAIN

Brian Shelton is a native of St. Louis, Missouri. He has been in Jacksonville for 10 years and a resident of Orange Park Country Club for nearly 6 years. He is an active duty Navy Chief and will be retiring in July this year. He enjoys spending time with his family, fishing and working on custom carpentry projects. He



resides at 2460 Country Club Blvd. and has volunteered to be the street captain for 2388-2492 Country Club Blvd. Thank you, Brian, for joining our street captain team.



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## TIME TO START PLANNING FOR THE OPCC/LOCH RANE COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

## SATURDAY, MAY 6 RAIN OR SHINE 7:30 AM – 2:00 PM \$15 PER HOME TO PARTICIPATE



Garage Sale Applications will be posted online and are also available in the display box at the Community Building. **APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MAY 2, 2023.** Application should accompany cash or check payable to OPCCOA and dropped off in the mail slot at the Community Building. Monies collected will be used for advertising in local papers, additional security patrol, maps handed out at the gate the morning of the sale listing homes participating in the sale as well as an individual **GARAGE SALE** sign for each participating home.

# **DO YOU KNOW**

In order to receive updates about what is going on in the community via eBlasts OPCC residents must not only register on our website at www.opcc.info but they must go to the profile tab at the top of the page and scroll down to where you can click yes to receive community email updates and/or notifications.

Sometime after May 3rd The Grove Investment Team will be sending out a survey to all members of the LRIA and OPCCOA. We encourage everyone to participate.

Things would go much more smoothly at the gate if we all would use the Gatekey visitor access system. If you need help getting set up to use Gatekey please contact one of the following: Loch Rane residents should contact Marie Bryan at marieandbobby@yahoo.com. And OPCC residents should contact Randy Rutan at randy@randyrutan.com.

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