

# BILTMORE II CONDOMINIUM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Volume 12 Issue 5

February 2020

## BILTMORE II CONDO

600 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

### Board of Directors 2019

- President**.....Jose M. Fuster
- Vice President** ... William (Bill) Beitz
- Treasurer** Beatriz (Bee) Cosculluela
- Secretary**..... Ginny Shwedel
- Director** ..... Luis Ricciardulli
- Director** .... Terence (Terry) McKinley
- Director** .....Erin Anding

### OUR STAFF

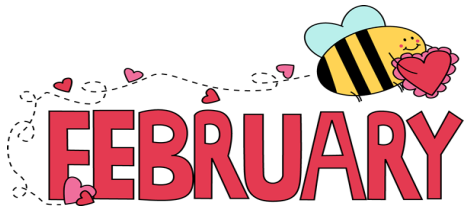
- Manager** ..... Vivian Medina
- Admin. Asst.** ..... Elisa Burnbaum
- Front Desk Supv.** .....Jose Marban
- Maint. Supv.** .....Eduardo Mustelier S.

### HOW TO REACH US

- Manager** .. manager@biltmore2.com
- Office** ..... 305-448-4765
- Admin**..... admin@biltmore2.com
- Concierge/Front Door**.. 305-443-7914
- Concierge**.. Concierge@biltmore2.com
- Maintenance**.....
- Maintenance@biltmore2.com

### OFFICE HOURS

**Monday-Friday**..... 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.



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## MANAGER'S CORNER

Dear Residents, below we have a few of the projects that we are currently working on.

**Elevator Modernization Project** - The building committee together with the assistance of an elevator consultant requested and accepted bids from numerous elevator contractors. Kone Elevator, our current contractor, presented a very attractive package and the Board of Directors voted to send the agreement for review to our counsel David Rogel of Becker & Poliakoff. We should hear in the coming weeks on his recommendations in moving forward with the elevator modernization of all (4) elevators. Once voted on by the Board of Directors, and execution of the agreement, we can move forward with this project. If all goes well, we are looking at the fall of 2020 to start the project.

**Perimeter Planters** - In anticipation of the 50-year Building certification, the exterior deck planters along the perimeter of the property need to be repaired. Removal of the trees/palm trees will be necessary in order to reveal the condition of the concrete surfaces within the planters. Removal and replacement of waterproofing systems of exterior deck planters will likely be performed, in addition to the expansion joint removal and replacement of the parking deck expansion joint system. Biller Reinhart is currently the contractor managing this enormous project. We are in the preliminary stages of identifying the immediate repairs needed to be completed now and repairs that can be completed in phases throughout the next few years.

For all renovation projects, the Board Members with the assistance of the Building Committee will make the aesthetic and economic decisions while maintaining a balance of interests. The hardest challenge for the Board when faced with capital improvement projects is keeping a balance between controlling costs and maintaining and enhancing the value of the property.

**Annual Meeting February 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm** – We will be voting to elect three (3) Board Members. Once you receive your 2<sup>nd</sup> Notice of Meeting in your

*Continued on page 2*

**Manager** (cont. from page 1)

mailbox, please mark ONLY THREE candidates from the ballot list. Put the ballot into the ballot envelope and seal it. Then put it into the second envelope, addressed to the Association. Make sure you fill out the upper left-hand corner with your name, unit number and signature of the appointed voting member. You may leave drop off your envelope in the office mailbox or bring it with you the evening of the meeting. **We need to have a quorum for this vote to pass, so please don't forget to vote!**

We will continue to provide the latest updates in the coming newsletters.

Vivian Medina  
Property Manager



**NEW RESIDENTS**

**Jean Pierre and Carolyn Bado**  
**Oscar and Leonor Suarez**

**SUPER BOWL PARTY**

45 people attended the Super Bowl party in our Social Room – and enjoyed our brand new 70” TV!




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## Social Club Activities

**Wednesday, February 19th – Movie Night, 7:00 pm**  
**“Leap Year” (2010)**

Leap Year is a 2010 Irish-American romantic comedy film directed by Anand Tucker and written by Harry Elfont and Deborah Kaplan. Loosely based on I Know Where I’m Going and It Happened One Night. When yet another anniversary passes without a marriage proposal from her boyfriend, Anna (Amy Adams) decides to take action. Aware of a Celtic tradition that allows women to pop the question on Feb. 29, she plans to follow her lover to Dublin and ask him to marry her. Fate has other plans, however, and Anna winds up on the other side of the Emerald Isle with handsome, but surly, Declan – (Matthew Goode) an Irishman who may just lead Anna down the road to true love.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Lecture by Robert Dawson**  
**Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**7:00 pm**

Robert Dawson as Leonardo da Vinci – Mr. Dawson, in costume and makeup, imparts biographical lectures based on the lives of famous men. Sign up at the Concierge Desk.



**Movie Night - March 18<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 PM**

**The Monuments Men (2014)**  
 During World War II, the Nazis steal countless pieces of art and hide them away. Some over-the-hill art scholars, historians, architects and other experts form a unit to retrieve as many of the stolen masterpieces as possible. The mission becomes even more urgent when the team learns about Hitler’s “Nero Decree,” which orders destruction of the artworks if the Third Reich falls. Caught in a race against time, the men risk their lives to protect some of mankind’s greatest achievements. The film stars an ensemble cast including George Clooney, Matt Damon, Bill Murray, John Goodman, Jean Dujardin, Bob Balaban, Hugh Bonneville, and Cate Blanchett. Directed by George Clooney.

## Around Town

**Bike Walk Coral Gables – February 16<sup>th</sup>.** Marion Manley (1893-1984) was greater Miami’s first female architect. From the University of Miami to private residences, Ms. Manley enjoyed a prolific and highly successful architectural practice for over half of the twentieth century in South Florida. Join us on an architectural journey through time and place as we visit landmark structures designed by Ms. Manley and trace the progression of her architectural legacy. Meet at the Coral Gables Museum, 285 Aragon Avenue. For more info: coralgables.com

**South Miami Rotary Art Festival – February 22-23** – The Rotary Club of South Miami proudly presents its 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival. The South Miami Rotary Art Festival takes place in the downtown area of South Miami on Sunset Drive from US1 to Red Road. There is free admission with ample nearby parking on-street and in garages. The festival features 148 outstanding artists, a fine expanded food court and beer garden, and live jazz onstage. For more info: southmiamiartfest.org

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## FOB/CLICKER & VEHICLE AUDIT

On Monday, February 3, 2020 an audit of access devices (Fobs/ Clickers) and resident vehicles began. The audit will progress floor by floor and will continue through April 2020. It is important for the security of all residents that we better control access to Biltmore II.

Two weeks are allocated to every floor in order to bring all records up to date. Please see the schedule below. Please bring all your fobs/ clickers to the office for verification. They will be checked against our office records. All clickers/fobs not in our system will be deactivated. Residents who do not comply will have their fobs/clickers deactivated and will have to come to the office to have their access devices added back into the system.

**2<sup>nd</sup> floor and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor**  
February 3 - 14

**4<sup>th</sup> floor and 5<sup>th</sup> floor**  
February 17 - 28

**6<sup>th</sup> floor and 7<sup>th</sup> floor**  
March 2 - 13

**8<sup>th</sup> floor and 9<sup>th</sup> floor**  
March 16 - 27

**10<sup>th</sup> floor and 11<sup>th</sup> floor**  
March 30 - April 10

**12<sup>th</sup> floor and Penthouse level**  
April 13 - 24

Please also bring your vehicle tag registration to the office. Management office hours are 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday. Please contact the office if you have a scheduling conflict.

We appreciate your cooperation. This is an essential security audit that will enable staff to monitor access to address unauthorized access attempts.

## BILTMORE WAY STREETSCAPE EVENT CANCELLED – WHY?

3 days after the Biltmore Way Streetscape event, scheduled for February 5, 2020, was posted and communicated to residents via email, it was cancelled. The cancellation was communicated to the Biltmore II Condominium Association by Mr. Peter Iglesias, City Manager of Coral Gables.

He explained that just 3 days earlier, the Coral Gables Commission unanimously voted to terminate all planning for bike lanes on Alhambra Circle. This was a vigorously contested matter. Mr. Iglesias indicated that the City Commission directed his staff to develop new strategies for bike lanes, effectively acknowledging that the Bike Master Plan, approved in 2014, could not be implemented in its present form.

That plan specified roadways in the Gables that should have bike lanes. 4-block long Biltmore Way was one of them. Given the significant resistance to bike lanes that led to the cancellation of constructing them on Riviera Blvd. and now on Alhambra Circle, it is apparent that bike lanes on Biltmore Way are very unlikely. Mr. Iglesias indicated that the Biltmore Way Streetscape project needed to be reassessed, which will take several months, and that communicating to residents would not be appropriate until new plans are developed.



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## OUR INTERESTING YOUNG RESIDENTS

By June Frost

It was a short email from Khalil Farha: “Happy New Year and Merry Christmas. We are currently in Lebanon until the end of this week. Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> works for us. Have a nice eve.” Thus, the young couple was available to be interviewed for the *Biltmore II Newsletter* which introduces neighbors to neighbors in the hopes that we all get to know each other better.

Khalil and his wife Alexandra were in Beirut for ten days to see family and friends for the holidays. The whole flight including stopovers takes about 16 hours. Once there, they are deluged with invitations. Says Khalil, “Beirut is a very alive city, everyone wants to invite you to their house for dinner.” A typical Lebanese mezza is a sit down dinner consisting of a variety of elaborate dishes spread out on the table buffet style and shared by all.

Although it would not be unusual for them to be part of the Lebanese diaspora that has characterized the exodus of their country’s population for decades, in fact they are not. Khalil was transferred to Miami by the multinational company he worked for in Beirut and is a Data Center Senior Project Manager. They have lived at Biltmore II for the past four months.

“We didn’t know anything about Miami, but we had a realtor and toured the region. When we saw our apartment, we liked it, because the building looked safe, clean, well maintained and close to everything and

our offices,” said Khalil.

Alexandra works for Uniquo Vacations as a graphic designer in marketing and advertising. She is not a stranger to the U.S., as she lived for a while in Virginia with her brother and mother. Back home, she met and married Khalil in Beirut two and a half years ago.

In addition to Arabic, both speak English and French perfectly. “In Lebanon,” explains Khalil, “you are trilingual, because you learn it in school in all classes.” Lebanon was colonized by the French in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and achieved its independence in 1943. So French was taught in schools, but several decades ago with the advent of the computer and booming technology then English became the dominant business language.

Khalil’s degree is in electro-mechanical engineering, and of course, most of his studies were in English and French. “Lebanon,” says Khalil is a very unique country, very open society with the largest Christian population in the region.” He further explained that formal Arabic is the written one for official business, but spoken Arabic is different from one country to another. The Lebanese version is a much softer sound he emphasized which makes it easier to pronounce other languages well.

When asked if they ever get culture shock going back and forth between the countries, they both said “not at all.” Beirut is a very international city, a very open minded modern city.

For entertainment, they prefer to stay in the Gables neighborhood and avoid the



*Khalil and Alexandra at home*

tourist places, for example, in South Beach. They like to try new foods like Japanese, Cuban, Mexican cuisines. Both expressed their desire to mingle with the locals, see their tastes, understand their culture either in restaurants, pubs or art galleries.

Alexandra said, “I went to Art Basel and the Museum of Illusion on Lincoln Road. We try to go to every art event that is happening. Tomorrow we plan to go to the Beaux Arts Festival.” As for aquatic sports, they like the swimming pool here when the weather is nice. And they have their eye on paddle boarding and kayaking.

Khalil adds, “We are not used to hurricanes, but the city is well prepared, and we did some research on the subject—we found that if we follow instructions, we will be safe.” (Nothing like a hurricane to produce tropical culture shock. Nevertheless, we all feel secure in Biltmore II.)

Welcome Khalil and Alexandra!

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## OUR SECURITY ASSURED

### BII Installs a New Diesel/Natural Gas Emergency Generator Set!!!

Our Building Committee has been involved in a project which will further assure we have power in common areas and to critical loads during hurricanes and other natural disasters which curtail FP&L service. The project involved engaging an experienced consulting engineering firm to study our electrical loads, recommend modifications and develop and evaluate bids. As a result, BII contracted a local electrical engineering firm to complete works involved in installation of a new diesel/natural gas (combined fuel) generator to replace our more than 40 year old diesel generator set.

**Why combined fuel?** One of the major problems with diesel (only) generators is refueling, should a long duration power outage be suffered. Sometimes, despite fuel supply contracts, infrastructure is damaged to such an extent that fuel cannot be delivered. The supply of natural gas has yet to be curtailed during such events. Our new generator set will run on 70% natural gas fuel and 30% diesel, extending our run time up to three fold!!! The new generator set produces more power in a smaller, quieter package.

#### Project Scope:

- Engineering work.
- Permits from City of Coral Gables.
- Purchase of Caterpillar\* C13 engine/generator set.
- Engineering work to change connected loads, fire pump controllers & elevator controls.
- Installation of gas supply to the roof.
- Removal of existing generator set and installation of new Cat C-13 on our rooftop with appropriate isolation mountings. (completed on Jan. 22-23)
- Connecting all associated equipment and testing on load banks (to be done over next few weeks)

#### Caterpillar\* C-13 Specifications:

Model: C-13 ACERT

Engine: Caterpillar\* C-13 in-line, 6 cylinder, 15 Liter

RPM: 1800

Voltage: 480 V

Weight (incl. radiator): 8,100 lbs / 3.6 tons

- Caterpillar is the world's largest manufacturer of diesel and natural gas engines and turbines, generator sets and earthmoving and mining equipment.

