

# BILTMORE II CONDOMINIUM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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September 2020

## 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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**Concierge/Front Door**.. 305-443-7914  
**Concierge**.. Concierge@biltmore2.com  
**Maintenance**.....  
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### OFFICE HOURS

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



Published monthly at no cost to the Biltmore II Condominium by Coastal Group Publications, Inc. Contact CGP at (305) 981-3503 or www.cgpnnewsletters.com to ADVERTISE in one of our newsletters or to get a FREE newsletter for your property.

## MANAGER'S CORNER

### Whose poop is that on the lawn?

We continue to find dog poop on our beautifully maintained lawn. All dog lovers know that we provide waste stations on our property. It's both rude and unsanitary for dog owners not to pick up after their pets. We can't blame the dog who was never toilet trained. Our community is pet friendly. Please be more conscientious and pick up your dog's poop.



We appreciate your cooperation!

### Roof Repairs

Our roofing repairs are underway. TARHEEL ROOFING is currently on property making the necessary repairs. They are on the west side of the roof top working their way to the east. The staging for their roofing equipment is located on the West Visitor/Employee parking area and will be moving to East side Visitor parking area. The project should be completed within the next few weeks. Our engineering firm, Biller Reinhart is assisting as the Project Manager to make sure the project is completed in accordance with the contract in a timely manner. We will keep you informed of other projects under way.



Vivian Medina,  
Property Manager

# CARDENA STREET PLANTER – NEW DESIGN

Cardena Street runs along the west end of the Biltmore II property between Valencia Ave. and Biltmore Way. Bordering the public sidewalk is a block-long planter that separates the basement garage exit ramps from the sidewalk. For many years it contained red-blooming Bougainvillea plants. Bougainvillea is beautiful when it blooms during the dry season, but it needs room to grow without frequent pruning to properly bloom. Unfortunately, this planter is very narrow so there is no room for Bougainvillea to grow properly. The branches have sharp thorns that cannot be allowed to extend into the public sidewalk, so pruning frequently is necessary. The Landscape Task Group recommended a dual plant and color scheme that works well in other parts of Biltmore II’s landscape – Variegated arboricola (also called Trinette) with yellow and green leaves and Green Island Ficus with glossy dark green leaves. Both develop into dense, easy to maintain hedges. The landscape contractor installed the new design in August 2020 – see pictures below. A new dripline irrigation system was installed too. Within 6 months these plants will expand to fill out the planter.

Robert Petzinger



## SOCIAL CLUB ACTIVITIES

Mia Vassilev, a pianist well known to Biltmore II for her various recitals in our Social Room, recently released an album: “Velvet NightNotes”. Many residents had asked Mia if she had CD’s of her music, so this is your opportunity to purchase one for \$10.00! If the order is large enough, she will personally deliver them to the building. Use the following link to purchase the entire CD: <https://miavassilev.hearnow.com/>.



### New Residents

Elina Santana and parents,  
Elina and Luis

Alireza Abbassi, Shahnaz  
Matinfard and daughter  
Melody Abbassi

Ingrid Fernandez

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## NEWSLETTER CONTINUES IN DIGITAL FORMAT

Coastal Group Publications, our newsletter supplier, continues to provide our newsletters in digital format only. They will be providing a limited number of printed copies, in black and white, which will be placed in the lobby and mailroom. We will continue to distribute the newsletter via email blast and post it on our website.

## A WRITER AND A PUBLIC RELATIONS MAN

By June Frost

It's always nice to meet up with an author who is a resident in our building. David Pearson describes himself as a writer and a public relations man. He is a natural born writer. He says he started writing in high school and hasn't stopped since. It is a talent that proved immensely valuable for the successful public relations career he developed later on.

David can tell a story about anything and make it captivating. Such is the content of his book *JFK and Bobby, Arnie and Jack...and David* (2016). It is a memoir of an incredibly adventurous and fortunate life. There are parts about his years in Washington, D.C. working for JFK's Peace Corps and promoting LBJ's 1964 Civil Rights Law, and there are parts describing his spectacular successes in the field of public relations.

The thing that distinguishes David's book from an ordinary memoir is that all of the people in his sphere of work are famous politicians and celebrities. This adds to the engaging read which is full of rich anecdotes. "That was the reason I wrote the memoir," he says, "because I thought my relationship with all these people would be interesting."

After graduating from Emory University where he majored in history, he went to work promoting Sea Pines Plantation on Hilton Head Island, today one of America's favorite family vacation spots. From there, David was persuaded by friends to join the action in JFK's New Frontier in Washington.

He bonded right away with Sargent Shriver, President Kennedy's brother-in-law, who headed the Peace Corps and was hired as a press officer. He recalls embarking on many recruiting trips to colleges and universities around the country as well as travels abroad interviewing and debriefing Peace Corps volunteers.

Perhaps his most memorable day came when President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, and his boss ordered a bunch of his staff to the White House to help out. David was there in the East Room when the president's casket arrived. His riveting account of all the players and particularly the widow, Jacqueline Kennedy, is all in his book. Aware that he was watching history, David took copious notes for use later on.

In 1964 President Lyndon Johnson asked Governor LeRoy Collins to head up the Community Relations Service, an agency created to help implement peacefully the new



Anne and David Pearson at Books and Books signing

Civil Rights Act. Governor Collins reached out to a fellow Floridian and appointed David to be Assistant Director for Public Affairs. Says David, "My job was basically to become a PR man for civil rights." He believes the most important work he ever did was to help Governor Collins get the United States to accept integration, especially the South.

But David was dead set against the Viet Nam war and eventually left Washington to return to the private sector. He says, "By that time, I wanted out of Washington and the political climate surrounding the Vietnam War." So he moved his wife Anne and three children to Atlanta where he joined a national public relations firm. His intent was to learn from the masters and then strike out on his own.

David grew up in Miami. It was only natural that when the opportunity arrived, he would set up his public relations firm on his home turf. That moment came in the early 70's when he founded David Pearson Associates, specializing in public relations and marketing for luxury oceanfront, marina and golf resort communities from Hawaii to the East Coast. In David's memoir there are a lot of amusing stories about his encounters with the likes of Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams, Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and the prominent golf architects he worked with on golf course design.

In 1966, he wrote his firsthand account of what he witnessed in the White House the day President Kennedy was shot. When it came out in the *Miami Herald*, he says the article opened up a lot for him. "In Miami I became a guru about politics, and Bob Graham called me up for help with his campaigns in 1968 and 1972."

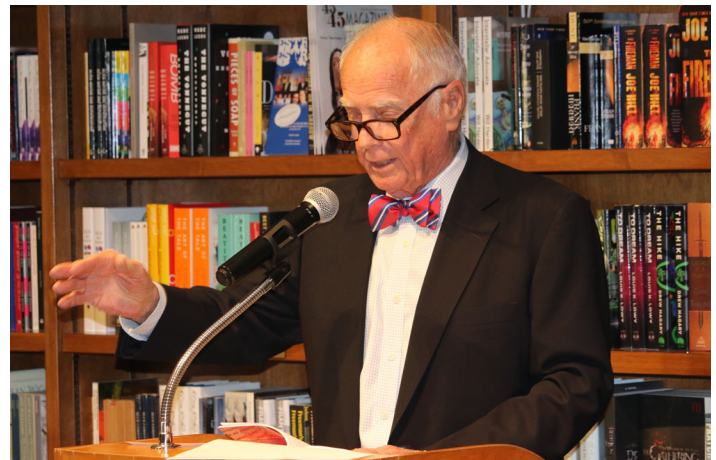
*Continued on page 4*

**Public Relations Man** (cont. from page 3)

It turns out David could also have developed a career as a singer (tenor). In a play at the age of six in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at St. Theresa School in Coral Gables, David was dressed up for a role that required singing “Shortening Bread.” Thereafter he has been singing all his life accompanying himself with an accordion or a piano. “I had several jobs singing, but it didn’t seem serious enough,” he says.

On February 12, 2017 David did a book presentation at Books and Books of the aforementioned memoir and was introduced by Darby Collins, Governor Collins’ daughter. His second book *Upon a Peak in Darien* (2020) is just out. In the novella he tells the story of an 18-year-old teenager who had a choice to stay home in Miami and sing in the Beach hotels or look for a summer job up North. In Vermont a whole new world opened up for him. The setting is peopled with WASP families who dot the landscape in summer homes and belong to exclusive tennis clubs. All from Ivy Schools. He finds a job singing in a resort hotel, and using entertaining dialogues the author recounts his youthful experience. Sound familiar?

Last year David and his wife, Anne Stuart Bates Pearson, from St. Louis moved to Biltmore II with their dog Molly.



David Pearson presenting his memoir to Books and Books audience

They have been married 59 years and have two daughters, one son and four grandchildren. Today David and his son are providing pro bono services for community organizations. “My son and I are both working for the League of Conservation Voters, whose main purpose is to help people get elected to office that are committed to conservation—the environment, that’s what we’re interested in.”

The question of whether he is retired drew an emphatic “no,” not once but twice!!

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## MIAMI ROCK RIDGE



Coral Gables sits on top of the Miami Rock Ridge – a limestone rock outcropping that runs south and west from North Miami Beach to Long Pine Key in Everglades National Park. This limestone ridge runs through the City of Coral Gables. The ridge is 10-25 feet above sea level, so it provides protection from local seawater flooding. The early settlers chose to develop areas on this ridge as it was high and dry and not threatened by flooding. Downtown Coral Gables, including our neighborhood, sits on this ridge. The original native habitat found before development of Coral Gables was Pine Rockland that only occurs in South Florida, the Florida Keys, and the Bahamas – see picture above. At one time it covered 185,000 acres of Miami-Dade County, but only 2% of this habitat remains other than in Everglades National Park. It is designated as a globally imperiled habitat. The dominant tree is the native Slash Pine. The sharp edge Saw Palmetto palm covers the ground. 20% of the plant species are not found anywhere else. The top of the rock ridge is just a few inches below ground. The limestone is porous, so rainwater slowly passes through it to the freshwater aquifer (our drinking water source) that lies hundreds of feet below. This is infertile habitat as there is no rich soil, but only a hard marl soil of rock and clay. An amazing photo of this habitat in the early 1900’s at the center of downtown Coral Gables (the intersection of Miracle Mile and Ponce de Leon Blvd.) covers the inside wall of TD Bank at 2501 Ponce de Leon Blvd. It is worth a visit!

Robert Petzinger

# TREASURER'S REPORT

## TREASURER'S REPORT (Financial Month of July 2020)

**Income/Expense:** The month of July shows a budget deficit of (\$618.38) and a year-to-date deficit of (\$5,093.19).

**Funding:** The funds available in our bank accounts for the operation of the building are \$442,193.55 at the end of July.

As for Reserves, we have \$2,678,388.42 of funds available at the end of July which seems appropriate to cover the expected projects in 2020.

**NOV. 3**

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**Punch #57**

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## IN-UNIT ASSOCIATION FIRE SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

Recently the Association's fire control system contractor (Johnson Controls) performed the mandatory annual system inspection. A fire control specialist (accompanied by a member of our maintenance staff) entered each unit while the emergency alarm was activated to verify that the audible alarm is loud enough to alert residents throughout the unit should an emergency occur. Every unit has an alarm speaker in the ceiling or wall inside every bedroom door and near the entrance door as required by fire code. The left image below shows the large round speaker. These speakers are hardwired to Biltmore II's master fire control system.



The device in the photo on the right is the fire sprinkler head. Its heat detector is a small glass vial filled with a glycerin-based solution that expands as temperature rises. Once the temperature reaches a certain

level, the glycerin solution will have expanded to the point where the glass breaks. This acts as a trigger to force out a plug so the water can flow. The metal device that protrudes below the sprinkler head is a deflector that disperses the water in certain directions to create a fire free area for residents to exit into the common hallway. The flowing water activates the emergency alarm throughout the building. Every unit has one sprinkler head & heat detector device inside the entry door in the foyer, and a few units installed an additional sprinkler in the kitchen. Some penthouse units have 2 devices because they have two entry doors – one in the entry foyer and the other in the kitchen where there may be a 2<sup>nd</sup> door to the common hallway. In some units that have installed a lower suspended ceiling, the sprinkler device sits above the lower ceiling and is covered by a metal cosmetic cover that is held in place by solder that melts if temperature rises to a certain temperature. If that happens, the cover is released, and the sprinkler head and trigger mechanism perform in the same manner as in all other units. Every device acts independently, so only the sprinkler head(s) where heat rises to the point of triggering the sprinkler will activate, thus minimizing the amount of fire control water entering Biltmore II.

**THESE DEVICES ARE MAINTAINED BY THE ASSOCIATION. They should NEVER BE TOUCHED by residents and NEVER PAINTED.** If you plan to remodel your unit and the ceiling where these devices are located, notify the Association Management Office as only a certified fire contractor is authorized to touch these devices. Upon notification, Management will contact an approved contractor or Johnson Controls to do the work when it involves elements attached to the fire control system electrical panel.

Regardless of the contractor selected, work is performed at unit owner's expense.

Please be careful moving large items into and out of your unit as objects that hit the ceiling sprinkler head could break the glass vial, triggering the sprinkler to release water under high pressure. Once that happens, the alarm and water flow can only be shut off by Coral Gables Fire Department representatives. That may take 15-30 minutes or more. By that time, hundreds of gallons of water will have entered your unit and probably found its way into units directly below. The damage caused by such a situation would be the result of unit owner negligence so the cost to you for repair of your unit, other affected units and common areas would be substantial. **PLEASE BE CAREFUL AND WARN ANY CONTRACTORS TO STAY CLEAR OF THE SPRINKLER DEVICE.**

In addition, the entry door to your unit is a fire-rated door that is part of Biltmore II's fire safety system. It prevents fire within the unit from entering the common area hallway for a period to enable residents to safely leave the unit and building in case of an emergency. As reported in a previous article, the middle door hinge automatically closes the door if the resident fails to do so. The Association owns and maintains the entry doors. The most recent annual inspection found 90 entry doors with hinges that failed to properly close the door to a latched position. The maintenance staff replaced them. Contact the Management Office if you have any problems with your entry door(s).