

Ocean One Waves

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OCEAN ONE
Condominium Association
19333 Collins Avenue
Sunny Isles Beach, FL 33160

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
President..... Tamara Benson
benson_tamara@hotmail.com
Treasurer Mr. Lewis Thaler
mrtennist@aol.com
Secretary..... Hellen Soriano
sorcentral@gmail.com
Secretary..... Abraham Kalfus
ajk@knlegal.com
Director Jannette Kay
jannakaye13@gmail.com

OCEAN ONE CONTACT LIST
Property Manager... Ernesto Moreno
Assistant Manager.. Shawn Romulus
Management Office
Phone Line 1..... 305-931-1232
Phone Line 2..... 305-931-8732
Front Desk
Phone Line 1 305-931-9840
Phone Line 2..... 305-918-0638
E-mail.. frontdesk@oceanone194.com
Receiving
Phone 305-931-9883
receiving@oceanone194.com
Maintenance Supervisor
George Masten..... 305-931-5386
maintenance@oceanone194.com
Valet: 305-931-5712

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Hellen Soriano ... sorcentral@gmail.com



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear fellow residents,

March was a very busy month and, hereafter, Ocean One will remain busy for several years to come. The main reason being the Elevator Modernization Project, which is expected to take 2-3 years, formally began on April 1st. For those who park on the lower level, you might have observed several areas have been gated off with metal fencing—these have been designated as staging areas where the Nouveau teams will be storing their tools and equipment.

The elevators themselves are due to be in the upcoming weeks. The delivery method is quite unique. I invite all who are in the building to watch as the elevators are brought in by a barge that will be stationed in the ocean across our beach, from there lifted by helicopter, flown over to the building, and placed on our roof. This should be an interesting (and perhaps noisy) show that will last a few hours. This will require the closure of our Pool, Beach, and Rear Perimeter Area (Tiki Huts, Walkways, and Playground)

Once work on the replacement of our elevators fully begins, we ask for your cooperation and patience. During the past month, Nouveau has been evaluating all the elevators, selecting the ones with the most failures to be replaced first. Work will start in the south tower, and the plan calls for three teams to be working concurrently, one in each bank. At that time, because only one elevator will be in service, expect delays and plan your schedules to accommodate the extra time it will take to leave the building and return to your unit.

Cab interiors are now in the process of being manufactured. Three cab interior choices were displayed in the lobby, and a survey was taken. Unit owners had the opportunity to vote electronically, by mail, or by paper ballot. Over 150 votes were cast, and option 2 was declared the winner.



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President (cont. from page 1)

Perhaps some of you may have noticed the change to the upper lobby walls at the mezzanine level. Due to water intrusion, from a leak many years ago, the wallpaper was detaching in several areas and had to be removed. Unfortunately, we did not have enough replacement wallpaper, and, after futile efforts to locate and purchase more, it was decided to paint the walls. With the help of our neighbor, Mrs. Frimy Garzon, who is a decorator, a color similar to that of the wallpaper was selected. Our own maintenance staff did the entire work, resulting in major cost savings for the Association.

We also have a new addition to our staff. David Ámela has joined our security team as Front Desk Supervisor, replacing Shawn Romulus, who has now become our Assistant Property Manager. David brings extensive experience in the security and hospitality areas (for more on David see the article Meet Your Staff elsewhere in this publication). Join me in welcoming David to the Ocean One family.

On March 30th, a meeting was held in the spa to discuss and address the building's insurance. Susan Amendola, our insurance agent, explained the upheaval in the insurance industry, especially after the Champlain Towers collapse and the ensuing, new State of Florida regulations. Bruce Masia, Regional Vice President of KW Property Management, described the challenges facing their buildings wishing to renew and/or purchase a policy nowadays.

The hike in premiums, although expected, went beyond what was planned and budgeted for. This year's budget allocated approximately \$800k for insurance (the policy expiring Mar 31, 2023, cost \$609,206.26). This enormous increase is due to several factors:

- 1- the property previously appraised at \$72 million, has been reappraised with a new value of \$125 million.
- 2-many insurance companies have left Florida, leaving a only few companies operating and controlling the market.

Although a policy with LIMITED wind coverage was seriously considered due to its lower premiums, our attorney has advised us that our Condo Bylaws and State of Florida Statutes both demand FULL coverage. Furthermore, the letter of credit we have signed with the bank for the elevator project further requires it. Therefore, choosing this option would be a breach of our fiduciary responsibility.

Our legal counsel has strongly recommended that we select a policy that fully covers the appraised value of the building. Thus, we were forced to opt for a higher-priced policy, one that is \$700k over the amount presently allocated in our budget for insurance. This presents a major challenge to the Association's finances and one that the Board will have to try to resolve. In the meantime, following the Board's directive, our insurance agent is searching the market for lesser-priced policies that still meet the full coverage requirements.

A few months ago, the Board of Directors of Ocean Two reached out to us asking if we would allow their residents use of our pool while theirs is under construction. As good neighbors, throughout the years we have extended to each other the courtesy of sharing amenities. For example, we have attended each other's exercise classes and, most recently, our residents had access to their tennis courts while ours were being refurbished. In the future, when our planned pool resurfacing project begins, we will be asking them to reciprocate and allow our residents to use their pool. In hopes that this does not create too much of an imposition on our residents or disrupt our pool operations, strict rules and guidelines have been imposed (they must register at the front desk, bring their own towels, and chairs limited to two per unit).

As some of you already know Chris Santillana, our esteemed and long-time valet attendant, and his family are in the midst of an extremely difficult situation. While vacationing in Orlando, Christopher's 8-year-old son fainted and was rushed to the nearby hospital. After extensive testing, he was diagnosed with meningitis and they detected a mass adjacent to his nose and brain. His hospitalization requires the family to stay in Orlando indefinitely, while Chris runs back and forth between his job here at Ocean One and the hospital. As you can imagine this has caused major financial and emotional stress on Chris and his family.

A Go Fund Me page has been created for Chris and his family. We ask residents to please contribute to this fund as generously as they can. <https://gofund.me/d321ea4c>

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all happy Passover and Easter holidays,

Respectfully Yours,
Tamara Benson

MEET YOUR STAFF: DAVID AMELA Front Desk Supervisor

By Hellen Soriano

David Amela was born in Miami to Nicaraguan parents. His parents and his older brother had emigrated to the United States fleeing a country at war. However, when David was only 11 months old, they decided to return to their native land and that is where David spent the first 14 years of his life. There, he attended an all-boys catholic school, the best private school in the town of Masaya, the small village where he lived. His father and his uncles had gone to the same school and it was a family tradition to send the new generation to the same school.



He vividly remembers the two big earthquakes he survived while in Nicaragua and how the family had to take refuge at his grandmother’s home both times. He also remembers the many afternoons when there was no electricity in the entire town and he and his schoolmates had to do their homework by the flickering flame of a candle. Many months they had no water. Yet, as a child, David did not question his difficult living situation but took it as just the way things were since everybody he knew endured the same shortages.

When he turned 14, his parents decided to send him back to the United States to live with his aunt, uncle, and two cousins since the situation in Nicaragua was still too dangerous. He started middle school and immediately learned how to play football, a sport he enjoyed after having played soccer all throughout his childhood.

A year later his mother and brother joined him and they moved to their own home. To make ends meet, it was crucial for the three of them to work. And so, when he was only 15, David started doing various odd jobs from washing cars to doing deliveries and anything else that would make him a few dollars. When he turned 16, he got a job at a movie theater where he was in charge of cleaning, selling food at the concession stand and occasionally also selling tickets. After only a short period, he was made supervisor.

The family faced harsh economic difficulties and he needed to leave school for a year to work and help out. When his

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Meet Your Staff (cont. from page 3)

father was finally able to join the family, the situation did not improve. On the contrary, his father was an alcoholic and the family had to get a restraining order to keep him away from them.

By then, David was working at Sports Authority during the day and at night he started at the front desk in a residential building. He applied to work at Wells Fargo and he worked there for about a year. Later on, he moved to Orlando because a friend had asked him to help him open a Home Goods store there.

When he turned 17, his mother remarried and his stepdad became an important part of his life. His stepdad took on the role of father in a way his own father never could. His mother got sick and he left Orlando to return to Miami to be with her. He then started working security at the 1000 Venetian building where he met our manager, Ernesto Moreno. Ernesto became more than a manager, he became his mentor and friend, teaching him many skills he appreciates and values even today.

From 2019 to 2022 he worked at the Plaza Coral Gables where he honed his skills as a supervisor, learning all about security, technology, team management, and guest and resident relations. He was in charge of 6 buildings.

As of March 20, he was named Front Desk Supervisor at Ocean One. When I asked him what his plans were for his new job, he said his priority will be to get to know our building and how it is run and managed. He wants to get to know his team members and see how they work. He is very interested in showing us we made the right decision in offering him this position and he wants all front desk attendants to truly become a cohesive team with the same goals and thorough training.

He also wants to get to know all the residents and identify areas that need improvement in order to work on them.

Welcome to Ocean One, David!
Davidamela91@outlook.com

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