



The SCOOP!

Newsletter of the North River Shores Community

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July/August 2008

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2008 NRSPOA Officers, Directors & Committee Chairpersons

Tom Lusty	President
	<i>The SCOOP</i> Editor
Hal Halliburton	V.P., Boat Ramp
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Sean Fenniman	Treasurer
	Finance & Budget
	Insurance Liaison
Trish Littman	Secretary, <i>The SCOOP</i>
Bob Anderson	Social Committee
Pete Meier	Government & Public Relations
Chuck Wallenhorst	Maintenance
	Special Projects, Dredging
George Milne	Nominating
Jason Schwartz	Membership
	Covenants Sign-up
	Communications Monitor

Regular Board meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the First Presbyterian Church on Pine Lake Drive. NRSPOA members are welcome to attend. Any member in good standing (all assessments paid) wishing to address the Board should call 692-3939 and leave a message no later than Noon Friday before the next scheduled meeting. Schedule changes are posted on our web site: www.northrivershoresfl.org. NRSPOA, Inc. does not have a physical office, but may be reached at 692-3939, which is both a voice and fax number.

The SCOOP is published six times a year by the North River Shores Property Owners' Association, Inc. Submissions can be sent to Tom Lusty at acabonactom@aol.com.

Purple Martin County

By Tom Lusty

In March I read an article in the *Stuart News* entitled "The real snowbirds". It was all about purple martins, and the article brought back wonderful memories of when my wife Susan and I were purple martin "landlords" during the mid 70s in southwest Michigan. We lived in the country and I built and put up a wooden 12-compartment martin house. We waited two years before the first martins decided to build their nests there. We had six pairs the first year and twelve pairs thereafter. It was so much fun watching them soar gracefully, and their song is beautiful.

Well, this article prompted me to contact, via their website www.purplemartin.org, the Purple Martin Conservation Association (PCMA). I guess there's an association for everything these days. I immediately joined the association for only \$25 and purchased online an innovative "SuperGourd" martin house pictured above. Members receive discounts on every item in the Martin Market Place (the savings

on my order paid for my membership) plus four issues of the Purple Martin Update magazine each year.

I opted to begin with six gourds, but can add more in the future. The perfect place for the house was attached to one of the pilings on my dock. You need to put the house well away from any obstruction, like a dwelling or trees.

To my surprise, I attracted one nesting pair. They arrived in late March. I was

thrilled to discover two eggs in late April. The eggs hatched and the young fledged in early June. Interestingly, many other purple martins visited my nesting pair, but none chose to build nests in any of the other gourds. They probably had their nests built elsewhere. I often noticed upwards of 15 martins flying around the gourds or sitting on the perches on top of the pole.

One nice feature of the SuperGourd martin house is that

purple martin, continued on page 7.



The Importance of Paying Dues

By Pete Meier

It is important that association members pay their annual dues, also referred to as an "assessment." We also invite all the 165 property owners who are not part of the NRSPOA to make an annual voluntary contribution of the equivalent of the dues (presently \$185/year.) If we all participate, the annual dues for everyone could be much lower. Some neighboring gated communities have dues or assessments ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year. (These gated communities must maintain their own roadways and infrastructure.)

Dues are primarily used to keep up the parks, the boat ramp and the entrance. Lawn maintenance for the parks and entrance costs \$13,000 per year. Also, the NRSPOA carries a \$1 million insurance policy in case of a lawsuit following misadventure during park use. The annual budget is always displayed yearly in The SCOOP. Many non-association members live across from or near our four beautiful parks. The NRSPOA is presently having to add some seawalls to the boat ramp park to combat erosion (cost: about \$10,000) and to dredge the boat ramp canal, which is considered to be common element (about another \$10,000). Whether you do or don't use the park facilities or the boat ramp, the value of these assets enhances the value of all 514 residential lots in NRS.

When it comes time to sell your house, you will be praising these assets to new prospective buyers. When I tell my friends that we have a community boat ramp, they react with envy. All 514 residents are entitled to use the boat ramp. The 349 NRSPOA

members can receive a key when dues are paid, while the 165 non-members can obtain a key by joining the association or by paying a \$185 ramp fee (the equivalent of annual dues.)

One of the members recently called and said, "I thought we voted for the dues to be voluntary?" Not so. In order to maintain the parks, funding through dues is required. For members who do not pay their dues, late fees will be assessed. In the 2007 annual NRSPOA ballot, the power of the NRSPOA to enforce liens against property was removed from the covenants. The NRSPOA has never placed a lien against any member. However; if issues, like non payment of dues, go to small claims court, the courts themselves can apply a lien against any property until the issue is resolved. So, indirectly, liens can still be applied to a property.

Today, we are still undergoing discussions on the board about how to make the covenants fair for everyone. Eliminating dues is not one of the items being discussed. The last thing any of us wants to see is for these parks and boat ramp to become run down and taken over by the county. This would open these facilities to everyone in the county. So, we ask all members to pay their dues on time. And, for those non-members who want to help with the finances of running the development, you can make a \$185 contribution to the NRSPOA. ~

Community Classifieds

Does anyone have a typewriter to sell?
Call Margaret Peterson at 692-9225



Did you know that the North River Shores Property Owner's Association is one the oldest in Martin County? It was established more than 50 years ago to protect the unique living experience offered by our wonderful community. Find out more interesting facts about the NRS community by visiting our website at www.northrivershoresfl.org.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear NRS Residents,

As you are aware, we have elections coming up this year for many local positions, including two School Board positions, School Board Superintendent, three Martin County Commission positions, and more. The primary elections are August 26th and the final vote is in November. I urge you to educate yourself on the issues and vote.

Since I moved here only three years ago, I found that it was sometimes difficult to separate fact from fiction about some of our issues. There is a new grass roots organization called the Martin County Future Group that is working hard to get the facts about our local issues disseminated. There is no cost to join this group, and you can subscribe to the e-mail list that will keep you up to date on local issues, meetings, and decisions. I have found the e-mails from the Future Group to be informative and truthful. Below are some talking points that the Future Group uses to describe itself.

MARTIN COUNTY FUTURE GROUP

Who we are:

We're a collection of citizens who care deeply about Martin County and want to play an active part in the betterment of its future.

Our passions:

Preserving our environment and educating on its stewardship.

Upholding and improving upon our scholastic standards.

Bolstering our economic opportunities.

Demanding open, accountable, responsible behavior from our public officials.

What we're about:

Taking Martin County from a good place to live, and making it a great place to live.

How?

By keeping our members informed, involved and engaged.

By taking – and following up on – positions made with care and consideration.

By welcoming differences of opinions and viewpoints.

By supporting and creating projects with broad-based community benefit.

By consulting and incorporating the wisdom of our elders

By exciting and harnessing the energy of our youth.

What we're not about:


The politics of the past.

Criticism without solutions.

Propaganda, scare tactics and personal attacks.

Litmus tests or requirements of like-mindedness for membership.

For more information, or to join, please visit the MC Future Group website: www.mcfuturegroup.org.

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Sewer Update

By Pete Meier

Phil Keathley of Martin County Utilities provided an update for the NRS vacuum sewer system. As we have reported in the past, the 514 lots in NRS plus approximately 200 surrounding lots (Sylvan Shores, Victory Homes, Sunset Estates, etc.) will be divided into two phases. Phase 1 will be the north section, and Phase 2 the south section. Phil Keathley has tentatively agreed to come to the August 20th NRSPOA board meeting and provide an update.

Phase 1 is well on its way. The site plan is due from the architects by September 15. After the site plan is reviewed and approved by the county, the county will accept bids on the project. Title work by the county has indicated that the church property resides on 11 originally platted NRS residential lots which were amalgamated to create the church parcel. Details are being investigated.

The location of the Phase 1 pump station site within the church property has been changed from its original spot on Pine Lake Drive to a location on the east side of the church property near Quail Circle. The church congregation and governing group unanimously approved having the Phase 1 plant on the church property. Martin County has signed an agreement with the church to proceed with the project.

Martin County has received the executed grant from the state for the grant money. This money is called the 5-5-5 program, where this year \$5 million is committed from each of three organizations for environmental programs in the county. These three

organizations include the State of Florida, the South Florida Water Management District, and Martin County. This grant money is not all allocated to NRS but is being shared by about four other projects in the county. Once a bid is accepted for the NRS Phase 1 project, then better costs can be established per household.


Phil Keathley has also agreed to take NRS residents for a site visit to the existing Palm City facility. Due to limited parking, Phil suggested that groups of 6 to 8 cars might be the best, so perhaps car pools might be in order. If you get a group of neighbors together, please contact Pete Meier. Phil said that he can accommodate groups on most week days except Friday mornings.

There has been little progress on selecting a location of the Phase 2 south site. Martin County Utilities is in the process of looking for a location, one of which includes buying a lot. All recent efforts have been on developing Phase 1.

The South Florida Water Management District is also looking into a program to allow residents to convert their abandoned septic tanks into cisterns to collect rain water for irrigation. Under the present sewer plan, these abandoned septic tanks must be opened and filled with sand. Glen Gareau, NRS resident who works in the South Florida Water Management District, was at the July Board meeting to make a presentation. This idea is in its infancy, so stay tuned. ~



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Recognizing Community Contributors

In May, the Board established three gift categories to allow all NRS residents, whether members of the Association or not, to help pay for the maintenance of our beautiful community. These contributions will be kept in a special fund used exclusively for the upkeep and improvement of our common areas – parks, entrance sign, plantings, boat ramp. We will recognize all donors in The SCOOP issue immediately following receipt of the gift.

Your gift will not only help keep North River Shores an attractive place to live, but it will also help unite our community towards this common goal. Please make your checks payable to NRSPOA, Inc. and mail to: NRSPOA, Inc., c/o The Rizzolo Group, 1958 SE Port St. Lucie Blvd, Port St. Lucie, FL 34952

Our thanks and appreciation to the following persons:

SILVER STATUS: Non-members who gift an amount equal to the NRSPOA annual membership fee (currently \$185). All NRSPOA members who have paid their dues are automatically Silver Status.

GOLD STATUS: Any NRS property owner gifting \$100 to \$199 above the amount of the annual membership fee.

Margaret Peterson
Stacy Stoddard

PLATINUM STATUS: Any NRS property owner gifting \$200 or more above the amount of the annual fee.

Patricia Deerin
Joseph Deerin
Will Kupfrian
Tom Lusty
Donna Wood
Rick Wood

Families Gather for July 4th Bike Parade



The Neighborhood 4th of July Family Bike Parade was a big success! After several days of rain, Friday morning turned out to be sunny and clear and everyone was anxious to get out and enjoy the day. The parade was attended by several families that met at the boat ramp, a very convenient meeting place since there was shade and a nice breeze. The parade route was a short one for the bike riders, but was a little more challenging for the scooter riders and wagon pullers. All in all, everyone had a great time. It was a wonderful way to start the celebration of our national independence. Hope to see even more families participate next year.

— submitted by Colleen Patterson, parade chair

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Neighborhood Watch Report

By Jan Stoorza

Volunteers Needed – Are you aware that every night one or more of your neighbors patrols the entire North River Shores neighborhood by car in an effort to keep our area safe? It takes less than an hour, and many couples report they enjoy the time to talk while they are keeping an eye out for nefarious activity. (The volunteers don't get involved if they observe a crime in progress, but immediately notify the Sheriff's Office and deputies are dispatched.) Currently we don't have enough volunteers – which means that several take two or sometimes three shifts a month. Some winter residents are gone, and others are on extended vacations. Won't YOU volunteer for one night a month? This activity is one more reason North River Shores is a great place to live, and we need your help! If you would like to volunteer, call Jerry or Fred Felton at 692-2729.

"Creeper" Burglaries: At the July County-wide Neighborhood Watch meeting, Laura Passanesi, Community Programs Practitioner of the Martin County Sheriff's Office, cautioned us about "Creeper" Burglaries – burglaries from cars parked in driveways. We were advised to remind our neighbors to lock their car doors (double clicking when necessary to assure that all doors are locked), and to remove tempting valuables (ipods, money, GPS's, sunglasses, etc.). Apparently, the Jensen Beach area is one where a high percentage of these crimes are taking place. We were also reminded to



be alert at the beach, Boys and Girls Clubs, and gyms, where burglars are breaking glass to enter cars when they can see valuables inside. Also be alert for unsecured and easily stolen car keys at gyms. While Martin County does not have the crime problems that some places do, "Creeper" Burglaries are still an issue, and we all should be alert.

Computer COP Software Available: This software has been publicized recently, and shortly FREE copies (while supply lasts) will be available through the Sheriff's Office. It scans a computer and provides owners a method to see if the computer has been used inappropriately. Parents can use it to search what sites have been accessed and protect their children from opportunists, as well as to monitor their children's activities on-line. Call Laura Passanesi for more information at 320-4749. ~



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purple martin, continued from page 1.

it can be lowered by a rope/pulley to allow cleaning of unwanted nests made by sparrows or starlings, and to check on the purple martins' nesting progress.

Over one million North Americans put up housing for purple martins. East of the Rockies, purple martins are totally dependent on human-supplied housing. Martins exhibit site fidelity, meaning that they will return to the site they bred at successfully the previous year, providing, of course, that you maintain the site properly.

Purple martins are the largest member of the swallow family in North America, measuring 7 ½ inches long and weighing 1.9 ounces. They spend their non-breeding season in Brazil then migrate to North America to nest. The first to arrive are termed "scouts" and they will show up in Florida as early as mid January. Sub-adults, the birds that fledged the previous year, will arrive four to eight weeks after the adults. Because my nesting pair arrived in late March, I suspect they were sub-adults nesting for the first time.

People treasure purple martins for their graceful flight, social antics, gurgling song, and insect-eating habits. The pair-bond of the purple martin is monogamous. The male and female cooperate equally in building the nest out of mud, grass and twigs. The female lays two to seven pure-white eggs at a rate of one egg per day. The female incubates the clutch for approximately fifteen days, then the young hatch. The parents both feed the young con-

tinuously for a period of 26-32 days until the young fledge.

Martins, like all swallows, are aerial insectivores. They eat only flying insects, which they catch in flight. Their diet is diverse, including dragonflies, damselflies, flies, midges, mayflies, stinkbugs, leafhoppers, Japanese beetles, June bugs, butterflies, moths, grasshoppers, cicadas, bees, wasps, flying ants and ballooning spiders. Martins are not, however, much to my dismay, prodigious consumers of

mosquitoes as is so often claimed by companies that manufacture martin housing.

An intensive seven-year diet study conducted at PMCA headquarters in Edinboro, PA, failed to find a single mosquito among the 500 diet samples collected from parent martins bringing beakfuls of insects to their young. The sam-

ples were collected from martins during all hours of the day, all season long, and in numerous habitats, including mosquito-infested ones. Purple martins and freshwater mosquitoes rarely cross paths. Martins are daytime feeders, and feed high in the sky; mosquitoes, on the other hand, stay low in damp places during daylight hours, or only come out at night.

The PCMA was formed in 1987 and is an international non-profit organization devoted exclusively to the scientific study of purple martins, their biology and habitat requirements. The PMCS is the only organization collecting and analyzing martin information on a large-scale, long-term basis.

Their goal is to utilize data from PMCA research projects, public education programs and wildlife management techniques to help increase martin populations throughout North America.

To effectively achieve their goal the PCMA needs martin landlords and people who care about the future of the purple martin to join in their effort.

If you are a bird watcher, like me, please consider becoming a purple martin landlord and member of the PCMA. ∞

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Calling All Eager Volunteers!

Are you interested in being a candidate for a position on the Board of Directors of the NRSPOA? We are looking for eager volunteers to fill positions that will be available at year's end. Per Article II, Section 2 of our Bylaws, "The Nominating Committee shall list as candidates on the NRSPOA election ballot, the names of all members in good standing who submit a statement of candidacy at least sixty (60) days prior to the election meeting."

Mail your statement of candidacy to NRSPOA, Inc. P.O. Box 3154, Stuart, FL 34995. OR leave a message at 692-3939 and the Nominating Committee Chair, George Milne, will return your call. Other candidates shall be placed in nomination as needed, and nominations shall also be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

NRSPOA Annual Membership Meeting

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2008
7 P.M. AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
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Vote on Board
candidates

& the 2009 Budget!

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