

# Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



JUNE 2021

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

VOLUME 15 • ISSUE 6

## JUNE INSIDE HILLCREST

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My bed is a magical place where I can suddenly remember everything I was supposed to do. So, adding earworms into the mix made getting to sleep a bit of a challenge. But since I wrote about the earworms in the last issue, they seem to be gone. I think it is because I looked them up and the relief at finding out I am not alone or losing my mind, helped make them go away. Not sure if that was it, but I sleep a lot better now that they are gone. And I am sleeping even better since I got my Allure shades!

### ALLURE SHADE CONCEPTS

Our living room and bedroom windows face west so it drives me crazy when I am in the kitchen around 5PM and the sun is in my eyes. We have pull down shades but they don't screen out the glare nor enough of the heat. They are pretty though and I didn't want to get rid of them. So, what to do? My friend Mary Ellen Tracy in Hillcrest 23 recommended I call Dario Salto, owner of Allure and I highly recommend him. The shades are a God-send for those days when the glare gets uncomfortable and the room darkening quality for the bedroom makes it easier to sleep at night – as did the price! See his ad inside.

### IN OUR BACKYARD

These articles are very popular with our readers and I want to thank Meredith Shuster for submitting them and for the great pictures. Due to a shoulder injury, we missed her articles for a couple of months and her May article was pushed to this issue. However, Meredith has some concerns about what is going on with some of the wildlife lately. She did send a letter about her concerns to the Florida Fish and Game Department on June 2nd and will keep us posted when they answer.

I used to lay by the pool and it sounded like the birds were singing along with the music - I loved it. Now I don't hear that anymore. One of Meredith's concerns is that some of the birds are being poisoned which frankly, I worry about when I see landscapers spraying poison on our lawns when they fertilize. I would hate to think someone was doing it on purpose. She also thinks that we may have rats and/or racoons moving into the areas around the pools or where there is thick foliage. That has definitely happened before. And I too saw several broken eggs around our pool area a few weeks ago. As for irresponsible dog owners who don't pick up

after them, I have seen them too. Something does need to be done about their disrespectful behavior. This is an important issue. Please read her article on page 2 and if anyone would like to get involved with her efforts, please write us at [inside.hillcrest@comcast.net](mailto:inside.hillcrest@comcast.net) and we will put you in touch with her.

### PULTE UPDATE

Several Hillcrest leaders and the Compliance Committee will have an in-person meeting with Pulte, probably for the last time before the Parkview HOA takes over and Pulte is out of the picture. The meeting will take place on June 24 so details will be in the July issue. If anyone has any questions or concerns get them in now. Email [hillcrestleadershipcouncil@comcast.net](mailto:hillcrestleadershipcouncil@comcast.net).

### FOPS FOR THE SMALL CLUBHOUSE

We have a lot of new neighbors who do not understand why the large Clubhouse is off limits and some who think that the small Clubhouse is exclusively for our use. The large and small Clubhouses are both available to the Parkview homeowners. Condo owners may use the small Clubhouse only. Michelle Deverson, the Castle Group Property Manager for Parkview at Hillcrest explains further on page 2. If you need a fob for the small Clubhouse, see the clip out form on page 3. The only info needed is:

Name, Address, Contact #, Email address, a copy of your ID to prove residency (or other proof like closing statement) and a \$25.00 check or money order made out to Parkview at Hillcrest HOA. Drop everything off at the large Clubhouse ATTN: Michelle Deverson.

### THE LOBBY WARS

It is always exciting to see buildings do any type of remodel. We wrote about buildings 19 and 20 when they redid their lobbies. Each was different but both are beautiful. 19 is sophisticated and elegant, 20 is eclectic and colorful. Property Managers Sandy Goldstein, LCAM (19) and Omaira Martinez, LCAM (20) love the buildings they manage and it shows.

As for the other high rises, in my humble opinion I always thought 23 and 26 had the most attractive lobbies. I was surprised when

23 decided to remodel. According to the residents the new monochromatic furniture cost close to 70K but the lovely furniture they used to have was sent to a consignment shop in Wilton Manors - home of the nicest consignment stores - which is a great way for the building to recoup some money. 21, 22, 24 and 25 also redid their lobbies.

Hillcrest 22 finished first and I love it. Ron Cleary, former president, played a big part in the design and it is beautiful! They repositioned the Security area so packages have a storage space. Their new mailroom is big, beautiful and user friendly. The lobby has an informational TV like Hillcrest 25 and the furniture is a mix of classical and contemporary. The modern-looking seating is surprisingly comfortable. The hallways look great and the art work on the walls as well as the unique furniture on each floor are striking. And, finally, thankfully, they are painting the outside of the building. On a practical note, 22 also replaced all their risers. Kudos to everyone involved in making 22 one of the best looking buildings in Hillcrest inside and out.

When things settle down, I will take a closer look at 21, 24 and 25. Some people may not think that spending money on décor is important, but it is. Our lobbies are our "first impression" and can really impact our condo values. Maintenance issues and healthy reserves come first of course, but anything that is going to enhance the enjoyment of where we live is a good thing. Our lobbies are our "first impression" and can really impact our condo values. Maintenance issues and healthy reserves come first of course, but anything that is going to enhance the enjoyment of where we live is a good thing.

Hillcrest 21 was the first building to replace balustrades and break from the 1970's colors. Sam Tyler, president of Hillcrest 21 is also one of the "go to" folks when other buildings have questions or need advice. I love 21's hallways (they just may be my favorite) and I need to get over there to see the finished lobby.

The values in 24 went through the roof after John Caizza and his leadership team completed major projects like installing impact windows, replacing the balustrades with railings, mounting fire sprinklers in the hallways, remodeling the hallways and lobby as well as painting the exterior. They also installed new A/C ducts when they redid their hallway ceilings.

Ditto for Steve Hurtig and his team in Hillcrest 25. Their freshly painted exterior is gorgeous and they have a new roof. 25 had already replaced their balustrades years ago.

*Continued on Pg. 2*



Continued from Pg. 1

All the hallways have been painted; new carpet and lighting have been installed. The lobby was remodeled with new furniture and they created a separate space to place to store incoming packages securely. All the domestic water lines were replaced with copper plumbing. They were the first to install a large screen electric bulletin board in the lobby to keep their residents informed. To further beautify their surroundings, they privatized the pool area with new landscaping. When I am over there, I often see one of their snowbirds, Louise Lamontagne taking care of the landscaping in the front of the building. Now THAT is pride of ownership!

Hillcrest 27 is next up for the 40-Year Safety Inspection. But 27 was always ahead of the curve when it came to infrastructure. They were the first to replace all the risers and complete the electric requirements of the upcoming inspection. Herman Melotti, who has been on the board for several years and is the current president, was responsible for most of this proactivity and is still called upon by other Hillcrest buildings for advice. Right now, Alex Altidor who lives in Hillcrest 21 and is a representative for Fred Services LLC is in the process of installing new cameras and upgrading the surveillance system in 27. Should your building need similar services, His contact info is in this issue.

Every low/mid-rise that has been repainted looks great! I am loving the paint job that Hillcrest 16 is having done. Our community has always been ahead of the pack in keeping our buildings clean and well-maintained but this current beautification drive by many of our buildings has given us all a lift. Hillcrest has managed to master the combination of unique and cohesive.

#### WORKING WITH NEIGHBORS IS GOOD BUSINESS!

Not a week goes by that we don't get at least one question addressed to Inside Hillcrest asking for a recommendation – whether it is for a house cleaner, impact window installer, insurance agent, repair person, etc. Most times we have a past or present advertiser that we can recommend. Otherwise as Hollywood Chamber members, we know the best in town. Keep them coming. When we have a new advertiser, we like to put in a head shot and a short bio so you can get to know them better. We are happy that many of our advertisers are also our neighbors.

We get rave reviews about **Mimi Fantini** (27) our go-to for **Expert Tailoring and Alterations** and **Ingrid Sorensen** (21) who does in-home manicures and pedicures. I am thrilled that **Bridget D'Arco** (22) sells **Young Living Oils**. If you haven't tried them, and you are into natural remedies and cleaning agents, google the company and see what you are missing.

Please consider hiring a tutor for your child if he or she is struggling at school. I was a tough year last year and so many children have

fallen behind. Especially the early grades from kindergarten to 6th are especially crucial in a child's education. Our neighbor in Hillcrest 21, **Carol Bradford**, is a **licensed tutor** specializing in those grades and an expert in assessment, diagnosis and remedial reading skills. **Eddy Pierre** (25) of **American Disability Advocates** takes good care of Hillcresters who need his services. **Sharon King** (18) is our **State Farm** Agent for home and auto insurance.

**Alex Altidor** (21), who represents **Fred Services LLC** is our newest advertiser-neighbor to join the IH family. I ran into him in my building where he is working on installing cameras and upgrading our system. His ad is on page 7, underneath the best apple pie recipe in the world. And if you use mangoes instead of apples...oh my!

I have gotten a couple of calls about what services are provided by **Dino Petropoulos** (27), owner of **Justingems** so I may not have explained his business very well when he started advertising. His ad is on page 14 and I listed his services.

Of course, for the past several years, we can always count on **Etta Stevens** (22) to end each Inside Hillcrest issue on a high note with her articles about Meditation and information about her classes. I have known Etta for many years and she is a beautiful soul.

#### USE OF SMALL CLUBHOUSE AT 4600 HILLCREST DRIVE

There is NOT one clubhouse for condo owners only. The Hillcrest residents are provided the ability to use the small clubhouse per the agreement with Pulte – BUT that clubhouse is owned by the Parkview community, as are the walking trails, the tennis center and the courts which are accessible to Hillcrest condo residents. We are working on having the reservations listed on a calendar on the community website, however, those Parkview and Hillcrest residents who pay to use the facility for an event have every right to have exclusive use. **The small clubhouse is first come first serve UNLESS it is being rented. If an event is ongoing, it cannot be used at all.**

**It is not the Hillcrest Clubhouse.** It is referenced as the small clubhouse or community clubhouse however, it is owned and maintained by Parkview. Per the agreement made with Pulte, Hillcrest residents are NOT allowed usage of the large clubhouse, fitness center, or pool/pool area.

**Going forward please be respectful of any person(s) renting the small clubhouse as once again they pay \$300 for private usage.**

**Michelle Deverson - Licensed Community Manager | Castle Group**  
Parkview at Hillcrest HOA 4600 Hillcrest Drive, Hollywood, FL 33021  
[mdeverson@castlegroup.com](mailto:mdeverson@castlegroup.com) | [castlegroup.com](http://castlegroup.com) - 754-263-7426

#### WILDLIFE IN HILLCREST – by Meredith Shuster



First the birds: If they were killed by an animal, odds are we would only see the remains of the birds. The three birds found in our buildings backyard are intact. All three birds were found this week. The lack of any birds in our area from the multitude of Ibis, Herons of various types, several species of ducks - along with the Muskovies - that used to graze in our backyard is not a normal phenomenon. Has poison been used as a means of removing the birds?

As to the broken eggs, in Spring there were several eggs found broken. It may have been noticed by some that we have no ducklings, goslings, or other bird fledglings in our area. Some birds will lay a second nest of eggs if the first group are destroyed early enough in the season. I believe that is the case here. The eggs indicate the nests

were raided. Lizards (usually not iguanas), snakes and birds will attack nests for eggs. I am ruling out snakes. They tend to eat the egg whole. The species of lizards in our backyard are not large enough to attack eggsthisize. My guesses are rats, raccoons, and feral cats.

Coming back from the pool on several occasions, I have been aware of something living in the thick foliage. Please note that many of us behind Building 26 and 27 have trimmed and opened up the ground so it is less inviting for “long term residents”. I am ruling out feral cats because they tend to come out in the day time and we would have seen them. Rats and racoons are nocturnal. We have evidence that both exist in our community. Efforts to rid the birds in our backyard will backfire on several fronts. Poisoning is so totally out of line with what is good for our environment and I am specifically thinking of humans and their pets.



Wildlife continued on Pg. 12



## Resident Registration Form

**New**    
  **Update**    
  **Delete**

**Community Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Owner / Tenant Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Owner      Tenant

Owner / Tenant Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Owner      Tenant

Rental Term:     Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_     End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_     Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vehicle Information:**

Make	Model	State	Plate Number

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With the information below, Envera will enter your initial visitor list for you, or you may enter it on your own on your MyEnvera account. This list should be used for any and all relatives, house guests or service providers that you expect on a regular basis. Please provide a first & last name or company name in the spaces below.

**Permanent Visitor/Vendor List:**


The information above will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purpose stated. It is the responsibility of the resident to keep the above information current. Please advise us with any changes, additions or deletions by logging on to your account at [www.myenvera.com](http://www.myenvera.com), or by calling our office (877) 936-8372, by fax (941) 556-0737, or by emailing [customerservice@enverasystems.com](mailto:customerservice@enverasystems.com).

<b>FOR ENVERA USE ONLY:</b>	Credential Type:	(F)job	(S)ticker	(C)ard	(MT)Metal Tag
#1 ( ) _____	#2 ( ) _____	#3 ( ) _____	#4 ( ) _____		

# STATE OF THE COUNTY - County Commissioner Beam Furr - District 6



Greetings Hillcrest Residents,

As we begin to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, Floridians are facing other major challenges and difficult questions. One major challenge in the coming months will be over voting rights and the fundamentals of democracy. Senate Bill 90 has been passed by the Florida Legislature and signed by our Governor. This law will have major implications on how and when people can vote. The right to vote is sacred to our existence as

a country – and we must be diligent in making sure that every citizen has more accessible ways to cast their ballot. Senate Bill 90 is specifically targeted to limit access to vote-by-mail. It restricts the use of vote-by-mail dropboxes, which made voting easier for thousands of Broward residents during the last election cycle. It also makes it significantly more difficult to request a vote-by-mail ballot – including not automatically renewing requests for voters no matter how long they have been voting-by-mail. Many residents have been receiving their ballots automatically for four-year periods for many years, and this law will add extra steps to make it more difficult for these voters, many of whom are seniors, to receive their ballots. It also limits who can collect and drop-off ballots. For example, a resident who usually collects several ballots from their homebound neighbors to drop-off can no longer do so. This law could seriously limit the number of vote-by-mail ballots which are counted. We saw in the 2020 election cycle a record-breaking turnout due to vote-by-mail, which is what happens when voting is easier and more accessible. We should continue to provide access, not make it more difficult to vote.

This law will have major implications on your own neighborhood in Hillcrest. All election data shows that Hillcrest votes by mail at a much higher rate than the rest of the county and state, every single year. This law has the potential to specifically make it less convenient for residents like you and your neighbors to vote. Making it more difficult to vote by mail has significant impacts in a diverse community like Hillcrest, where residents cast absentee ballots for many different reasons. This is especially true when it comes to senior voters, who often need to vote absentee for convenience and health-related reasons. As Americans, we all have a responsibility to pay close attention and make sure that our elections are free and accessible for all citizens. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we all joined together and took care of our fellow citizen. Now, we must work together to protect the right of all American citizens to exercise their right to vote. Let's be diligent and pay close attention as we move towards the 2022 election.

**Vaccines**

All three vaccines are now widely available throughout Broward County! Remember appointments are no longer required at vaccination sites operated by the Department of Health-Broward. For a full list of vaccination sites, visit [GetVaccinated.Broward.org](http://GetVaccinated.Broward.org). Vaccines are also available at Publix, Wal Mart, CVS, and Walgreens. I am happy to say that with the increased availability and convenience of getting vaccinated, 44% of Broward residents are now vaccinated. Unfortunately, we have seen fewer residents in Broward County and throughout Florida request the vaccine. It is clear that the 56% of us who remain unvaccinated have other reasons to be hesitant. I encourage everyone to be informed about their responsibility to get vaccinated and keep each other safe. If half our population is not vaccinated, we will suffer long-term ramifications – it will keep this pandemic going for months after it should end and could leave many of our residents experiencing the impacts of this terrible disease. These vaccines are safe, effective, life-saving medicine that will help us defeat a terrible disease, just like we have defeated polio and smallpox and other pandemics. Get your vaccine!

**Contact Us**

Our District office is conveniently located in the lobby of the Hollywood Branch of the Broward County Public Library at 2600 Hollywood Blvd,

next to Hollywood City Hall. I am pleased to report that it has re-opened and is available to you from 10 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday. If you plan a visit, please honor the Covid-19 safety precautions of mask wearing and social distancing. My staff is also working from my office in Fort Lauderdale and from other remote locations within our District. The Fort Lauderdale office is open for your convenience Monday through Friday from 9AM to 5PM. If you would like to schedule an appointment, or you have a great idea, suggestion or an issue that needs my attention, feel free to **call me at 954-357-7006/7790 or send me an email at [bfurr@broward.org](mailto:bfurr@broward.org)**.

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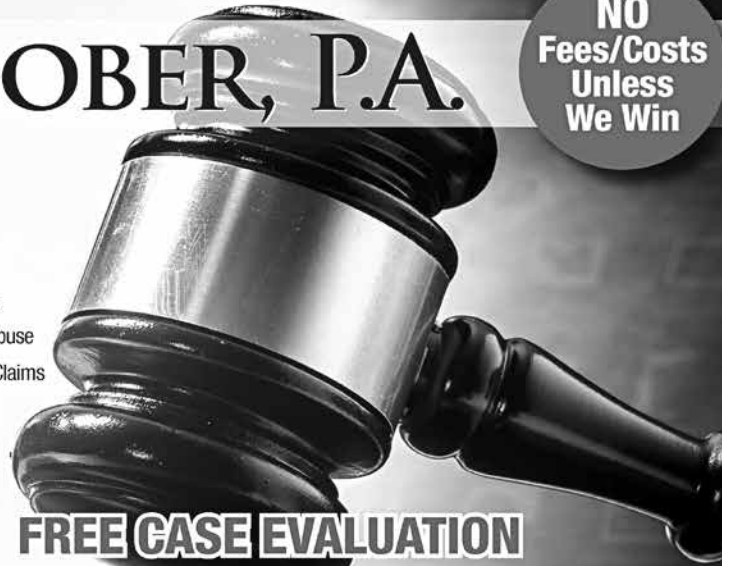
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Dario is the founder of Allure Shade Concepts, a window covering business that offers a variety of window fashion products. For the past 8 years, he has enjoyed connecting with his customers to help them navigate the various options of window coverings. He started Allure Shade Concepts to provide every client total satisfaction and a stress-free experience.

Mary Ellen says, "Dario Salto, owner of Allure Shade Concepts, is a hard-working, reliable professional. I recommend his services because he stands behind his products and installation."

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# June Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham

## HEALTHY SWEET STUFF

For some reason I have been making a lot of recipes with fruits and vegetables in the ingredients. The trick to getting some people (I will mention no names) to eat their vegetables is to give them a touch of sweetness. Some fruits I never would have thought of to use in a recipe but they all work! We would definitely make the Feta appetizer again, the broccoli side dish has become a weekly staple, the Chicken entrée worthy of a monthly meal and the Apple Cake compliments of my friend Sandy, is over the top delicious. Even the dreaded Brussel sprout tastes great when made with bacon and balsamic. I had you at "bacon", didn't I?

Do you know what "nut dust" is? Lordy, I hope not. When I make my "Yer Nuts" which is my own special blend of healthy types of almonds (raw, roasted, dark chocolate covered, cocoa covered, honey roasted) and walnuts. Of course, I throw in some dark chocolate chunks, dried blueberries, and espresso flavored chocolate chips to get you-know-who to eat something healthy. There is always 'nut dust' or tiny bits in the bottom of the can or bag. I pour the whole bag/can in into a large-holed strainer and catch all the good stuff and save it. The last recipe for Sandy's Apple Cake, I used nut dust instead of cinnamon sugar. Oh my! And, of course I made a second cake with mangoes instead of apples.

For the following recipes, I separated the ingredients that go together for each part of the recipe – makes it easier for me not to forget something. And BTW – when I print these recipes, I use a 16 or larger font size so I can see what I am doing – I tape the recipe above the counter where I am prepping.

## PAN FRIED FETA WITH LEMON-HONEY DRESSING

8 oz. block of Feta cheese  
1/3 cup flour  
2TBS EVOO  
1 cup red grapes  
1 cup walnuts  
1 TBS EVOO  
2 TBS fresh lemon juice  
1 TBS honey  
2 tsp chopped fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)



1. Preheat oven to 425. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and spray with non-stick spray. Toss grapes and walnuts in a bowl with the oil and spread in one layer on the baking sheet. Roast for 20 minutes or until grapes are blistered and walnuts are toasted. Set aside.

2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk lemon juice, honey, and thyme. Set aside.

3. Spread flour on a plate, wet the Feta and press both sides into the flour until well coated, shake off the excess. Fry in a small nonstick skillet over medium heat for 3 minutes undisturbed. Flip and cook another 3 minutes or until golden brown and cheese begins to crisp.

4. ransfer Feta to a serving plate and top with roasted grapes and walnuts. Drizzle with lemon dressing and serve with pita crackers.

We love chicken tenders but when it comes to recipes calling for chicken breasts, I like to use thighs. I buy chicken thighs on sale for 99 cents, remove the skin and fat and use them in any and all recipes that call for chicken breasts. I like bone-in for some reason. And I know how weird it sounds to mix pitted prunes with pimiento olives but it works. BYW I only marinated mine 4 hours so... I have made this one more than once – we really like it.

## CHICKEN BREASTS ANDALUSIA (MARINATE 4-8 HOURS)

3 boneless skinless chicken breasts or 5 boneless skinless chicken thighs

### MARINADE

3 minced cloves garlic  
2 TBS dried oregano  
¼ tsp salt  
½ tsp pepper  
3 TBS oil  
1/8 cup red wine vinegar  
¼ cup pitted prunes sliced in half  
1/8 cup pimiento-stuffed green olives (if large, slice in half)  
2 bay leaves  
2 TBS capers  
½ TBS lime juice  
¼ cup dry sherry (or chicken broth)  
¼ cup packed brown sugar  
1 TBS finely chopped parsley  
2 TBS lightly toasted slivered almonds



1. Combine the garlic, oregano, salt, pepper, oil, vinegar, prunes, olives, bay leaves, capers and lime juice and immerse the chicken breasts in the marinade covered and refrigerated for 8-12 hours – a zip lock bag works also. Turn it over every so often.

2. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Place chicken in a single layer in a large baking dish or paella pan. Remove the bay leaves and pour the marinade over the chicken. Cover the pan tightly with foil and bake for 1 hour.

3. Remove the pan from the oven and uncover. Pour the sherry over the chicken and sprinkle with brown sugar. Return the pan, uncovered to the oven for 15 minutes, or until the brown sugar is crispy (don't burn it). Garnish the chicken with parsley and almonds. Serve.

## BROCCOLI SALAD

2-3 Broccoli crowns, stems removed and cut into small florets  
¼ cup minced red onion  
¼ cup dried blueberries or chopped dried cranberries or cherries  
Toss the broccoli, onion and dried berries in a bowl and add ½ cup store-bought Cole Slaw dressing. Refrigerate for a few hours and toss again before serving.



I didn't have any Cole Slaw dressing so I made it – super easy:



Continued from Pg. 6

**EASY COLE SLAW DRESSING**

**(Vegans can use Vegenaïse)**

- ½ cup mayonnaise OR ¼ cup mayo and ¼ cup Greek yogurt
- 1 ½ TBS white sugar
- 1 ½ TBS fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp pepper
- ¼ tsp salt



**BRUSSEL SPROUTS WITH BACON AND BALSAMIC**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 lb. Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 6 Slices bacon, cut into pieces
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- kosher salt & Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ c. extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ c. balsamic vinegar
- ¼ c. honey
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary (yes I used ½ TBS dried)



**DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 425°. On a large baking sheet, season brussels sprouts, bacon, and garlic with salt and pepper. Drizzle with oil and toss until combined.

2. Bake until brussels are tender and charred, 30 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, make balsamic glaze: In a small saucepan, combine balsamic vinegar, honey, and rosemary. Simmer until reduced by half, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes (the mixture should coat the back of a spoon). Let cool.

4. Drizzle roasted brussels sprouts with balsamic and serve. Dr. George Jacobson and his wife Sandy have birthdays one month apart so we celebrate both with one birthday dinner. Sandy always brings the cake because remember I don't bake...hah!

**APPLE CAKE – Sandy Jacobson**

- 1 cup butter (softened)
- 4 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp lemon extract
- 2 large apples (use your favorite) peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 2-3 TBS cinnamon mixed with ½ cup sugar or ¾ cup "nut dust"



Mix first six ingredients together in mixer. Spread into greased 9X13 pan. Sprinkle about half of the cinnamon-sugar over the cake batter. Layer the apple slices vertically on top of the batter, you will have enough for two layers.

Sprinkle the rest of the cinnamon sugar on top. Bake at 350 degrees for about 45-50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Go ahead and serve but I will tell you it is better the next day!

**FRED SERVICES LLC**

**Dear Hillcrest Residents and Associations,**

My name is Alex Altidor, with Fred Services LLC, and a resident of Hillcrest community (Bldg #21) for over 12 years. I specialize in technical solutions and services such as diagnostic, repair, and installation of electronic equipment such as home and office electronic devices (computers, printers, routers, switches, etc), Phone (VOIP & POTS lines), cameras systems (DVR/NVR, Video Doorbell, Hard drive), Automation (Smart Sensors – Water Leak, Contact sensors, and Smart alerts). After working 14 years in the Satellite Telecommunication Industry with an educational background in Electronic Engineering Technology, I wanted to use my experience and knowledge to support residential properties and local businesses.

Below is an overview of some of the projects that I have completed in the community.

**Hillcrest Bldg #21**

- Upgrade current Camera System which includes High Definition Wired and IP/Wireless cameras for permanent and temporary installs.
- Smart Leak Sensor solution which immediately alert board members and security personnel, of potential water leaks in the building locally and remotely. These alerts can help Associations avoid and minimize damages and costly repairs especially in low traffic and non-monitored areas
- Package Tracking and Notification Solution was implemented to help Security personnel manage UPS/AMAZON/FEDEX/USPS packages and automatically notify residents via Phone call or Text once their packages have been processed.

**Hillcrest Bldg #27**

- Upgrade current Camera System which includes High Definition Wired and Wireless cameras that provide extend coverage of their parking lot and exits.

**Hillcrest Residents**

- Computer, phone, and internet diagnostics and repairs.
- Home Theater System installation

If you are looking to upgrade your system, new services, or for technical support, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

**Alex Altidor** - Technical Advisor & Representative  
**Fred Services LLC** - Phone: (954) 417-5335

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- Home & Office Electronics (Computer Network, Printers, etc)
- Phone and Internet services
- Camera Systems (DVR/NVR, Camera, Video Doorbell, External Storage)
- Automation (Smart Sensor – Water Leak and Door/Window Sensors, Smart Alerts)
- Satcom Equipment and Services

**Alex Altidor**  
 Technical Advisor and Representative  
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 Pembroke Pines, FL 33024  
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## KITCHEN TIPS – by Cindy Abraham

This one and the next one are two of my favorites. If you have spinach, arugula, spring mix whatever in one of the plastic containers they sell them in, put a paper towel on the bottom and top of the container before putting it in the refrigerator. It will last weeks longer. I even save my plastic containers in case buying it in a bag is cheaper so I transfer it to the plastic.

I learned this one from an old chef years ago when I was the Director of Training for Tony Roma's and have done it ever since. Cook a steak from frozen – do not defrost. The broiler sears the outside nicely and you can continue to cook to the internal temperature you want without worrying about it getting over done. He also taught me that if anyone locks me in a restaurant freezer to jam a frozen steak in the fan to short it out so I wouldn't freeze to death...geeze, those were the days.

In today's world, your freezer can be your best friend. Freeze lemon and lime juice in ice cube trays. Freeze zest and most herbs. Freeze grapes and use them to cool wine without watering it down,

The only reason I drink wine is because wine bottles do a great job of rolling out dough. OK maybe only the last part of that one is true.

Freezing bay leaves keeps them fresher. Also, put them in your cabinets to ward of ants and other pests.

Why don't your garlic mashed potatoes taste better? Mix equal parts garlic powder and water and sauté in the butter before adding to the potatoes. Not sure why this makes all the difference but it does.

I already told you this one but I love it. If you have anyone in your family who eats cereal, save the bag (and recycle the box). The bag are GREAT for pounding chicken breasts.

Slice avocado with a spoon. Halve the avocado and remove the pit. Then slice with a spoon and scoop out the slices.

Keeping a grocery list on my phone is a pain. I tried. A paper list is easier. So, I take a twist tie and make a hole in the top of the list and tie it to my grocery cart.

To label jars, buy thick rubber bands, thick enough to write on and wrap them around the jar. They can also help to open the jar. You can put them under cutting boards so they don't slide.

If you have a pastry cutter, it can do double duty to break up ground meat when you are cooking it. Also, if you like to use ground meat to make chili and you don't want it all watery, toss the ground meat with baking soda (1/2 tsp per pound) before sauteing. It keeps the juices in and browns better.

An egg slicer can be pretty versatile also. Use it to dice cold butter or slice mushrooms. If you need butter to soften quicker, use a grater on the cold butter stick.

Here is one of my favorites, especially when using fresh thyme. Put the stems through a colander to get the leaves off.

The easiest way to deseed a jalapeno is to use a vegetable peeler. Cut the stem end off of the jalapeno and run the vegetable peeler around the inside.

Grating cheese can be tough if you get nicked by the grater so if you have a mandoline, use the mandoline guard to hold the cheese (take care not to hit the grater with the prongs when you get down to about an inch of cheese).

Store guacamole in a zip bag. Get out as much air as you can. It won't turn brown and when you are ready to use it, cut off a corner of the bag and squeeze.

To keep homemade Vinaigrette from separating, add 1 TBS molasses and shake well. It doesn't hurt the flavor either.

If you have a double sink, use a door hook to hold the sponge.

If you are making a layer cake, use a sheet pan to slide the layers on top of each other. Yes, I made a lemon layer cake that was OFF THE CHAIN and the recipe will be in the July issue.

## MARTY KIAR - BROWARD COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER



### Veterans Receiving the Full Exemption for Service-Connected Total and Permanent Disability May Be Eligible for a Refund

A recent change in Florida law allows for certain disabled veterans to receive a property tax refund. While the refund requirements are very specific, some property owners receiving the Full Veteran's Exemption for Total and Permanent Service-Connected Disability may be eligible for a refund on their new homesteaded property's taxes.

Effective tax year 2021, homesteaded property owners receiving the Full Veteran's Exemption for Total and Permanent Service Connected Disability on a newly acquired Florida property - who also received the Full Exemption for Total and Permanent Service Connected Disability on another Florida property in the immediately preceding tax year - may be eligible to receive a partial refund of the ad valorem taxes paid for the newly acquired property in the year the property is acquired, prorated as of the date of transfer of ownership.

If you believe you are eligible to receive this prorated refund, please contact our office a 954-357-6035 or email us at [CSEmgmt@bcpa.net](mailto:CSEmgmt@bcpa.net)

### BCPA Outreach Returning to Governmental Center West

Our Mobile Exemption & Information Team has returned to the Governmental Center West located at 1 North University Drive in Plantation on Wednesdays from 12:00pm – 2:00pm. Our staff is available to assist residents with filing for any exemption and is available to answer any property questions you may have. To view all our upcoming events, please visit <https://web.bcpa.net/ExemptionsExpress/calendar>

To schedule a virtual visit from the safety of your home, please visit our website at <https://web.bcpa.net/virtualvisits>

**The absolute deadline for applying for any 2021 exemption is September 20, 2021.**

If my office can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 954.357.6904 or by email at [martykiar@bcpa.net](mailto:martykiar@bcpa.net)

Take Care,

Marty Kiar, CFA  
Broward County Property Appraiser





One question that I have gotten from many of you since my last article is, "Why are our premiums going up so much when we never have claims?" This is a good question because on the surface it does not make sense for your premiums to go up, if you have never filed a claim with your insurance company.

Unfortunately, South Florida is the hardest area in the country to get affordable rates. There are a limited number of insurance companies that are willing to write policies in South Florida because

South Florida has the highest number of claims as well as fraudulent claims in the US. Insurance is a business like anything else and when costs go up because of this and a multitude of other factors, insurance companies pass the costs to their customers and rates go up.

A big factor is the cost of re-insurance. Re-insurance is insurance for insurance companies. Insurance companies, just like condominium associations buy their own insurance. During 2020, because of the 30 names storms, the Covid 19 pandemic and multiple natural disasters around the world such as fires in California and Australia, earthquakes across the globe and flooding, re-insurance companies had to pay out billions of dollars in claims. As a result of these disasters, re-insurance companies started to charge insurance companies more money to buy their own insurance and as a result the insurance companies that you buy from are now charging condominium associations more money regardless of whether you have had a claim or not.

Is this fair? Not at all, but it is the reality of the situation in South Florida. So, what should you do to make sure you are paying the lowest premiums possible for your largest budget item? The answer is simple. You and the agent you choose to work with for your upcoming renewal need to create a narrative that gives you a competitive advantage over other associations in the market place that will allow you to be seen as an exemplary risk over your neighbors so you are charged the lowest premiums possible.

**Over the past year, your agent should have been asking you questions about what updates you have done to your building and what risk management tools you are using to minimize claims activities. Does your insurance agent look at the major contracts you have with other vendors and review their certificates of insurance? Does your agent guide you in how do you educate your unit owners about their responsibilities? What type of proactive plan do you have in the event of a Hurricane?**

This is the job of your insurance agent. If this is not happening in your building, it may be time to look for alternative professionals to work with. A proactive approach is the only way to go to keep premiums low.

Please feel free to reach out to me any time to discuss additional questions you may have about this article as well as to set up a time for us to discuss your upcoming insurance renewal for your community.

Sincerely,

**Brandon Levy, CPIA - President**

Legacy Insurance Associates Unlimited, Inc.



**Brandon Levy, CPIA**  
President

blevy@legacyinsuranceassociates.com

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**Barbara Buxton, J.D., LL.M. Attorney at Law**

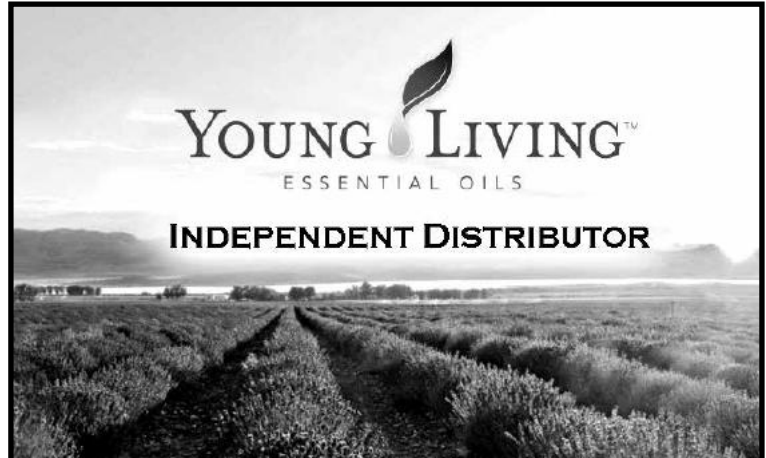
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## What's Happening In The Real Estate Market in Hillcrest and Hollywood?



Cindy Abraham



Brian Gaiefsky

The market for single-family homes has exploded. Right now, homes are at a premium and buyers are paying over list price; either all cash or coming up with the difference between the appraised price and the list price. Bidding wars are common.

**What does this mean to us?** Homes are becoming out of reach for many. The next best thing is a townhome or large condo. As we all know, Hillcrest condos are known for their size and views. And Keller Williams A Team Florida are known as the Hillcrest experts which is why agents shopping Hillcrest look for our listings.

**Looking to buy or sell? Let's talk. Or send us an email or text:**

Chat – **954-964-2559** - Email – [Info@ATeamFlorida.com](mailto:Info@ATeamFlorida.com)

Text – Cindy - **954-895-1617** Brian – **954-415-5323**



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## HOLLYWOOD REAL ESTATE – by Cindy Abraham



may end up selling this year. One warning I would give my sellers is not to overprice so much that your out of pocket while you are waiting to sell (the total of your monthly maintenance, taxes, insurance, utilities and sometimes an assessment) do not cancel out any profit you may have made had you sold at the right price and quickly. Right now, however, because of the rapid rise in the market, it may well have been worth it to wait until the market caught up with the price.

Days on market are not as long as they used to be. A unit that took 7 months to sell for 180K may actually have made more than the 5K+ out of pocket he incurred while waiting for a sale. The other longest DOM property took 13 months to sell. Listed at 139K and estimating that 13-months' worth of maintenance fees (4K+), taxes (\$7,800), insurance and utilities (3K) totaling 15K may not have been worth the wait.

When the market is such that only cash buyers or those willing to pay over appraisal price for a property can successfully buy because very few are appraising, our concern now is not if but when the correction

will happen. All the factors that have to come together for a market correction are not within our control. It will be a combination of higher inventory accompanied by higher interest rates. The old adage "what goes up must come down" and vice versa still holds true.

Keep in mind, just because a property goes under contract does not mean it will close. That is when the real work starts. If your agent does not know how to navigate the inspection and appraisal pitfalls, you will end up taking less or having the deal fall through. Do not think that because properties are easy to sell that they are easy to close. Sellers need a professional, experienced real estate professional now more than ever before. And for buyers you need the BEST in the business to get your offer accepted. Every market has specific winning strategies for buying and selling. We have been around since 2005 so we know how to "shift" when we need to.

While homes are in the over current market value range right now, condos are still a great buy for the moment. In any market, buying a condo is so much smarter than paying rent. It is baffling to me why anyone who has the means to stop paying the and landlord's mortgage and get their own with rates at a record low does not just do it. One of my favorite sayings: "Don't wait to buy real estate. Buy real estate and wait." And if you have a steady job history but your credit is not so great, we can help with that too.

We are only a phone call away to give you any information you need pertaining to your own personal situation and advice on how to navigate the current market successfully. Call me or Brian at 8-HILLCREST for a confidential conversation about your real estate wants and needs and how to get them.

# HILLCREST 2021 MAY STATE OF THE MARKET

– by Cindy Abraham, Keller Williams Realty Professionals A Team Florida

We are going to switch it up this month. Instead of listing the condos that went under contract during the month of May (22) and the condos that closed in May (17), I am going to print the current listings since we are down to 21. I was going to say 24, but by the time I finished this article 3 had gone under contract! Corner unit sales are designated by **C** and the rental building sales by **R**. But remember, unless the listing is grossly overpriced, it may not be on the market by the time you read this.

We took over two expired listings in Hillcrest last month, listed one at the same price and actually raised the price of another, and both sold at full price within a week. Remember that we have a pool of over 130 buyer agents who shop Hillcrest and they look for our listings FIRST because we know the buildings (each has its own paperwork and process) and they know that basically we do all the work for them. It is hardly ever a good idea to hire a Realtor outside of your area. When you do, you do not get full service AND there is a chance your deal will fall apart.

## PARKVIEW AT HILLCREST

The name of the game is EQUITY. It is amazing how much equity has been built up for homeowners just in the past year. It looks like sellers are realizing close to a 20% profit from the time they bought the property until today. If you are thinking of selling your Parkview home or townhome, give us a call at **8-HILLCREST** or email us at [Info@ATeamFlorida.com](mailto:Info@ATeamFlorida.com) for a current market analysis. The properties below are designated S for single family homes and by the letter T for townhomes. The first one has a pool and the one on Mahogany is waterfront according to the listings. The data I print changes with the feedback I get from readers. I have been asked to print the original sales prices of the resales. Readers also asked me to print the sales price of the homes/townhomes that are for rent.

### ACTIVE LISTINGS

TOWNHOME	B/B	SF	List Price	PREV. SOLD FOR
S-1143 Large Leaf Lane	3/2/1	2220	891,638	N/A
S-1153 Large Leaf Lane	3/2/1	1961	736,070	N/A
S-943 Mahogany Lane	3/2/1	1881	629,999	492,000
T-925 Banyan Drive	3/2/1	1768	575,000	349,154
S-1001 Banyan Drive	3/2/1	1769	530,000	381,000
T-3976 Black Olive Ln	3/2/1	1421	445,000	315,900
T-3040 Eucalyptus #1	3/2/1	1561	439,000	340,000

### MAY PENDING SALES

TOWNHOME	B/B	SF	List Price	PREV. SOLD FOR
T-4000 Black Olive Lane	3/2/2	1597	419,500	342,500

### MAY CLOSED SALES

TOWNHOME	B/B	SF	List Price	PREV. SOLD FOR
S-1372 Silk Oak Drive	3/2	2329	565,000	477,300
S-1054 Banyan Drive	3/2/1	1881	565,000	464,100
T-3944 Mahogany Ln	3/2/1	1768	445,000	367,900
T-1030 Eucalyptus #5	3/2/1	1497	410,000	352,000
S-1001 Banyan Drive	3/2/1	1769	530,000	381,000
T-3976 Black Olive Ln	3/2/1	1421	445,000	315,900
T-3040 Eucalyptus #1	3/2/1	1561	439,000	340,000

### PARKVIEW AVAILABLE RENTALS

TOWNHOME	B/B	SF	RENT/MONTH	SALE PRICE	DOM
T-5087 Eucalyptus	3/2/1	1768	\$3500	395,000	13

Curious as to how much equity you have built up in your Parkview home? Call us at **8-HILLCREST** or email [INFO@ATeamFlorida.com](mailto:INFO@ATeamFlorida.com).



### ACTIVE LISTINGS

Building	Unit #	B/B	SF	List Price	Sold/DOM
27	806	2/2	1688	275,000	193
26	C-801	3/2/1	2200	270,000	13
26	C-316	2/2	1344	225,000	47
8	303	2/2	899	205,000	2
23	603	2/2	1216	189,000	121
19	R-409	2/2	1100	186,000	49
27	C-816	2/2	1426	180,000	201
27	1212	2/2	1296	179,000	46
26	211	2/2	1132	169,000	1
23	C-919	2/2	1284	165,000	8
3	104	2/2	980	159,900	41
20	R-111	1/1/1	830	155,000	2
24	218	2/2	1216	155,000	41
26	906	2/2	844	155,000	156
9	214	2/2	899	149,900	73
23	118	2/2	1216	142,900	157
24	406	1/1/1	896	140,000	23
6	102	2/2	837	134,000	8
27	406	2/2	744	134,000	186
1	210	1/1/1	770	110,000	19
27	303	1/1/1	994	105,000	118



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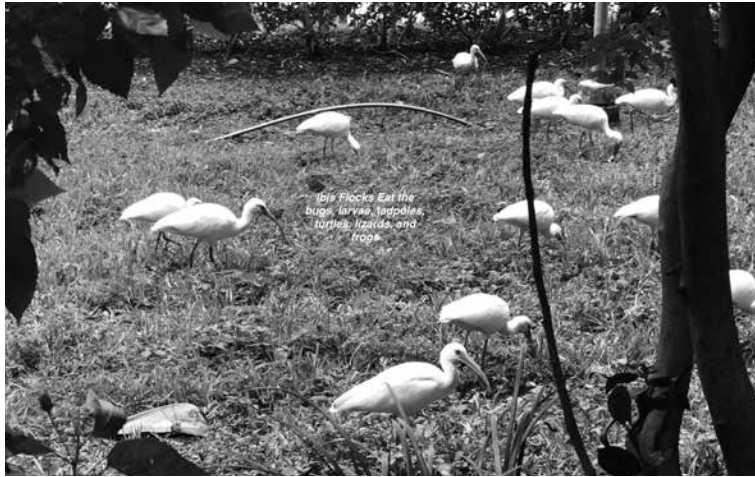
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**In Our Backyard – by Meredith Shuster, Hillcrest 26**

My apologies for not being with you these last couple of months. My broken shoulder is healing quite well. Thank you for all the well wishes.



*Ibis Flocks Eat the bugs larvae, tadpoles, turtles, lizards, and frogs*



*Egret Biting Off More Than It Can Chew*

Here is my backyard question. Where have all the Egrets, Ibis and geese gone? These birds tend to take up residence year-round in each area where food is available. Between the residents and Mother Nature, Hillcrest has been a variable picnic. Usually at this time of year, fledglings would be emerging from the nest; just in time to control the emergence of frogs from the multitude of tadpoles that escaped the Egrets and Ibis bills. The birds attracted to our area also consume small turtles and lizards, including baby iguanas. The Ibis, Egrets and geese also consume

many insects. This is not cruelty. This is keeping nature in balance. The only interference has been humankind. Without our understanding of the creatures we live with, the balance of nature can be skewed. Be prepared for more frogs, mosquitos, various other pest type bugs and iguanas in our backyard.

Some have objected to the noise these flocks make. Doves with their cooing and crows with their cawing add to the cacophony. Neighbors, living beings make noise. We humans add construction, traffic, music, voices of varying decibels, rolling carts, barking dogs and various other noises day to day. We barely notice or readily dismiss these sounds as “that’s the way it is”. Just for a moment, imagine how all our noises sound to the squirrels and other animals that are used to the sound of the wind in the trees. Many of us realize the joy, comfort and the pleasant distraction provided by the sounds of nature and miss them. On to the next objection; the “mess”. Yes. All animals poop. Bird “doo-doo” needs to be cleaned but so does iguana “doo-doo” (which is more difficult to wash away) and dead (squished) frogs, turtles and lizards. Besides, the birds may invade our patios and balconies but do not invade our homes.

We are seeing more blackbirds as their time of migration brings them to our area. I find these blackbirds fascinating. I have observed Fish Crows, Grackles, Starlings and Cowbirds. Fish Crows are the most common. They feed on the ground in flocks, are on the smaller scale of blackbirds and make the cawing sound.



*Great Egret*

Starlings are dark with yellow bills. Long tailed Grackles are the lankier black bird with (dah) the long tails. They have a loud chirping sound followed by clacking that reminds me of baseball cards attached to bicycle spokes. (Do kids still do that?) We have both the Bronzed Cowbird – black with a menacing looking red eye and the Brown-headed Cowbird (again Dah) black body and brown head.

Throughout history, blackbirds have been underrated and over villainized. First, “black” is highly under descriptive. Beautiful iridescent colors of blues, greens and purples are evident in the sunlight. Their main foods are insects and seeds. True story from this Midwestern girl. Farmers used to scare away blackbirds for fear they would demolish their crops. It is true these birds eat seeds, but by far, they eat bugs. Once harvested, corn stalks would remain in the fields throughout the fall and winter providing homes for many insects to lay eggs and provide food and shelter for larvae. Black birds would descend on these fields and feast on these insects until the farmers “dissuaded” them by various means. Tens of thousands were wiped out. Well, you guessed it. Large infestations of insects invaded the following harvests creating the need for more and stronger pesticides that we end up ingesting. Blackbirds are no longer considered the “enemy” of farmers. They shouldn’t be ours either.



Amazingly crows have similar characteristics to us. Crows tend to mate for life or at least several breeding cycles. Flocks are made up of family groups of aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, sons, daughters, nieces . . . you get it. The grown children stay with the parents the first year or two helping mom and dad feed and protect the new generations before mating and starting their own family.



For decades humans have been invading Florida’s natural habitats causing our feathered friends to either die or adapt. Conservation efforts only seem to follow the greed and need of human development.

Mother Nature in her ever optimism tries to keep balances in place. Without our flocks of birds, Hillcresters be prepared for more frogs, insects, and iguanas. Because of this lack of cooperation, humans end up using more pesticides furthering the pollution of our bodies and environment and continuing the decimation of the very wildlife that is the solution. Go figure!!!

*Wildlife continued from Pg. 2*

I hope that is not the case. Thinning out the excess foliage will encourage the animals to move on to a better environment.

One final animal that is recent in “Our Backyard” are the dog owners who leave large piles of poop behind our units. I have seen at least one person walking dogs behind



the units on Hillcrest property and not on the walking paths. Most owners are conscientious but more recently we are seeing dogs in the hallways and service areas. It may have gotten too lax and reminders of the Bylaws regarding animals on the property may need to be addressed.



**EASE BACK INTO WHAT YOU NEED TO DO**

By Eric Glazer, Esq. - Published June 7, 2021

Well, it looks like the worst of the Coronavirus is behind us. We are vaccinated and the world seems to be coming back to life, very quickly. And that scares me as an attorney.

I understand that after being cooped up for the last year, and putting many ideas, repairs and modifications on hold, there is an eagerness to immediately get back to business in a big way. Start that repair, remove the deck, paint the building, change those carpets, patch the holes and the like. But, before you get to do any of that, the contractor you choose is going to want you to do one thing first- sign a contract. So, slow down.

I can't tell you how many times I have been asked "Eric, we just signed this contract. It turns out we hate it. Can you get us out of it?" So, I say, "Is that your signature on that contract?" and they say "Yes, it is." And I say "Sorry, I can't get you out of it. You should have let me see the contract first, before signing it."

It just amazes me when I see associations sign six or seven figure contracts without the association's counsel reviewing the contract first. And often times the contract is missing simple terms like a starting date, a completion date, the exact scope of the work, the materials to be used, etc.

Sometimes clients will come in and complain that the job is taking too long. So, in the contract, I'm looking for a promised completion date and a monetary penalty for each day the contractor goes over. It turns out, that's not in the contract either.

I also hate it when the client tells me they paid for the entire job up front. What incentive does the contractor have to finish your project if he or she has already been paid in full? Why didn't you get a warranty? Who pays for permits?

In any event, I know you want to spruce up the place. I know you have a lot of pent up energy because we have been in the house for a year. But slow down. Have your counsel take a look at that contract before you sign it. If you don't ----- your rights and remedies can be severely limited and if you thought you felt frustrated during Covid.....

**GLAZER & SACHS P.A.**


**Eric Glazer**  
Attorney at Law

*Also admitted in New York  
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**BIG NEWS ABOUT MY BLOGS!**



As you know, I have been writing a blog 50 times per year for the last 10 years. That's over 500 columns that have spoken about virtually every aspect of community association living. Our readers love it. The only complaint about the blog was that it was not searchable by topic. It was difficult to find a specific blog about a specific topic. Not anymore!

From now on, by going to either the website for Glazer and Sachs, or by going to the website for Condo Craze and HOAs, you can click on our BLOG link --type a few key words in the search bar- and find a blog about a topic of your choice. You also still have the option to scroll through all our blogs in chronological order.

It's just another way our firm tries to make the law accessible and enjoyable to everyone with an interest in community association law, whether you're a Board member, owner, manager or service provider. We hope you enjoy reading them half as much as we enjoy writing them.

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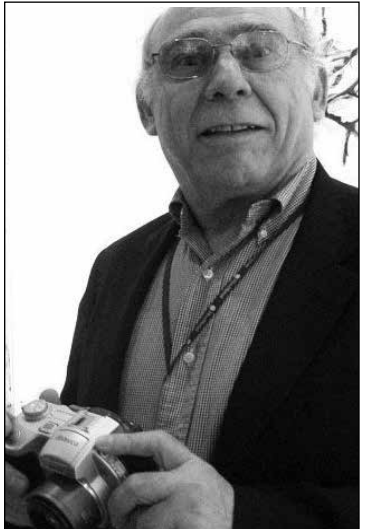
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**SPOTLIGHT ON...**

It has been a while since we had a "spotlight on" article in Inside Hillcrest. If you know someone who lives here that has had an extraordinary life or if you would like to share the improvements that your board has done in your building (see above), we would love to print it. When we share knowledge, it makes us all smarter about how to manage and improve our buildings.

I rarely write about individual board member but it is also rare that a board members serves for 23 years without making enemies. I have known Lynne Gurst, in Hillcrest 27, for about 20 of those years, way before I moved to 27. I have worked with her since I got into Real Estate in 2005. Every building has someone that is in charge of Real Estate which involves dealing with Realtors/Mortgage Companies/Title Companies when a unit is sold. Few have developed the stellar reputation with agents/brokers/attorneys that Lynne has. Her approach is to not only help buyers navigate the buying process but she always treats them like future neighbors and makes them feel welcome. It is a unique perspective and has earned Hillcrest 27 the respect of all the professionals involved in sales transactions. So many realtors and attorneys who routinely work Hillcrest have expressed their gratitude for her work that I had to let her know that we are all sorry to see her go.

Big shoes to fill? Yes! But Lynne is the type of person who – no matter what – puts the building needs above her own ego. She will continue to help whoever is in charge of Real Estate learn what she knows and she is also humble enough to step back and let them make changes if they feel they have a better way. After putting a few people in the position, I think the board has finally found a good replacement.

And I can honestly say that Lynne and I have not had one argument or disagreement in the 20 years I have known her. We have had way more than that! Some of them were knock-down-drag-out "I'll never speak to you again". But you know what? Lynne is one of those exceptional people who do not carry a grudge (although she sometimes says she will). As soon as civility returns to the relationship, she is a forgive and forget kind of person. Rare...and appreciated.

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Thanks to Marcia Skupeika from Building 23 for this info. Now that we can get out and about, this may be the answer to our quarantine weight gain. If finally getting your hair cut didn't knock off at least 5 pounds this past year, try this!

**Re: TOPS Taking Off Pounds Sensibly**

I started going to TOPS to lose some of this Covid 19 weight. I found a wonderful group very close to our Hillcrest Community and thought perhaps we could share this resource with our Hillcrest neighbors in the newsletter. These members are mostly our age and lovely to be with. We meet at 3:30 p.m. every Thursday at the address noted below. Dues are \$3 weekly and onetime fee of \$32 annually for participation, seminars, education, bimonthly magazine and lots of love and support. Men and Women welcome. I have shared this with a few people who are enjoying this venue of no pressure, no shame just support and encouragement.

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## HOPE FOR THE MODERN WORLD - BY SISTER CHRYSIA, SUBMITTED BY ETTA STEVENS



The world appears to be topsy-turvy at present. Everything is upside-down, the wrong way around. And so instead of the *right being might*, it seems wrong is strong. We look around at the greedy taking from the needy and thriving. We see people making merry from wealth easily and unlawfully gained. Fear and tension in the atmosphere grow from 'decades of lies'. With the pandemic we feel isolated and uncomfortable in public with 6 feet of social distancing separating us, finding it difficult to breathe and communicate behind our masks. Wrong has become powerful today. "Right is might" is questioned when innocent bystanders and non-violent leaders are killed, eliminated at the peak of their lives. The memory remains of the lives, work, and words of those courageous and determined men and women who dared to stand with the truth of goodness. The truth is that Truth never remains hidden.

We now see that negativity, vices, and stress have been uninvited guests in our lives creating havoc physically and mentally. They have been with us for such a long period that sometimes it felt natural, but now we must say goodbye and part ways. Many believe that happiness is achieved through material wealth, "Am I what I have? I have wealth, a good profession, and many talents. If I did not have all these things, would I still exist?" "If my beautiful body becomes not so beautiful, would I still exist?" The things that we feel proud of are the things that we may one day be without. So, what do we have to be proud of? *Our thoughts and our character are the two things that remain with us.* Am I proud of the type of thoughts I have? And my character, my personality, is it so spotless and clean; because when the character is lost all is lost! Presently, morality at a leadership level is defined as, "How could the bar for shame be set so low?" as lust continues to make prominent people fall in their quest for power, wealth, and popularity. We sometimes have the habit of letting go of our mind, so we must train it well and not mix truth and untruth. Live now in this present moment and forget everything about the past. Remove the awareness "this is mine and this is yours". A truly rich person is not someone who has more but someone who desires less.

The wealth of lasting happiness comes from appreciating what we have, what we are, what life gives us at every moment, and what we give.

During these unprecedented times, adversity can strike at any moment. Resilience helps us quickly find the strength and clarity to tackle

what comes. Will power helps resilience grow by overcoming obstacles. With each success, our resilience increases and at the time of need strengthens us. As the world is experiencing the age of 'new normal', it is time to form a new, stable relationship with God and goodness, and make our minds and lives into stress-free, peaceful free zones. Keep your mind with God, the One who has the right and might to transform lives riddled with impurities into lives filled with peace and pure love. *When Right is Might*, wrong becomes so weak it disappears. What is upside down once again turns right side up.

In the modern world - wealth, status, and power have become important symbols of happiness. They can be genuine blessings and not irrelevant, but only if they help us feel joyful. It is important to understand how we can consciously create efforts towards attaining these goals, while also staying happy and content at the moment. Materialistic success is only one aspect of life. There are many other dimensions of life that can give us joy and satisfaction. This awareness can free us from becoming addicted to the attention and approval from others that often come along with being successful on a materialistic level. In order to overcome the stress of contemporary life, we first need to re-experience our original virtue of happiness. We can do this by defining what is really important to us and what isn't. We can then find enjoyment and purpose in our actions, and learn to reward ourselves, irrespective of its social relevance and regardless of external circumstances.

Nothing is bad, nothing is wrong. Everything is as it should be. I am learning to drift with the 'all' and 'everything' of life. This life's drama and is always accurate.

Meditation fills us with these qualities and powers very easily. This is because meditation is a beautiful relationship and connection with the Supreme Source of spiritual energy and power - God. God is full of those qualities and powers and never loses them ever, unlike us, who need to fill ourselves when we lose them.

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