

BILTMORE II CONDOMINIUM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Volume 11 Issue 12

September 2019

BILTMORE II CONDO

600 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

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HOW TO REACH US

- Manager** .. manager@biltmore2.com
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- 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;

In the last few months we've had numerous leaks emanating from residences for different reasons: plumbing, fixtures, appliances, etc. It is of utmost importance that every resident maintains an HO6 Insurance Policy to cover damages to your unit as well as other neighbors affected.



Let's clarify what the Association policy covers: The Association insures the "condominium property" as originally installed by the developer or replacements of like kind and quality. "Condominium property" includes all the structural components of the building, except those items which are to be insured by the unit owners. Unit owners are to insure floor, wall, and ceiling coverings, electrical fixtures, appliances, water heaters, water filters, built-in cabinets, countertops, and window treatments. The Association insures the rest of the building.

Typically, your individual insurance policy (HO6 policy) should provide primary coverage for any damage to the items not insured by the Association.

When a resident causes damages to other's property, both parties should contact their insurance carriers immediately to report the damages and initiate repairs. It is the responsibility of each owner to make the necessary repairs to their property. The insurance carrier of the unit which was damaged by the other unit, will determine whether they can file a subrogation claim to be reimbursed by the insurance carrier of the owner at fault. Also, please keep in mind that if there is a flood, a water remediation company must be contacted immediately to dry out the unit(s) affected by the resident that caused the damage. This urgent step is required to avoid mold issues within the walls and or floor coverings.

If you do not have insurance and would like more information, please contact the management office at (305) 448-4765.

VIOLATIONS PANEL

The Violations Panel is looking for volunteers for their group. If you are interested, please let the Office know.

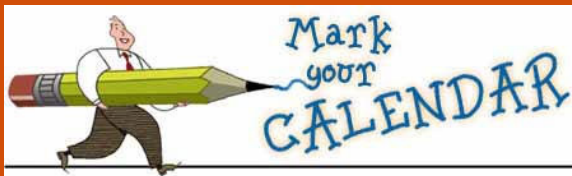
SOCIAL CLUB ACTIVITIES

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Wednesday, October 16th – Movie night at 7:00 pm – “The Chorus” (2004)

Pierre (Jean-Baptiste Maunier) is an aimless child at an austere boarding school in France. The students and faculty are constantly at odds with one another, until a music teacher, Clément Mathieu (Gérard Jugnot), arrives and starts a choir. Clément -- who has troubles of his own -- tries to change the reactionary policies of the school, choosing instead to encourage his students. His efforts have a particular impact on Pierre, who shows great musical promise. Directed by Christophe Barratier, the French title of this movie is “Les Choristes”. It’s a French/German/Swiss production, and Biltmore II’s first foreign film. It was nominated for Best Foreign Language film at the 2004 Oscar’s.

Save the Date: Sunday, November 3rd - 5:00 pm. Piano Concert with Mia Vassilev



WELCOME!



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Lobby Plant Decor Change Delayed

Recently, the Lobby Plant Proposal Task Group (Bob Petzinger & Amadeo Molinos) reported to the Board of Directors (BOD) that it recommended changing most of the lobby plants for a new plant selection as proposed by Unique Foliage, an interior plant specialist firm. This firm was chosen after thorough competitive bidding and evaluation. The new design proposal was sent for comment to all unit owners in late July 2019 and a schematic depiction of the new plants with their lobby placement was put on display for a three-week period ending August 15, 2019. No negative comments were received so plans were developed to implement the new decor in September 2019.



However, due to unexpected 2019 landscape budget expenditures, the plan to modify the plants in the lobby will be delayed. This project will be submitted as the top priority landscape improvement project for the upcoming year. Subject to BOD approval of the 2020 operating budget, implementation is expected in January 2020.

AROUND TOWN

Coming to the Gables: New restaurants such as Cheesecake Factory and Coyo Taco. A new Target will also be up and running soon at the old Office Max location.

Miami Spice: hurry! Visit one of the restaurants participating in Miami Spice, which lasts until September 30th! Lunch and brunch for \$23 and dinner for \$39. Check out locations and menus. <https://www.miamiandbeaches.com/offers/temptations/miami-spice-months>

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A TALE OF A WORK IN PROGRESS

By June Frost

And what a tale! It takes the dedication of a tall, quiet man who roams the condominium property in the 600 block of Biltmore Way evaluating the landscape and looking for ways to improve the aesthetics of our look. If poet laureates exist, why not a gardener laureate to bestow a well-deserved title on Bob Petzinger?

How uplifting to our spirits to drive up to our property or look out of our balconies and see a well-tended lush, manicured look in the beds, planters and lawn! The present is certainly a great improvement over the past. And by the way, our property values are benefitting also.

Bob and his wife Cris Moran moved to Biltmore II in 2014 after living for sixteen years in Coconut Grove where the look was lush but wild tropical. Their property had no grass but many different species of plants and palm trees. During that time Bob began a long serving career as a volunteer at Fairchild (Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden). "I put in 11,000 hours of work into Fairchild," he says. "In 2006 I was declared Volunteer of the Year. I started as a garden groomer weeding and pruning and learned through the staff person all about plants and trees."

At Fairchild he went on to work as a plantsman in the Native Plant Conserve, as a tram guide and as Art Historian. "I would research the artist who was coming with his sculpture for the next season and train volunteers to be docents." He also gave lectures and served on the Board of Trustees.

Bob loves anything green. When he was a kid of twelve he had a lawn cutting business for neighbors. He had twelve lawns and his father's mower. "I was just meticulous. I liked doing it, and it was a steady income," he says. "I wanted to make sure weeds were pulled and hedges looked neat." Whenever he could after high school and college he worked with a landscape crew. "My love of green meant I did not want to go to college in the city. I valued the countryside."

Fortunately when Bob was posted to London as managing director of AT&T UK Ltd. he and Cris lived in a condominium near beautiful parks. "That's why I like London, because it is so green." Thereafter, they moved to Naples, Florida and were surrounded by a general look that was lush and manicured.

When Bob was president of the Board in 2016, he concentrated all his efforts on the building's 40-year recertification program and got the common area electrical systems recertified by end of summer. Later on he teamed up with Bill Beitz to take a hard look at the landscape outside. What needed to be done to enhance the architecture of our building? The idea was to take time to examine all the landscape with the contractor and evaluate what looks good, what isn't surviving, what do we want to change, what about irrigation, what costs are involved, what is priority and what look do we want?

Speaking in general of condominium landscapes Bob comments, "We are unique for Coral Gables in the amount of land set aside for landscaping around our building. Most other buildings occupy a much higher percentage of their property than we do. Lawns, trees, hedges, flowers are key assets of the building."

That said, Bob went to work. "The 4-year plan [2017-2020] is in my head, he says, "I know what it is." Accordingly, each summer a plan is made for the following year with a list of projects that is given to the contractor. Each item is costed out and prioritized. To get to this stage Bob is very grateful for the help and cooperation he gets from the Landscape Task Group and a good landscape contractor.



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Work in Progress
(cont. from page 4)

The Landscape Task Group includes Sandy Klukas and Steve Lehrman. They walk the property with Bob to assess the status of the plants and suggest changes that need to be done with an eye to costs and priority. Steve maintains the status of project expenditures and prepares the financial reports that are ultimately presented to the association in the fall for approval in the upcoming budget.

So far so good. What goes on behind the scenes is another matter. Plants behave pretty much like human beings. They want to be heard. They have likes and dislikes regarding their location. If the amount of sun or water is too much or too little or the drainage too poor or the planter too small or too shallow or the wind too strong or too weak, they will let you know loud and clear.

Thus the same Queen Emma Crinum Lilies that thrive in a bed on the southeast side look scraggly and windblown on the north side of the building. They were removed along with a mess of ferns and unkempt gingers that only tolerate shade. The front entrance of the building was redesigned to extend the plush lawn and plant colorful flowers in neat, trim beds to achieve a simple manicured look.

Bob is very pleased with the choice of Green Island Ficus for the planters and hedges and plans to use it extensively. It is hardy, drought tolerant and has a beautiful deep green glossy leaf. It also has a manicured look and compliments the formal setting in some areas of the property. Better yet, it can be pruned freely to maintain a desired size.

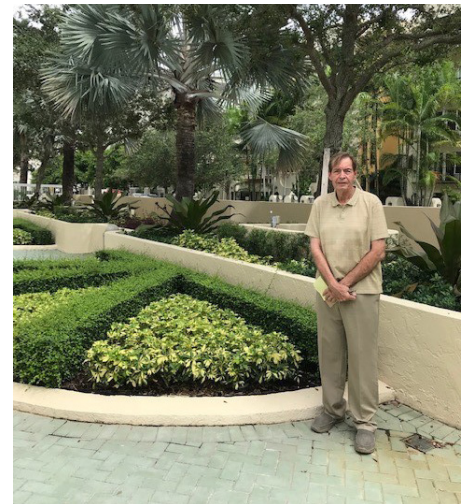
Plants are picky about how they

get pruned. They prefer costly hand pruning to machine pruning which is considerably less expensive. The Ixora and Gardenia hedges refuse to produce flowers, because they are machine pruned and, alas, will have to go. The same goes for the Bougainvillea hedges except for the ones on the center south side which have a reprieve for another couple of years, because they produce a ton of beautiful flowers with limited pruning.

A lot of gardening involves trial and error. The Oak trees are a beautiful native tree, but Bob fears they are wrongly placed in 4-foot wide planters that are 2 feet deep and way too small for the root system of an Oak tree which likes to match its canopy. Normally the Oaks' aggressive roots attach themselves to limestone and other rock below for good support. During Hurricane Irma 5 Oaks and 2 Bismarck palms were lost.

Indeed, the yearly landscape plans call for removing plants that are in the wrong place.

If a plant has aggressive roots that penetrate expansion joints or threaten the



Bob by newly designed beds in swimming pool area

planter's waterproof or wall structure, it is doomed. Worse still, if the planter is leaking into the basement, Bob warns, "It has to be emptied to replace the waterproof seal before the irrigation can be installed and a planting scheme implemented." A costly affair.

The success of beautiful landscaping is as good as its irrigation system. In some areas the antiquated irrigation system has been upgraded, and the

Continued on page 6

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Work in Progress (cont. from page 5)

wish list for 2020 Proposed Landscape Improvement Projects includes replacing a couple of old drip lines with modern PVC pipes.

So many nice improvements that have worked well are a source of enjoyment. Bob is especially pleased with the outcome of the new landscaping in the swimming pool section done in 2018. The formal design of hedges in manicured beds with contrasting green colors dramatically enhances the area and gives it a well-tended look.

He counts the extended lush green lawn in the northeast section and the neat tiers and contrasting green hedges in the northeast and northwest sections as a success. Just recently the right plant was finally found for the bed over the entrance to the garage! The Red Fountain Grass is drought tolerant, needs almost no pruning and “loves blowing in the wind”.

Not everything works as planned. In 2018 we partnered with Fairchild to serve as a research site for their Million Orchid Project. The squirrels ate most of the rare native orchid seedlings planted in our trees. The red flowering Jatropha trees in the Social Room patio keep blowing over. Their bed is 12 inches deep. Decisions have to be made about removing more shrubs and replacing more stuff. And the list goes on. Truly a work in progress.

That’s just the tip of the iceberg. A smattering of what our dedicated landscape team deals with all the time. They are, of course, we all are, rewarded with a beautiful setting for our esteemed Biltmore II.

How about gardener extraordinaire for a title?



Bob with a handful of plucked weeds



The extended lawn in northeast section

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