

# Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



DECEMBER 2019

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

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## DECEMBER INSIDE HILLCREST

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Happy Holidays everyone! Hillcrest is always more beautiful with all the added lights and decorations! Many buildings did some major remodeling and/or landscaping over this past year and our community just keeps getting better and better!

For those of you who are new to Inside Hillcrest, our advertisers are tried and true. Not just anyone can advertise in IH – they need to be recommended by residents OR personally known to us. Here is a nice note from a reader who used **Steib's/Cohen** (page 5) to sell some coins: "Just read 'Inside Hillcrest'...nice job as usual. I don't remember if I told you but am reminded as I saw your adv for Mike Higgins...a month or so ago we sold him \$10,000 worth of silver coins that were kicking around and can attest to his business acumen as well as his pleasant demeanor. We saw the adv in an earlier issue of 'I H' so that works for sure. We liked it because he came here and we didn't have to haul it all to a shop. Not only that, but we had some other stuff that he didn't know the value of at the time so took it to his shop, figured it all out and sent us a check for that part too. Nice to do business with honest people." - JB

Speaking of advertising, Brian Gaiefsky and I advertise in IH also, for our **Keller Williams Realty A Team Florida**. I didn't mention it on the front page of last month's cover but we did include our award for "**Best of Hollywood**" for Real Estate in our ad (page 11). Thank you to everyone who called and/or emailed your congratulations! You guys really do read IH from cover to cover... thank you for that also! The most rewarding part of this type of reward is how many votes came from other local Realtors. It is a tough business and our peers are a big part of our success. "The greatest success is helping others succeed and grow."- Amy Rees Anderson

### REAL ESTATE TIPS

We have some Real Estate tips for sellers starting on page 10. However, this is the time of year we are focused on buyers. Most of

our buyers want to close before the end of the year so they can homestead their property so the majority of our closings are with buyers right now. But once you work with the A Team, you cannot get rid of us! Right now, we are contacting all of our buyers this year to remind them to file for Homestead Exemption. It is not a difficult process but it can be daunting for our clients who are not computer-savvy or who speak limited English. For most of our condo buyers, their tax bill can be reduced 20% or more if their condo is their permanent residence. Even for our home buyers at a higher price point, saving a few hundred is nothing to sneeze at as they say. **If you bought your home or condo during 2019 and made it your permanent residence, whether you used us as your Realtors or not, call us if you need help filing for Homestead exemption at 8-HILLCREST.**

One word of warning: if your home or condo is NOT your permanent residence (either you rent it out or you are a seasonal resident, do NOT be tempted to file for homestead exemption. We had one client who owned a home in Connecticut and spent winters here for several years. The BCPA caught up with her and her back taxes and fines totaled \$27,000.00!

Another real estate tip that has become more important is getting the proper permits to do work in your home or condo. We had a client who put in a new water heater 4 years prior without a permit. When she went to sell, the buyer agent was wise enough to do a permit search. Oops! Her back fees and fines totaled \$1225.00! I asked if she could just put in a new water heater which at the time including permits would have cost \$875.00 and was told "Too late". Recently I saw a complete remodel sell for over market value (cash buyer) and there were NO permits pulled for the work! The buyer agent was

either a rookie or didn't want to rock the boat and lose her commission. Hopefully the buyer does not sell anytime soon. Yes, the buyer is responsible for the permit fees now that the title has been transferred.

I never understand why buyers are not more careful when they choose an agent. The seller pays the commissions so why not hire experience Realtors who have the integrity to care more about your money than theirs?

### SPEAKING ABOUT CARING

You all know I love a good quote and this is one of my favorites. "Helping one person might not change the world, but it could change the world for one person."

We try and support your building board members who are often burdened with unit owner issues outside their purview such as having to step in when a resident is having age-related or mental health issues. It is not a part of the board's job to watch out for the personal well-being of residents but most do. In fact, most buildings have one person who is dedicated to keeping an eye or ear out for red flags so he/she can step in and help when needed. Many times, we use our advertisers as resources. Their business cards are all on page 19 to use as a handy reference.

### OFFICER W. BRETT HAMMAKER

Thanks to Officer Tomas Hernandez who served as our Neighborhood Team Leader for Hillcrest for many years. At the November HLC meeting (notes inside), we met our new NTL **Officer Brett Hammaker**. We were all extremely impressed and I believe we all felt a little safer knowing we are in good hands once again. PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THE POLICE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER - **(954) 764-4357**. This is the number to use if you see something suspicious. ALWAYS call 911 if you see something actually happening.

### A PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT

Holidays are fun and exciting for most of us. We get to reconnect with family. My son Dean and daughter-in-law Kristyn came over for an early Thanksgiving dinner – both had to work on the actual holiday) and I found out I am going to have another grandchild due on my daughter's birthday in July!



Continued on Pg. 4

## NOVEMBER 18 HLC MEETING NOTES - by Steve Schneider

The two new clubhouses on Hillcrest Drive have been closed for repairs, people attending a recent meeting of the Hillcrest Leadership Council learned. Pulte, the construction company responsible for the Parkview at Hillcrest upscale development, built the large clubhouse for Parkview owners and the small clubhouse for Hillcrest residents. The clubhouses were closed for the past few weeks, according to Betty Merk, a member of the Hillcrest Compliance Committee. She informed attendees at the Nov. 18 HLC meeting that carpet was removed from the two clubhouses and is being replaced. It will reopen sometime in January 2020. On a more positive note, Merk noted the nearby tennis courts and building remained open for everyone to use.

Cindy Abraham, founder and Secretary of the HLC, discussed the importance of Hillcrest unit owners organizing now as Pulte gets closer to turning over control to the people who live in the new development. The first Parkview resident has been appointed to the Parkview Homeowner Association at Parkview, with more owners joining the HOA when more homes and townhomes are sold.

Abraham said it is important for Hillcrest and Parkview at Hillcrest owners to hold Pulte, the developer, accountable for construction-related improvements before Pulte completes its work. Once that happens, she said, Pulte will be gone. That change means Parkview owners may have to pay for anything not completed and agreed to between Pulte officials and Hillcrest representatives. At some point Parkview and Hillcrest owners will meet to discuss issues affecting the two communities; our 24 Hillcrest Condominiums and the 645 home/townhomes of Parkview.

Merk has communicated with Pulte representatives in her role as a member of the Hillcrest Compliance Committee. She told the audience that the land swap between Pulte and Tobin will happen soon after City Hall holds a third reading on the transfer and paperwork is prepared. The land behind Building 15 has been fenced in and still requires clean up.

On other matters, Merk said Pulte has seeded the park area shared by Parkview and Hillcrest owners. She added Pulte landscapers will monitor the grass to make sure it is growing properly. Fencing is going up for the area between buildings 24 and 26, and gates are being designed to fit the specific sizes of the entrances to the park area and they are projected to be installed this month. Gate access will be via a keypad punch code. Building presidents will be responsible for giving unit owners the punch code numbers. Merk added the park area will not have lighting. She also said Pulte is getting ready to install benches and garbage cans. Anyone with questions or concerns can contact her at [bettymerk1@gmail.com](mailto:bettymerk1@gmail.com).

After the meeting, a Pulte official emailed Merk with answers to other questions raised at the meeting. Here are the questions and answers:

1. Are there plans for lights in the park? Bocce ball? Mini golf? - to which I answered no. Please confirm. Also, a playground will be built but I believe it's only for Parkview. RICH KASSER, land development project manager: The playground is going to be near the clubhouse on the Parkview side. It will be for younger children. I'm not sure whether it will be open to everyone or just Parkview.
2. Will there be another Gazebo built? If yes, where? RICH KASSER: No new gazebos will be built.

3. Timing on the benches and waste containers? RICH KASSER: They are on back order now, so it should be early January.
4. The water in the lakes doesn't look healthy - very green. Is it being checked? Also, is it being used to water the park? RICH KASSER: I'll check it out. Certain areas in the park are being irrigated by reclaimed water.
5. Will the pickle ball courts get lights? RICH KASSER: I believe there are lights at the pickle ball courts. If they are not functional, let me know.
6. Will there be WIFI in the Clubhouse? RICH KASSER: I can find this out for you.
7. Interesting one...there is purple fruit on bushes that were planted that look like plums? Are they edible? RICH KASSER: I would advise against eating this fruit. I do not know if it is edible or not.
8. On the park side there is pavement going up to the gates but on the Hillcrest side it will not continue. Correct? If the Association would like to pay for a continued path, would Pulte/or the contractor consider this? RICH KASSER: We can have our contractor work with each building if they would like to extend the path on their side, however the cost will be the responsibility of each building or association.
9. Once the houses are all finished, will the walkways be redone? RICH KASSER: If walkways need to be repaved or repaired, it will be taken care of.
10. There are some lights installed behind building 21? When will they be functioning? RICH KASSER: I need to look into this.

Also in attendance was Officer William(Brett) Hammaker, our new Neighborhood Team Leader for Hillcrest and Hollywood Hills. Officer Hammaker said although Hillcrest is historically a low-crime area, he encourages residents "if you see something, say something" to keep it that way. For non-emergencies of anything that looks suspicious, call **(954) 764-4357** . Continue to call 911 for emergencies.

To protect against car break ins, Officer Hammaker reminded people to lock their cars and take personal property with them. Many of these crimes are crimes of opportunity – if the thief does not see anything of value in the car, most often they move on. Officer Hammaker advised attendees that he can request additional patrols of Hillcrest if unit owners report a significant problem to him. His email address is [whammaker@hollywoodfl.org](mailto:whammaker@hollywoodfl.org).

Margit Larriviere, the owner of Magnolia Cleaning Solutions, told attendees about her services. You can reach her at (754) 551-4536 or [magnoliacsolutions@gmail.com](mailto:magnoliacsolutions@gmail.com).

People also learned about the waste removal and recycling services offered by Republic Services. Saula Moquette, an account manager, said she aims to beat rates set by competing companies. Currently Republic services three Hillcrest buildings. You can reach her at (954) 327-9532 or [smoquette@republicservices.com](mailto:smoquette@republicservices.com).

Abraham introduced Larriviere and Moquette after announcing the HLC was working on updating its list of Hillcrest preferred vendors.



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## SPOTLIGHT ON HILLCREST 19 – BY STEVE SCHNEIDER



Black Friday came to Hillcrest, and all through Building 19, residents were sleeping in, leaving for a major shopping spree or even going to work on the day after Thanksgiving.

Downstairs, a handful of children, off from school, met in the lobby to decorate their building for the holiday season. Some parents also pitched in, with one father watching as he sipped a can of coke.

Jazmine Jean, a 20-year-old college student spearheaded the effort, and Sandy Goldstein, the building property manager enthusiastically embraced the idea. Jean is a veteran building holiday decorator. At about 9:30 a.m., she noted, the younger children would be downstairs to help with the Christmas and Hanukkah preparations. She added, the older children work fast so

*Continued from Pg. 1*

My daughter Jennifer & son-in-law Aaron surprised us with tickets to the Florida/FSU game over the weekend and flew to Gainesville from Denton, TX with my 10-year old granddaughter Zowie. Jennifer's dad and 2 half-brothers all live in Gainesville so it was a nice family get-together. The long drive there and back was a little tedious but also nice together time for me and Brian.

More importantly, each member of our family never forgets those for whom this season is not as fun due to illness or the loss of a loved one. It is a family tradition to reach out and spend some quiet time with friends/neighbors that we know who are ill or grieving. This is the perfect time of year to call on them and just let them talk about how they are feeling WITHOUT any suggestions or advice.

The reason why professional therapists are often portrayed as doing not much more than saying, "And how does that make you feel?" is because when we let someone talk it out, the answers that are best for them COMES from them. How about we all make it a point to reach out to one friend/neighbor in Hillcrest and make that connection? Talk about the perfect holiday gift! I promise you will get as much comfort and joy out of it as they do.

### LAUGHTER IS AN INSTANT VACATION

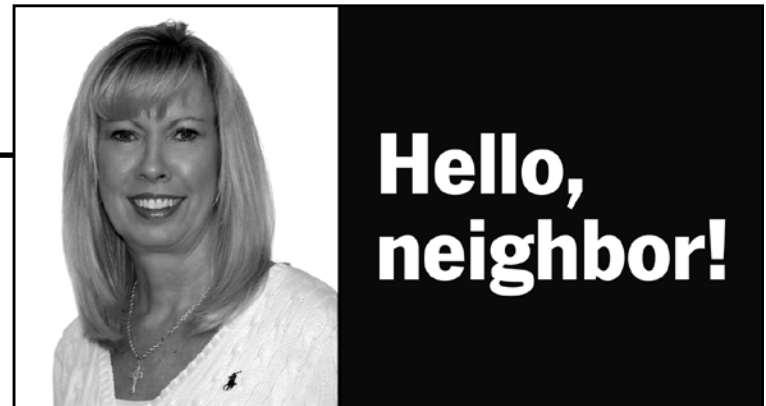
And won't we all need one after this year! Yes, January is bi-annual our joke issue so when you hear a good one at a holiday cocktail party, please share. Email to [inside.hillcrest@comcast.net](mailto:inside.hillcrest@comcast.net).

they can get to the cookies and pastries that they share when they complete their mission. Soon enough, Christian reported for duty. He emptied a box full of Hanukkah ornaments. Christian placed the electric Menorah on a table near the front door to the building. He has helped decorate for each of his several years living at Hillcrest 19.

Sandy Goldstein, the property manager, told Christian, "It's all yours. Be creative and do whatever you want." She also told a guest how much she enjoyed watching children – younger and older, many from different backgrounds – working together on a common objective. Meanwhile, Felipe worked nearby, hanging lights and balls and trinkets on the Christmas tree which rests diagonally across from the Menorah so both greet people as they enter the building.

Across the lobby, near the elevator, Jazmine hung stockings and other colorful decorations. Mercedes Martinez, the Association treasurer, encouraged her son Marco to help. "He has no choice," she joked. Martinez has pitched in for seven years, which Sandy Goldstein said is the amount of time the residents have gathered to add holiday cheer to the common area of their home.

The holiday lobby festivities came after Hillcrest 19 conducted a Thanksgiving food drive. Next up: an annual toy drive in time for the upcoming holidays.



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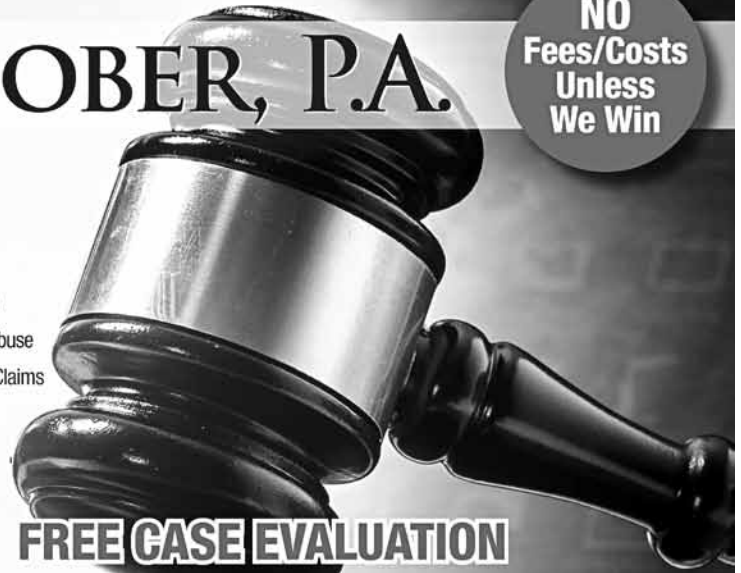
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## HOLIDAY STRESS MANAGEMENT TIPS

**Your Holiday Self-Care Checklist** - Therapy for Real Life | Anna Lindberg Cedar – contributed by David Treece, our trusted Financial Advisor who has helped so many of our Hillcrest Residents

The holidays are upon us, which brings a lot of happy celebrations. The holidays can also bring a lot of difficult emotional triggers, such as painful memories, grief for family members who can't be with us, or challenging dynamics with family who are with us. Use this checklist to plan your self-care so that you can enjoy the upcoming holidays to their fullest.

### 1. Take time for yourself.

It is easy to feel lost or overwhelmed during all of the holiday hubbub. Even if you are not at home for the holidays, plan ways to make space and time for yourself to decompress. Seek out a quiet space from time to time where you can collect your thoughts and re-center yourself as need be.

### 2. Connect with the breath.

The holiday season can trigger all kinds of anxiety: social anxiety, performance anxiety, worry about family interactions, or just plain old holiday stress. Tuning in with your breath will give you a good sense of your anxiety level. Is your heart racing or breathing quickened? Then, it is probably a good time to slow down with some deep breaths. Breathe gently and deeply in moments of holiday stress, giving yourself permission to let go of all of the distractions around you to just breathe – even if only for a moment.

### 3. Be mindful about drug and alcohol use.

The holidays are filled with fun gatherings and parties, which sometimes also means lots and lots of alcohol will be around. You may feel tempted to use drugs and alcohol to take the edge off of holiday stress, or as a form of joyful celebration. Should you decide to use drugs and alcohol, try being mindful and intentional about your use. Pick a personal limit that feels healthy and realistic. Check in with yourself before your next glass to make a conscious decision about your use and to know when it is time to take a break.

### 4. Practice a healthy relationship with food.

You might feel subtle or not-so-subtle peer pressure to stuff your belly with all of those delicious holiday treats. Find balance for yourself by enjoying special holiday food, while also paying attention to your body's cues of hunger, fullness, and satiation. Check in with yourself from time to time to ask whether you are eating because your body is hungry, or whether you are eating out reaction to some form of stress. Food has restorative and nutritive qualities, but food can also take its toll as easily as drugs and alcohol if you are feeling out of control with what you eat. Treat yourself, and also respect yourself in the process by maintaining a healthy relationship with food.

### 5. Take care of yourself during difficult interactions with family.

The holiday season often means being in spaces with people who you may not see the rest of the year. Sometimes this means seeing family or individuals who you would rather avoid because of past hurts. Pay attention to difficult family dynamics and take steps to get the support that you need. Consider having a special self-care buddy, someone who you can check in with either in person or over text to talk about how you are feeling. The crisis text line is another support that you can use if you are not sure who to reach out to in a moment of stress.

### 6. Make room for grief during the holidays if you are missing loved ones who have died.

Consider making a place at the table, having a moment of silence, or sharing favorite memories of loved ones who you are missed during the holiday season. Joy and sadness can exist in the very same moment, so leave room for both as much as you need.

### 7. Remember that holiday stress will pass.

Keeping a strong sense of self during the holiday season will give you a sense of consistency and security during the ups and downs of the holiday season. Enjoy this time, while knowing that the stress of this season will eventually come to a close. Be kind to yourself.

**Happy holidays!**



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# December Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham

When our dear friends Don and Linda Washburn celebrated their 41st anniversary at our house for dinner, I remembered that Linda is a GREAT cook. So instead of making a traditional dinner, I made several appetizers that I wanted to test for Inside Hillcrest. What better judges than two people who know tasty food? We had five appetizers that I had never made before and 2 soups that have been favorites of ours for years; "comfort food" for the stressful holidays. Speaking of stress, I am sure you know to prep and assemble all ingredients before you start a recipe – it makes timing a breeze.

The appetizer recipes may sound "Frou-Frou" but the only exotic ingredients you may not have on hand are smoked fish, Caviar, phyllo cups, speck and Labneh – (Lebanese yogurt which is way better than Greek yogurt - of course, I am biased). It makes every spread usually made with cream cheese or sour cream richer and more delicious. Phyllo cups are in the freezer department of any major supermarket. And I am not kidding when I say that I will be happy to give you any spice you need so you don't have to buy a whole bottle to try my recipes. Call me at **8-HILLCREST**. The best place to buy speck/prosciutto, smoked salmon or any type of cheese is Aldi's – and most of the other ingredients!

## SMOKED FISH SPREAD – goes great with rye crackers

1 ½ cups Labneh  
(Lebanese yogurt) –  
available at Damascus  
Food Market, 57th and  
Hollywood Blvd)  
2 TBS minced shallot  
3 TBS EVOO  
2 tsp caraway seeds  
3 thinly sliced scallions  
(save some of the green  
part for garnish)  
Salt and pepper to taste  
12 oz. smoked trout or salmon FILLET skinned and the meat flaked  
into large pieces.



In a medium bowl combine all ingredients except the smoked fish. Mix well and then gently fold in the flaked fish. Garnish with scallions and serve at room temperature.

## GOAT CHEESE PHYLLO CUPS WITH FIG JAM (you can use full fat Feta if you don't like goat)

Bake 6 large or 24 mini-  
phyllo cups ahead of time  
according to package  
directions and let cool  
completely.  
8 oz softened goat cheese  
4 oz softened butter  
4 oz whole-milk ricotta  
1 tsp lemon zest  
½ tsp Herbs de Provence  
Topping: Fig Jam or  
Chopped dates



Mix everything together in a medium bowl. Divide between phyllo cups and top with a dollop of fig jam. Serve at room temperature.



## CAVIAR MOLD – spray a small mold pan with non-stick

Bottom layer – mix together:

4 large chopped hard-boiled eggs

1 TBS mayonnaise

1 TBS sour cream

½ tsp salt

2nd layer:

1 cup chopped red onion rinsed in ice water, drained and dried in paper towels

3rd layer – mix together:

8 oz softened cream cheese

¼ cup thinly sliced fresh chives

Top with:

2 oz. caviar

Refrigerate for two hours and unmold on to a serving plate and serve with crackers. I couldn't get it to 'mold' so in the future I would use a see-through glass bowl and just serve it in the bowl.

## SPICY CLAM DIP (Makes less than a cup so double if needed)

1 6.5 oz chopped clams (reserve  
clam liquor)

2 oz softened cream cheese

¼ cup sour cream or yogurt  
(preferably Labneh)

1 ½ TBS grated shallot

½ tsp lemon zest

½ TBS lemon juice

1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

½ tsp salt

1 tsp clam liquor

Topping: hot sauce if desired

Mix first two ingredients in a medium bowl until smooth. Gently stir in remaining ingredients. Refrigerate at least 1 hour (up to 8). Top with hot sauce before serving at room temperature. Goes great with potato chips or crackers.



## SPECK WRAPPED HARICOTS (or skinny green beans) 30 minutes from start to finish

3 Quarts Water

¼ cup kosher salt divided

\*\*4 TBS date or unsulfured molasses





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# HILLCREST STATE OF THE MARKET – NOVEMBER 2019

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



We are down to 52 units on the market in Hillcrest. Closed sales for November fell to 9 – that is something I have not seen in years. All but two sold within 2 months.

Only three units went under contract last month. In the past 6 months, TWENTY-FOUR listings expired. This is a sure sign that you are doing something wrong. Number one is always price. But as you know, if you follow our advice and are willing to invest in your unit, we can more than make it up to you in your sales price. EVERY client who has made the changes we suggested ended up with a bigger bottom line when they sold – and they sell quickly. We will never suggest changes that will not yield a return on your investment. In fact, if the unit is original, many times you should do nothing. However, if it is in great shape, painting and flooring could get you a few thousand more.

And remember, one of the things that sets us apart from other agents is that we are willing to front our clients the money to make the changes. They pay us back at closing and are happy to do so.

Of the nine sales, four were 2/2 units (no corners) that ranged from 117K to \$159,250. Five of the sales were one bedroom units that ranged from 59K to 93K. Notice how broad the spreads are. It is all about remodel. One easy way to estimate the price of your unit is to take the highest sale of a similar unit, deduct 10% (complete remodels sell for over market value) and then deduct what it would cost you to make your unit look like that. I can assure you that is what buyers do. Be sure not to compare your unit to other listings. List price is a wish list, closed sales are real data.

We are running into sellers with expectations that just do not pan out. Unfortunately, what you paid for the unit or how much you put into it is irrelevant. Market value varies from year to year. All a buyer cares about is price and condition in TODAY’S market. It doesn’t matter if you paid 200K for a 2/2 convertible in 2006 or 32K for a 1 bedroom in 2012 (real numbers). The first one recently sold for 145K and the second recently sold for 89K.

The sad fact is that the 2/2 was completely remodeled by the seller since paying that high price. The 1/1/1 was updated a bit but the kitchen was still mostly original.

If you have weird colors, clutter and/or cigarette or pet odors, you have a problem. At the very least, you need

Building	Unit #	B/B	SF	Orig. List	Final List	Sold	DOM
Hillcrest 20	605	2/2	1,100	169,000		159,250	26
Hillcrest 2	404	2/2	990	149,000		120,000	16
Hillcrest 25	620	2/2	1,250	144,900	139,000	125,000	54
Hillcrest 26	305	2/2	1,132	135,000	124,000	117,000	96
Hillcrest 4	301	1/1/1	771	97,900		93,000	123
Hillcrest 17	105	1/1/1	775	94,500		88,000	2
Hillcrest 19	611	1/1/1	810	92,500	91,500	85,000	287
Hillcrest 1	108	1/1/0	700	75,000		75,000	50
Hillcrest 5	108	1/1/0	690		61,000	55,000	17

to paint, hire a stager and get rid of the smell. We have an odor removal system that we own so we can take care of that for our sellers. It works but after that, no more smoking inside and they need to board the dogs/cats with a friend until it sells. The good news is that if they do as we say, it will sell fast; especially now with so little inventory.

**Call us at 8-HILLCREST or email us at [info@ATeamFlorida.com](mailto:info@ATeamFlorida.com) to find out your unit’s true market value and to learn strategies to get top dollar for your condo sooner rather than later.**

## REAL ESTATE TIPS FOR SELLERS

– by *Cindy Abraham*

### THE LISTING WAITING GAME

Although homes tend to sell twice as fast as condos locally, a condo should sell within 60 days if it is priced right according to its condition and location, especially now with few Hillcrest condos on the market. Buyers are value savvy thanks to the internet but we still have sellers who stubbornly insist on listing over market value either because they overpaid for their unit or they just have the idea that theirs is superior to everything else on the market. It is true that over-the-top remodeled condos can sell for over market value, but condos that need any work at all will not. ShelterZoom and Propeller insights surveyed 1,000 U.S. home sellers to find out how long their property would have to sit on the market before they were willing to lower the price:

- **One week: 3.5%**
- **One month: 19.7%**
- **Three months: 33.2%**
- **Five months: 17%**
- **One year: 9.4%**
- **More than a year: 5%**
- **Will not lower the price: 12.3%**



Side note: In an ascending market, sometimes the market “catches up” with the list price. However, we are entering a balanced market. Where before Florida properties were going up 6.3% each year, in 2020 our market is projected to go up only 3.7%. In a condo, you need to add up your monthly expenses: maintenance fees, electric and taxes and see if it is worth accumulating these expenses rather than listing at market value for a faster sale.

*Continued on Pg. 12*

*Love Where You Live!*



**We want to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to our clients and peers for honoring us with the Our City 2019 Best of Hollywood Realtor award.**



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We handle **ALL** the details from the initial offer to the final negotiations. A Team Florida has helped South Floridians over the last 15 years. Put us to work and see how we can help you!

If you need to downsize or upsize we are in the business of helping families love where you live! We strive to help Veterans and renters achieve and make affordable homeownership a reality. We work with only the top lenders to get you pre-qualified. This call is free, the information is priceless.

**NOVEMBER 2019 PARKVIEW  
STATE OF THE MARKET**

**PARKVIEW AT HILLCREST  
MLS ACTIVITY**

**www.ParkviewatHillcrest.com**

Remember that these Parkview at Hillcrest market reports are **ONLY** homes that are listed in the MLS and sold through a Realtor – not through the developer. Why hire a Realtor to buy new construction? The better question is why hire Keller Williams A Team Florida to help you buy a brand new home.

Either way the buyer does not pay the agent; the seller (or developer) does. So why go it alone? In most cases, you cannot negotiate a better deal than we can **AND** you have an on site Realtor with a construction background to monitor the day to day building of your new home. You would be surprised at how valuable that is. That being said, November was a light month for MLS listed Parkview at Hillcrest homes:



ACTIVE LISTINGS	#B/B	Sq. Ft	Original List Price	Current List Price	List Date	Pending Date
4658 Greenway Drive	4/3/0	2569	675,998.00	649,998.00	08/26/2019	
1403 Myrtle Oak Terr	4/2/1	2220	499,000.00	525,000.00	10/27/2018	
4113 Mahogany	4/3/0	2164	599,500.00	515,000.00	08/07/2019	
4141 Large Leaf Ln	3/2/1	1905	417,000.00	400,000.00	05/30/2019	
<b>BACK ON THE MARKET / ACTIVE</b>						
4102 Long Leaf Ln	3/2/1	1502	345,000.00		11/26/2019	
<b>PENDING SALE</b>						
4137 Large Leaf Ln	3/2/1	1904	<b>419,999.00</b>	<b>404,999.00</b>	02/15/2019	11/06/2019
<b>Two active listings from last month cancelled:</b>						
4113 Mahogany	4/3/0	2164	530,000.00		08/07/2019	CANCELLED
4103 Black Olive	3/2/1	1920	424,900.00	RENTED FOR \$2700 PER MONTH		

Continued from Pg. 10

### HOME CLOSING CHECKLIST FOR SELLERS

You may already have gathered all the paperwork you need for closing day, but there are a few other tasks to handle before you get to the closing.

- Clean the entire house, including inside drawers and cabinets.
- Close utility accounts and have them shut off on the day of closing.
- Place all keys/fobs (front door, mailbox, pool, etc.) garage remotes, alarm and gate codes, etc. in one place, such as a drawer closest to the refrigerator.
- Create a packet of appliance manuals, service contracts, warranties, etc. and put them in the same drawer.
- Visit [usps.com/manage/forward.htm](https://usps.com/manage/forward.htm) to direct the post office to forward your mail. Also, consider leaving a large, stamped envelope that's addressed to your new home so the buyers can forward any important mail that ends up at your former home.
- Cancel newspaper subscriptions, if you have any.
- Do a final sweep of every drawer, cabinet and surface to make sure you haven't left anything behind.
- Lock up the house, turn off the lights and close the blinds on the way out.
- Make a note to cancel homeowner's insurance after the closing is complete and the title has been transferred or the deed recorded.

### DID YOUR BUILDING ATTORNEY TELL YOU THIS?

If your condo docs call for a range of directors, for example no less than x or no more than y, the number is automatically 5.

That first notice must go out at least 60 days in advance of the annual meeting, by mail, hand delivery or electronically transmitted.

You must hold your annual meeting on the date contained in the bylaws. The courts have held that to have it on a different date requires an amendment to the governing documents.

**The annual meeting is a unit owners meeting and not a board meeting. You do not need a quorum of board members in attendance at the annual meeting. In fact, the Board does not have to show up if it doesn't want to.**

Persons running for the Board can require the association to send to the owners an information sheet containing the candidate's Background, Education and Qualifications.

Unlike an HOA, Condominium owners cannot vote by proxy in board member elections. However, a proxy is valid to establish a quorum and for other issues and referendums.

## HOLIDAY TIPPING GUIDE

Hillcrest has always been gracious about being appreciative to employees that work in our buildings. All but one appreciate their staff so much that they actually print up a list of employees to make it easier for the unit owners to remember those who worked hard to keep their buildings clean and safe during the year. Below are some guidelines for Holiday tips for our cleaning staff, security and maintenance people, as well as our mail and newspaper carriers:

- Security Guards - \$10.00 - \$20.00 depending on how much they do for you, you may even tip more. Don't overlook the overnight security guards and rovers; you may not see them much but they are helping to keep you safe while you sleep! For new people or part timers, \$5.00 - \$10.00 is sufficient.
- Cleaning/Maintenance Staff – minimum \$10.00 - \$20.00 for full time (again, if they do more for you than usual, tip accordingly), \$5.00 - \$10.00 is sufficient for part timers.

- Newspaper Deliverer – \$10.00 to \$20.00 (special service like hanging the paper on the door would warrant the higher tip)
- Postal Carrier – \$10.00 or more, or a small gift
- Office Secretary – a small gift or gift card is most appropriate, however \$ is always appreciated!

### PERSONAL SERVICES

1. Cost of one service (pool, gardener, housekeeper, hair/nail technicians, dog groomers/walkers, etc.)
2. Gift or gift card rather than money is most appropriate for teachers, instructors, office staff, or whenever you are unsure how a monetary gift would be received

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## THIS ONE MADE MY DAY – by Cindy Abraham

Denise Caligiuri who is in the Hollywood Chamber with me has become a dear friend. In fact, we spent Thanksgiving at her house instead of at home which is a first for us! Denise is a firecracker and always fun to be around. I rarely go on Facebook but I saw that she had posted something, so I opened it. Totally worth sharing!

♥ Gracefully Broken!

I was in Dollar Tree the other day, and there was a lady and two kids behind me in the LONG line. One was a big kid, and the other one was a toddler. The bigger one had a pack of glow sticks, and the toddler was screaming for them. The Mom opened the pack and gave him one which stopped his tears. He walked around with it smiling; but then the bigger boy took it, and the toddler started screaming again. Just as the Mom was about to fuss, the older child bent the glow stick and handed it back to the toddler. As we walked outside at the same time, the toddler noticed that the stick was now glowing; and his brother said, "I had to break it so that you could get the full effect from it."

I almost ran, because I could hear God saying to me, "I had to break you to show you why I created you. You had to go through it so you could fulfill your purpose."

That precious child was happy just swinging that "unbroken" glow stick around in the air, because he didn't understand what it was created to do - which was "glow".

There are some people who will be content just "being," but some of us that God has chosen... we have to be "broken." We have to get sick. We have to lose a job. We go through a divorce. We have to bury our spouse, parents, best friend, or our child...

In those moments of desperation, God is breaking us. But... when the breaking is done, then we will be able to see the reason for which we were created. So, when you see us glowing, just know that we have been broken but healed by His Grace and Mercy!!!



## TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WELL

– by Cindy Abraham



Except for Mark Roth's (Hillcrest 26) grandson Tyler, I don't think I ever have gotten a thank-you card from a child for whom I have given a gift. And I give a lot of gifts to my friend's kids. This is weird to me because my kids ALWAYS wrote a thank-you note whenever they received a gift – even birthday presents.

I think one of the things that got my daughter ahead in life was the impression she made on others by taking the time to write personal thank you notes. Most of my adult friends practice this custom. Whenever we invite them to dinner (or they invite us), a written thank you is the norm. Of course, in cases where we are at each other's house for dinner back and forth a lot, we usually text.

"Please" and "Thank You" will never go out of style. You will be doing your children a favor by teaching them to say "Thank You"...with style.

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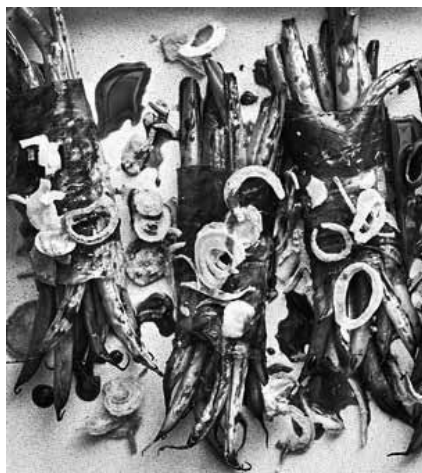
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**"Your Space Refreshed"**



Continued from Pg. 8

\*\*1-1/2 TBS sherry vinegar  
1-1/2 TBS olive oil  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
4 thin speck slices (available at Aldi's) or prosciutto  
1/4 cup fried shallots (or store-bought crispy onions)  
\*\* - I used balsamic glaze mixed with regular molasses.



Preheat oven to 475. Bring water to boil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add salt and return to a boil. Add green beans for about 4 minutes. Drain and put beans in a bowl of ice water for about 3 minutes. Drain and dry on paper towels.

Stir molasses and vinegar or balsamic glaze and molasses in a small skillet, simmer over medium until it reduces to about 1/3 cup, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool 5 minutes.

While you are simmering the glaze, toss the beans with the oil, salt and pepper and divide into 4 bundles on a foil lined baking sheet. Wrap each bundle with speck, seam side down and brush evenly with molasses mixture. Bake for 8-10 minutes in pre-heated oven until ends begin to char, 8-10 minutes.

Arrange on a serving platter, brush with remaining glaze and sprinkle with fried shallots/onions.

### BEEF CABBAGE SOUP

I hadn't made this in years – great meal for a winter day – oops, too late... It was really good but as with all soups/stews, it is better the next day.

1 1/2 lbs. beef cubes (or beef round/chuck cut into 1/2 inch cubes)  
1-2 tsp oil  
4 cups water  
3 beef bouillon cubes  
4 cups finely shredded cabbage (buy the already shredded angel hair cabbage at Publix)  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1/2 green pepper chopped  
1 minced garlic clove  
1/2 tsp dry mustard  
1 large white potato cut into 1/2 inch cubes – peeled or not, your choice  
1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced  
10 oz. corn kernels (canned or frozen)  
Salt & pepper to taste  
Minced parsley for garnish



In a large saucepan or pot, brown beef in hot oil. Add 2 cups of the water, the bouillon, 2 cups of cabbage, onion, pepper, garlic and mustard. Bring to boil. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Add

remaining water and potato cubes. Bring to boil again. Simmer until potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes. Add remaining cabbage and corn. Simmer 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with parsley before serving.

### TURKEY TORTELLINI SOUP - A great after Thanksgiving recipe and a standard in our family because we waste nothing!

4 Quarts water  
One turkey carcass broken into large pieces (and any leftover turkey, skinned)  
1 sliced carrot  
2 cut up celery ribs  
1 bay leaf  
1 small quartered onion  
1/2 tsp dried thyme  
3 parsley sprigs  
1 tsp fennel seeds

1 TBS canola oil  
2 cans cannellini beans drained and rinsed  
1 medium potato, peeled and grated fine  
9 oz. fresh cheese tortellini  
1 medium onion halved and sliced thin  
2 tsp minced garlic  
1 head escarole washed and chopped coarse.  
Topping: freshly grated parmesan

In a large pot, combine the water, turkey carcass, and next seven ingredients. Simmer uncovered for 1 1/2 hours. Scoop out the turkey to cool on a plate, strain the stock and return it to the pot. Strip all the meat from the bones and return to the pot.

In a large saucepan, heat canola oil. Add sliced onions and sauté until soft. Add garlic and sauté 1 minute longer. Lower heat and add escarole. Cover and stir until wilted. Add these ingredients to the stock pot. Stir in cannellini beans, grated potato and tortellini. Simmer for 10 minutes. Serve with parmesan on top.

This is a lot of soup and again, it is better the next day. It can also be frozen in portions.



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# DECEMBER 2019 COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

*by Commissioner Dick Blattner*



An important way to start is to let you know that I have filed papers to run for re-election as your Commissioner in 2020. Our revised website will be up soon. The web address is still the same: [www.dickblattner.com](http://www.dickblattner.com). If you have not been receiving my monthly reports, you'll be able to do so on the revised site in a week or two.

**November Meeting Highlights** - Awarded \$180,000 in grants to eligible social service agencies to provide services to residents. This is a competitive grant process.

**Accepted** a pro-bono project with the Urban Land Institute to develop a leadership institute project for improvement of the community.

**Cancelled** the agreement with the firm that had installed the textile collection boxes for failure to comply with contract.

**Authorized** \$300,000 to Goodyear for tires and related services for our truck fleet.

**Approved** process allowing the Diplomat to proceed with a residential project on the intracoastal waterway across from the hotel.

**Accepted** a federal grant for \$300,000 for advanced training for police officers.

**Approved** roughly \$800,000 for utility work and programs.

**Established** distance separations and other requirement for self-storage facilities.

**Approved** 2020 budgets for CRA districts.

**Development Update** - With great enthusiasm, the Commission approved development of a 433-room, mixed use project on the site of the old Hollywood Bread building. They will save and reuse the sign. This is in a federally approved opportunity zone. Demolition and construction on the site of the Great Southern has begun. There are three residential projects on South Federal Highway that moving through the development process.

**University Station** - This is the area where the shuffleboard courts are. We accepted a public / private proposal from a great developer. Unfortunately, another company sued so the project is on hold. However, the winner has another project on the west side of Dixie Hwy that will begin the process.

**Upcoming December Events (Note: Only Commissioner meeting this month December 5)** - At the December 5 meeting, the commission presented performance evaluations for the City Manager, City Attorney and CRA director. It is always interesting to see how seven of us can see things differently.

**For Commission Meeting Junkies** - For those of you addicted to what the City Commission does and would like to take a closer look, tune to Comcast channels 78 or 79. Or, you can stream from city website by clicking on [Hollywood Commission Meetings](#).

Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy holiday season. This is family time and Bunny and I hope all your gatherings are memorable.

## MARTY KIAR - BROWARD COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER



After your initial application for Homestead Exemption has been made and the exemption approved by our office, it automatically renews each year unless there is a change of ownership or eligible use of the property. Each January, our office mails a Homestead Renewal Notice and "Change-Card" to all Homesteaded properties.

Florida law requires the property owner to notify the Property Appraiser of any change of property use or ownership status, and this Change Order Card provides an efficient way to communicate important changes to our office.

If there are NO changes to the use and/or ownership of the property, simply keep the card as your receipt verifying you were automatically renewed for another year. However, if there are changes, please mark the Change Card accordingly and return it to our office.

If you are a surviving spouse or otherwise believe you are entitled to an exemption, you must file your own Homestead Exemption application to receive the benefit. If you have any questions relating to the death of the owner, the Change Card or need assistance in filing for Homestead or other tax-saving exemptions, please visit

our website at [www.bcpa.net](http://www.bcpa.net) or contact our Customer Service Department at 954-357-6830.

There are other tax-saving exemptions available to qualified individuals. These exemptions and the specific requirements are available on our website at [www.bcpa.net/homestead.asp](http://www.bcpa.net/homestead.asp)

### WHERE DID MY PORTABILITY SAVINGS GO?

A portability deduction is only posted to your property record page the first year you receive your new Homestead Exemption. The portability savings from the first year form the basis of your new Save Our Homes value on a going forward basis and -- in subsequent years -- will rise or fall based upon market just value changes and the 3% cap, as your new Save Our Homes value has incorporated your portability savings. When our website is updated to display subsequent year property values, your portability deduction is no longer shown independently because it is already factored into your new Save Our Homes value.

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).

# THE QUALITY OF MERCY

*BY Brahma Kumaris Aruna Ladva, submitted by etta stevens*

**The quality of mercy is not strained.  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed:  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.**

**- William Shakespeare**

Mercy is not an easy quality to come by. It requires that we have a big heart and an understanding spirit. It is a quality not for the meek, but the strong.

Mercy has always been perceived to be a religious or righteous quality. Hence God has often been referred to as the 'God of Mercy', implying He is the One and only one who can be totally kind and benevolent, who can set aside all wrongdoings and forgive. The title 'Angel of Mercy' is given to those humans who are able to follow suit.

It is perhaps much easier to have mercy for those whom you like and who may be undergoing difficulties, but to have mercy for those who have harmed you, insulted you or betrayed you is indeed a god-like quality. It indicates that you remain in a high stage of self-respect and are not influenced or shaken by the malevolent acts of others. Furthermore, to not cast blame on the perpetrators' reveals a high degree of spirituality.

We need to be merciful not just to others, but also to ourselves. Here are some reasons why...



When we have been hurt, it is important to forgive and to let go. If we do not, it is like holding onto a hot piece of coal and expecting the other to get burnt. It is the quality of mercy that enables us to forgive and to let go. Mercy for the self is wisdom in itself; it enables me to first forgive myself. Mercy for others enables me to forgive them. Finally, I realise that all that happened was toxic and that I cannot hold onto it any longer, for it will make me sick. So best to let go of it and move on peacefully.

To be merciful means to have a loving heart as big as the ocean that accommodates everyone. Mercy does not pick or choose, measure or

weigh, barter or bargain. Mercy means pure love. And when I am able to love in such a way without discrimination, it is the purest feeling ever. I feel free and victorious.

The one who has mercy does not entertain taking revenge in the slightest. The word is not even in their dictionary. They have understood the philosophy of karma well and so do not feel the need to take judgment into their own hands. A merciful soul realizes that two wrongs do not make one right and that only benevolent and well-wishing thoughts can help a soul.

A merciful soul only sees virtues and not vices. They only see greatness and not weakness. They give a hand to uplift, rather than put down one another. Even after being betrayed, the merciful soul is able to see the other with a positive vision, because beauty is in the eye of the beholder!

Most importantly the merciful soul gives and does not want. He/she is so full of taking power from God and following His footsteps, that he/she does not need to beg from anyone. In fact, mercy is almost synonymous with giving. Mercy means to give love no matter what, to give peace when it is needed, to give happiness in light of sorrow, to give help when none is being shown to them. Mercy makes one great! It's Time... to have a big and merciful heart.

The souls of the world are suffering at a rate that is almost impossible to believe. Everyone has a difficult story and some are even more unhappy to comprehend.

As meditators, we can learn to help souls whose paths have become very challenging. I do not even mean with money although that is always something those of us can do and have enough to spare. But MERCY means helping these troubled souls with sending love and light from our eyes to theirs. We can write letters to our service people who cannot be home for the holidays, we can use our power of positive thinking that is learned in the free meditation classes and smile often, say hello to strangers, give blessings to our brothers and sisters across the globe by sending them mercy and compassion for their challenges. And most of all we can help by having mercy and compassion for ourselves first, loving our life and then it is so much easier to give the love and light that is within us to others.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL, AND MAY YOU FIND JOY IN EVERY DAY AND FILL YOUR HEART WITH GOD'S BLESSINGS.**

**Please join us every Tuesday morning, from 10:15 am to 11:30 am throughout the year as well as Tuesday evening from 6:30 pm-7:30 pm. Dania Beach Library classes are on Saturday Mornings at 10:00 am. Join us, it is free, are you?**

**\*Join us at ArtsPark the 3rd Sunday of every month at 6pm for WORLD PEACE Sunday, December 15, 2019 • 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm**

**Bring a chair and a flashlight, see you there.**

**\*MEDITATE@8 CALL IN FOR LIVE MEDITATION**

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\*FOR A FREE THOUGHT OF THE DAY INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE SIGN UP: [http://brahmakumaris.org/interactive/mailling\\_list](http://brahmakumaris.org/interactive/mailling_list)

# ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ CONDO ELECTIONS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As editor of Inside Hillcrest, I do my best to keep up with the building boards; mainly through HLC meetings. Each Hillcrest building is separately managed and each has different rules and definitely unique cultures. I have seen great buildings go bad and struggling buildings become great – and all because of their Board of Directors. Elections are coming up and electing the right people has never been so important. In every building there are unit owners who are unhappy with the current board. Few actually make the effort to run for the board and contribute; many prefer to criticize rather than actually do any work. However, it is even worse when the critic gets elected and constantly finger points at “the old board” or other board members. Creating a negative culture can make condo/HOA living just as bad as mismanagement.

Be careful when new board members want to replace many of your building’s trusted vendors or do away with amenities “to save money”. This is almost ALWAYS a sign that their board position will be used for financial gain – also called “kickbacks”. Big projects will be initiated and all of a sudden you will see huge maintenance fee hikes and yearly assessments. One building passed TWO assessments over the past several years to cover excessive attorney fees; the attorney was as corrupt as the board. And interestingly enough, knowing this, another building got rid of one of the best attorneys in town and hired the same guy...

For several years, our November HLC meeting reviews our list of trusted vendors that past building boards recommended. We distributed the lists before the November HLC meeting so your leaders can add and edit. This list comes in handy when associations need to get bids on maintenance projects. (Unfortunately, we cannot publish a list of the dishonest or incompetent vendors, but we can let you know if we do NOT recommend someone and why.) When in doubt, email [hillcrestleadershipcouncil@comcast.net](mailto:hillcrestleadershipcouncil@comcast.net).



**Rafael P Aquino is the Co-Founder and CEO of Affinity Management Services and a frequent contributor to Eric Glazer’s Weekly Blogs. As we all know, Eric Glazer is a prominent local Condo Attorney. Eric has a weekly one hour radio show for unit owners and board members in Condominiums and HOAs to call in and get answers to their questions. Tune in at noon each Sunday 850 WFTL or go to**

**[www.condocrazeandhoas.com](http://www.condocrazeandhoas.com) for more information.**

## TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY

By Rafael Aquino

Published September 18, 2019

As election season quickly approaches most associations, I wonder how many owners pay attention to the person they are electing to such seat. I’m surprised by the lack of regard most owners have when it comes to an election and who they are appointing. Selecting the wrong individuals to serve on the board can cause some severe impacts to the association and the

culture of the community. I get it, no one wants to work for free; however, the wrong choice can cost you more in the long haul so the selection process should not be taken lightly. What steps can an association take to ensure leadership takes each position seriously?

First, good governance begins with sound policies and procedures. If your documents don’t outline the role of the officers and their responsibilities, this should be the starting point. Second, the selection of board members is recommended to be balanced out with individuals that can play different roles. In doing so, more can be addressed because each member can play to their strength rather than their weakness. Third, committees such as Financial, Grievance, Legal, Security, Insurance etc. should be created. *(Ed note: check your by-laws, they may MANDATE the creation of committees.)*

It is a great way of getting members involved. It can play to the associations benefit as well because these committee members get exposure with the members and eventually can become new board members.

Once you’ve elected such board your job as a member doesn’t end. Remember this is your home and for most your primary investment. It is equally as crucial that once they are appointed that you monitor the actions and the decisions being made. Are they leading the association in a positive direction? Are they conducting themselves in a fashion that is in line with the policies and procedures of the association? If you aren’t asking these questions now, don’t come back a few years down the line complaining about the lousy job they did. You are just as responsible as they are because you had the choice to hold them accountable, and you didn’t.

Remember elections happen every year in most associations; if they don’t perform you can vote them out.







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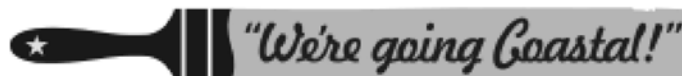
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