



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE PHASES I & III VOLUME 7 2021

CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE VOICE

A Legacy Community | "Best of the Best" award from Hillsborough County

A Message from Suzanne & Lindsey

The holidays are here and the Village has never looked more beautiful. To boost your holiday spirits, walk or drive thru the neighborhoods after dark and enjoy the holiday displays.

As we reflect on 2021 much has been accomplished in the Village to work toward the "Best of the Best" of neighborhoods; the pickleball courts are hugely popular, landscaping along our boulevards has been refreshed, a vegetation buffer around the ponds is a big step toward a more sustainable environment, the welcome committee members have welcomed over 100 new residents, and the Carrollwood Village Park has become a popular venue for concerts, community events, playing with our dogs as well as de-stressing and just enjoying nature. All three Phases are working toward good stewardship of our natural resources as well as fiscal strength to maintain the Village standards we have come to expect. 2021 was a very busy year and we look forward to 2022.

Your contributions to the Carrollwood Village Voice and questions are welcome. Please email us at communications@carrollwoodvillage.com. We would like to print articles in our Newsletter that reflect the opinions or ideas of our residents (please refrain from negative comments without a solution – we do not want this to be a place for airing complaints unless you have a solution). Take some time to put down your ideas down in writing and send to the email address listed above.

Many thanks to the many residents who have contributed their time, ideas, articles and photos for the Carrollwood Village Voice in 2021.

And above all have a safe and healthy holiday with your families and friends.

Happy Holidays!

Suzanne and Lindsey



Thank You

BILL WEST



Bill and Karen West have moved from Tampa after many decades of volunteering to make Carrollwood Village a Legacy Community. Bill worked tirelessly on traffic calming, the creation of the Carrollwood Cultural Center, Vista Gardens and the Carrollwood Village Park. These amenities make Carrollwood Village a unique oasis in the suburbs of Tampa. Bill's easy and gentle approach to problems and challenges helped us all see that these special projects could be successful.

Bill also served as president of the Carrollwood Village Phase III Homeowners Association for over 20 years. Leading us thru the re-branding project, defeating rezoning efforts that would have a fire station on West Village Dr, a Charter School with 1000 students in West Village Commons and a cemetery just off Dale Mabry on our southern border. Bill's non-confrontational approach lead the Phase III HOA thru many growing pains as our neighborhood matured. All the while Bill never lost sight that creating an ecofriendly sustainable environment would benefit all of us.

So, thank you Bill for all you have given us. We very much appreciate your dedication.

"A Visit to Vista" was written by Jennifer Grebenschikoff, VISTA Gardens President And is so "Bill" we wanted to share it with everyone.

So, with apologies to Clement Clarke Moore and his 'A Visit from St. Nicholas,' please enjoy our poetic tribute to Bill:

A Visit to VISTA

'Twas the day before planting, when all through the garden beds
The weeds had been pulled and the mulch had been spread;
The seedlings had been planted in the soil with great care,
In hopes that Bill West soon would be there;

The plants were anxious to be watered and fed;
While visions of bountiful crops danced in their heads;
And Bill at his computer in his t-shirt and shorts,
Had just completed another Hillsborough County report.

When out in the garden there arose such a clatter,
All the plants sprang up to see what was the matter.
Straight up on their trellises they stood at attention,
And waited to see what was all the commotion.

The sun in the sky smiled with a glow,
Giving the warmth of midday to the garden below.
When what to our wondering eyes did appear,
But an SUV who knows what model or year,
With a tall lanky driver so casually dressed,
We knew in a moment he must be Bill West.

More happy than babies his veggies they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Carrot! Now, Lettuce! Now Eggplant and Tomato!
On, Rapini! On, Pepper! On, Radish and Potato!
To the top of the stake! To the top of the trellis!
Now grow a lot! Grow a lot! Don't make me jealous!"

So up to waist high the veggies they grew
Full of green leaves and yellow blossoms too.
And then, in a twinkling, we heard Bill West say
Oh my, oh dear, look over this way.

His eyes, how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like apples, his nose like a strawberry.
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as green as lime Jell-O.

The stump of a cigar he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath.
That Green Giant had a lean face and a six-pack belly
That stayed put when he laughed, like a grilled portobello.

He was toned and buff, a right healthy giant,
And we laughed when we saw him, not to be defiant.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave us to know we had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And fed all the seedlings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, through VISTA he strode;

He sprang to his beanstalk, to Bill West gave a whistle,
And away they both flew like the down of a thistle.
But we heard them exclaim, as they sailed out of sight—
"Merry VISTA to all, and to all a good night!"

Meet The New

CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGER

DAWN ARCHAMBAULT



Dawn Archambault is originally from Connecticut and has been residing in Florida since 2000. She moved to the Lennox subdivision of Carrollwood Village Phase II in 2002. She has a combination of over 20-years of experience in real estate sales, property management, customer service and project management. Her experience has enabled her to develop key skills to affectively handle all aspects of her role which includes building strong relationships

with homeowners, vendors and board members alike. As a result of working with leaders of different companies, Dawn has been able to consistently expand her knowledge and has been in leadership roles since graduating high school. She attended the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and is constantly striving to learn and grow. She recently obtained her CMCA designation and is currently working to obtain her AMS. Additionally, she is a Real Estate Broker and Florida Notary. In her spare time, she enjoys going to the beach, fine dining, bowling and spending time with her four boys.

To reach Dawn, please email her at thevillage@greenacre.com

Carrollwood Village

REQUIREMENTS FOR REMOVING A TREE



This is a real issue for Homeowners who don't realize that not only do they need the ARC (Architectural Review Committee) approval to remove a tree, but first they need a Hillsborough County permit.

Do have a tree on your property that you need to remove? Unsure if you need to replace it?

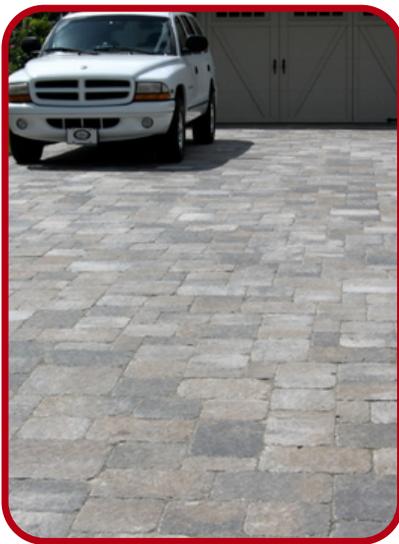
Not sure what to plant if it does need to be replaced?

Be sure to check out the County's Residential Tree Removal Guide for lots of helpful information or contact NaturalResources@HCFLGov.net with any questions. A certified arborist can also assist with these requirements and obtain the necessary permits on your behalf.

Once you get your Hillsborough County permit, you should then complete your ARC application located on our website (<https://www.carrollwoodvillage.com>) and attach the Hillsborough County permit you obtained. Your ARC cannot review your tree removal application until you obtain the permit. We also recommend only using tree companies that are fully licensed and insured so there won't be any issues if the tree damages a person or property. These companies will get the needed permit from the Hillsborough County for your tree work.

Replacing Your

CONCRETE DRIVEWAY WITH PAVERS?



Many of our driveways have discolored and cracked concrete and are in need of replacement. After the fun but challenging part of choosing the pattern and color for your new pavers you need to have ARC approval. A permit from the County is required and needs to be part of your contract with the paver contractor.

The County requires a Hillsborough County Permit to replace a residential or commercial driveway (concrete, paver or otherwise) if the driveway meets or encroaches Hillsborough County easement, sidewalk or right of way. The permit is \$50.00 and requires a foundation inspection followed by a final inspection. The County takes this very seriously because Hillsborough County is liable for both the sidewalk and the easement and there are certain construction standards that must be met.

Phase I Landscape

IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE

BY DIANA RAO, CHAIR OF LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE



Phase I is pleased to tell our homeowners that we have many exciting improvements in the works:

In December, Fieldstone Landscaping, our contractor, installed our holiday flower rotation by planting red geraniums and white alyssum on the top tier of the south and north sides of our main entrance at South Village Drive and Dale Mabry. Going forward, the lower beds along the walls there will be planted with perennials or shrubs to reduce the cost of the plants and maintenance.

We asked Fieldstone to test the soil in the entrance beds of our subdivisions, and the results showed remediation was necessary to promote the health of our plantings. The nutrients have been added into 90% of the beds with the remaining scheduled soon.

A complete re-design of the entrance at Old Orchard and Casey Road has begun. This will include all new plantings, improved lighting, and updated irrigation. Much of the work is on hold until TECO completes its part of the electrical installation.

The Landscape and Field Committees recently met at the front entrance to the Village to determine a better place to locate the clock (yes, there is one; can you spot it in the photo here?) so it's more visible. We agreed on a new, better location closer to the street and traffic. We are considering a pedestal and landscaping around the clock base.

Finally, Phase I is continually putting costly band-aids on our existing irrigation system (many parts of which are close to 50 years old). We have asked Fieldstone to get bids from several irrigation consultants to assess our existing irrigation system and what it would cost to update it to meet today's and the future's needs. We now spend upwards of \$30,000 to \$40,000 each year to keep our system barely functional. Our committee feels this replacement is long overdue, not only because of the amount of money being spent on the constant repairs but to also increase the efficiency and water conservation a new system will give us.

Dan Ruskiewicz

FIELD UPDATE



The Carrollwood Village Phase I Homeowners Association has several committees that work on numerous projects for our Village and residents each year. One such committee is the Field Committee which implements enhancements at Dan Ruskiewicz Field with a focus on engaging residents and to also provide an overall cohesive aesthetics to the field. Some of the projects The Field Committee completed over the summer was the relocation of the Dan Ruskiewicz Field marquee to the entrance of the field which now allows visibility of the sign as you approach the field before the entrance.

Landscaping and irrigation projects were also completed at the base of the sign along with the addition of several palm trees throughout the field. The Field Committee is currently busy planning projects that will be completed over the winter months and will provide updates and pictures when completed. We wish everyone a wonderful holiday season, and as we wait for some cooler weather, we hope you will take some time to visit us down at the field, play some pickleball or just relax by the pond. Thank you, The Carrollwood Village Field Committee.



Free Fitness FOR SENIORS



Did you know that most insurance companies in Florida offer us a free way to stay in shape or get healthy? Staying fit has never been easier for seniors. After being confined to our houses during the pandemic, many of us are looking for ways to get back in shape and perhaps to lose a few of the “quarantine pounds” that found their way onto our hips. One of the many advantages of being 65+ is that we qualify for Medicare and that gives us access to a program

called “SilverSneakers”. I thought it was common knowledge, but in speaking to several of my neighbors, I have come to learn that it is not as well-known as I thought.

SilverSneakers is a program designed to promote health and wellness for people age 65 and older. SilverSneakers is included in many Medicare plans, including both Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement insurance.

Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement carriers have different benefits in different states and counties, which means that not every plan in every state offers SilverSneakers.

Key Benefits include:

- Access to gyms and fitness centers around the country
- Online live and on-demand fitness instruction which includes Zumba Gold, Yoga, Cardio dance, Stretching and Stability courses and even Meditation

When you are a member of SilverSneakers through your Medicare plan, these benefits are already included in your coverage. There is no additional fee for this program. The list of providers currently offering access to SilverSneakers changes every year. Just because your health plan includes SilverSneakers this year doesn’t mean it will next year. Keep in mind insurance companies change their plan benefits all the time. So, when shopping for your plan, look to make sure this benefit is offered. This list below details the major carriers widely known in the United States—you may find other, lesser-known insurance companies that offer SilverSneakers.

- Aetna
- Anthem
- Bankers Life
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Care Plus
- Clover
- Eon Health
- Humana
- Kaiser Permanente
- Medica
- Mutual of Omaha
- Vitality
- Well Care

One of the major carriers in Florida, United Healthcare has left the SilverSneakers program and offers their own program called Renew Active (see their website for more details on that program.)

As SilverSneakers is mostly known for its gym membership program, you’ll have access to over 17,000 gyms and health clubs nationwide. One of the nice features is that you can join several gyms at the same time to maximize your fitness options. The gyms in our area include, but are not limited to:

- Youfit
- Planet Fitness
- EoS Fitness
- Crunch
- Bob Sierra YMCA
- Anytime Fitness

Besides the gym memberships that SilverSneakers is known for, you also have access to live fitness and wellness classes that you can stream online. This is a particularly useful benefit given the current concerns over COVID-19.

To get started, simply:

- Create your profile online.
- Get your digital membership card.
- Start using your benefits!

So, there is no excuse for not getting or staying in shape in the New Year. Have a healthy and happy holiday!

Holiday Village

EVENT AT THE CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE PARK



These Phase 1 Board Members Met with Santa: Susan Baxter Gibson, Tres.; Jennifer Grebenschikoff, VP; Santa; Dick Woltman, Pres; Diana Rao, Sec.

Saturday, December 11, 2021 the Homeowners Associations sponsored the "Holiday Village" Event at the Carrollwood Village Park. The event included a visit from Santa and ornament making, an ice sculpture demonstration, tree lighting and sing along, performances by the Tampa Bay New Horizons Band, the Carrollwood Community Chorus and the Carrollwood Brass Band. Food trucks and artisans were also there. If you attended, we hope you had a great time. If you missed the event, we hope to see you at the next event.



A Letter From The CARROLLWOOD PARK CONSERVANCY

FROM: PHILIP J. DAVIS, PRESIDENT AND WILLIAM DEMARE, TREASURER
TO: CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE PHASE L, LL, AND LLL HOMEOWNERS



Additional Carrollwood Park Conservancy (CPC) Board Members and Volunteers are needed.

As many of you know, the CPC was initiated to oversee and facilitate the development of the Carrollwood Village Park (CVP) in our community. CVP is fully operational and all the amenities have been constructed. The County Parks and Recreation Department (Parks) has done a tremendous job and is now in the process of developing programs to provide the community with meaningful cultural events. As such the Parks is looking for as much support from the Carrollwood community as possible.

Unfortunately, because of the circumstances of COVID-19 and other personal issues several board members have resigned over the last year which has left us with three members, Philip Davis,

William DeMare and Kevin Newsome, who has just joined the board. Phil and Bill have supported the requirements of the Parks up to this point, however, because of new programs under development, we do need additional board members and volunteers.

We are asking the Homeowners Associations in the surrounding communities to help us recruit new Board members and auxiliary volunteers to support CVP operations and to enhance and maintain existing amenities. One of the unique features of our assistance to the Parks is that we provide a great deal of local control on "who does what, where, when and how." We wish to continue; however, we need some help. We do not think it would be beneficial to our community to just be one of 176 parks. We want to be involved with all decisions made by the Parks regarding CVP. We have set the Board of Directors member annual donation at \$250 per person.

We definitely need directors that can plan events, develop fundraising campaigns, manage volunteers, and support general park operations. We prefer board members and volunteers from the local community. We are looking to ramp up capability within the next two months to support the CVP. Your help is essential.

Our next Board of Directors Meeting will be on 6 January 2022, at 5:30 at the Carrollwood Village Park Nature Center. If you are interested but have questions, please post questions on our Facebook site.

<https://www.facebook.com/Carrollwood-Village-Park-2175225516137317>



Phase I OUTREACH

ARE YOU LOOKING TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

If so, we are looking for homeowners just like you, who might be interested in becoming more involved and serving as active Outreach Committee members.

Some of the Outreach activities we are encouraging residents to consider include:

Welcome Committee—hand out complimentary bags in your respective communities to new neighbors and welcome them to Carrollwood Village. Or gather items from local stores and businesses to put into our bags.

Organize Block Parties—consider holding a block party/happy hour in your respective subdivisions once or twice a year.

Board Committees—consider serving on any of the current committees that the Board currently has available. Or come up with a new one!

TECO Lighting Project—consider gathering signatures in your respective subdivisions to upgrade lighting to new decorative LED lights. This project deadline has been extended until October 1, 2022.

Coffee Chats—once per quarter, Kristine will hold a coffee chat to update the outreach committee on board activities and receive feedback from outreach members on what's happening in their neighborhood communities.

Board Positions—perhaps even consider joining the board, when positions come up for renewal.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these outreach activities, please contact Kristine Glein at kmglein@gmail.com.

Terra Sur Cafe



Terra Sur Cafe, owned and operated by fellow Villagers David and Janine Rivas, has been a part of the Carrollwood Village community since 2005. The restaurant is a favorite among many and is located near the corner of Ehrlich and West Village Drive. The owners proudly serve delicious Peruvian food mixing ingredients like rice, potatoes, chilis, beef, cilantro and corn. These flavors were inspired by immigrants that came to Peru from Europe, Africa and East Asia in the 1800's.

The flavors and techniques of Peruvian food is masterful and if you don't have a favorite dish already, you will soon. Some of the most popular menu items at Terra Sur Cafe are Lomo Saltado (stir fry with rice, potatoes and strips of beef tenderloin), Chifa (Peruvian style fried rice with your choice of beef, chicken seafood and more), Ceviche (fresh cuts of red snapper marinated in lime, chili peppers, cilantro and red onion). And the daily lunch and dinner specials offer an opportunity to showcase a new twist on traditional dishes.

What would be a great dinner without a great wine selection? White, red and sparkling wines are carefully selected from various regions, from California, Oregon and Washington to Argentina, Chili, Spain, Portugal, Italy and France. Terra Sur hosts memorable wine pairing dinners like the one in July that featured wines from Duckhorn Vineyards and four food courses, Thai chicken satay, crab cake, stuffed poblano pepper, carne asada taco.



The dining room is welcoming, chic and cozy. It's the perfect place for a date night or a night out with friends. Indoor and outdoor dining is available.

What is now a restaurant staple in the neighborhood, almost became a breakfast cafe. David and Janine had always loved the suburban and family-oriented feel of the area. A trip to the old Sweetbay Supermarket (now EOS Fitness) led David to a discovery of an empty office space on the east side of the shopping center. It looked like the perfect place for a breakfast spot. But with vision, inspiration and help from family members, an authentic Peruvian restaurant emerged.

Enjoying a lovely, loyal crowd, weekend reservations begin to book up. In 2015 Alex's BBQ Restaurant, located next door, closed after the death of the beloved owner and namesake. It remained vacant for a few years when David and Janine made the decision to take over the space. The expansion doubled the size of the dining area opened in February 2019 with rich, warm colors and a one-of-a-kind private wine room.

The expansion also included the addition of an elegant bar that that offers whiskey, cocktails, martinis, wine, premium cognacs, tequilas, Peruvian craft beers, vodkas, gins and cordials. Happy Hour at the bar is Monday through Friday 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

With the same attention to detail, David and Janine also own the intimate and casual CEPAS Wine Bar, that also boast a superb menu and wine list. CEPAS is located a couple doors down and has indoor and outdoor seating as well.

Terra Sur Cafe is located at 5330 Ehrlich Road #103 Tampa 33624. For reservations call 813-269-2694. The restaurant is open Monday - Thursday 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Friday 11:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. and Saturday 2 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Sunday closed.

Indoor and outdoor seating is available. Order takeout by calling ahead. For delivery use UberEats or Doordash. Go to terrasurcafe.com to sign up for emails about wine pairing dinners, events and specials.



The Tampa Bay

NEW HORIZONS STRUM AND SING UKULELE GROUP

CALLING ALL UKULELE PLAYERS AND THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO LEARN!
COME SING ALONG!



The Tampa Bay New Horizons Community Band (TBNHB) formed a ukulele Strum and Sing band in November 2019. Candace Otte, from the Tampa Bay Ukulele Society, leads the community ukulele group. This is an OPEN invitation to join the fun strumming and singing weekly.

The TBNHB Strum and Sing is comprised of people who have never played a ukulele and want to see if it's as much fun as it looks, people who have "dabbled" with the ukulele or guitar and want to learn and play more, and a few who are quite good. It's a wonderful way to keep your mind and spirits bright! After all, the ukulele is a happy instrument and very easy to learn the basics.

Come try it out! There are extra ukuleles on hand for people who want to just "test it out". You don't have to read music or have a prize-winning voice. It is a great way to meet new people and have fun.

The TBNHB Strum and Sing group meets Thursdays, 12:15 pm, at the Carrollwood Cultural Center Studio, 4537 Lowell Road, Tampa, FL 33618. There will be a beginners' class from 11:15 to 12 pm to learn basics.

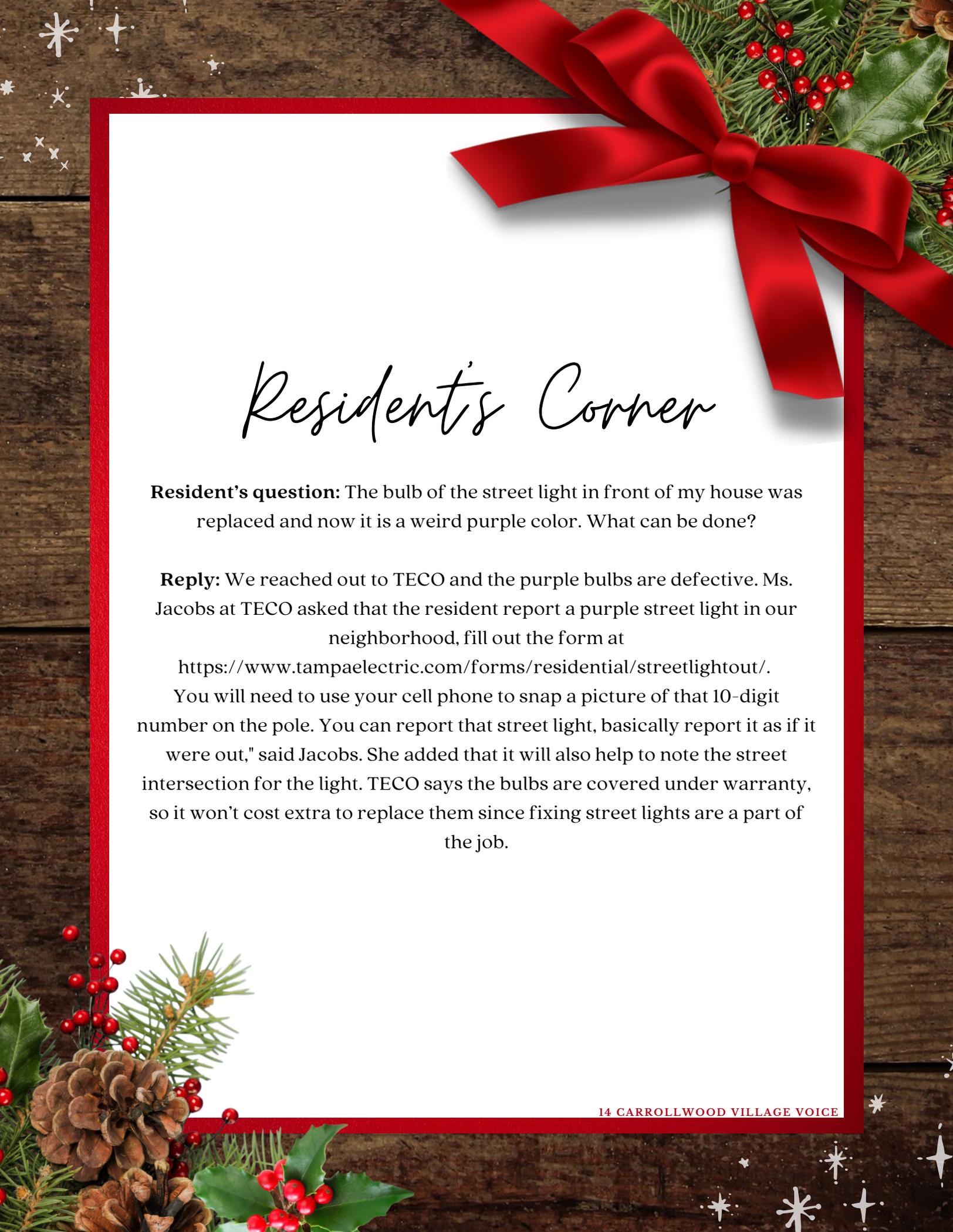
For everyone who plays an instrument or who would like to learn! The Tampa Bay New Horizons Band is a member of the New Horizons International Music Association (NHIMA) with over 250 community bands all over the world. We provide opportunities for adults to be involved in a band – whether it's for the first time, or the first time in a long time. Together we learn and perform in a friendly and positive atmosphere.

The Instructional Band is a beginning band for community members who wish to get back into music making or would like to learn to play an instrument. Thursday mornings bring a music stand and an instrument to the Carrollwood Cultural Center Studio" at 9:00 am.

The TBNHB concert band meets directly after the instructional band from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. The band boasts 28 members and we always have room to grow. The TBNHB encourages all ages and abilities to check us out.

For more information, check out <http://www.carrollwoodcenter.org/clubs/new-horizons-band-3/>. To join, please contact Helen Bailey, hdbailey1@verizon.net or newhorizons@carrollwoodcenter.org.





Resident's Corner

Resident's question: The bulb of the street light in front of my house was replaced and now it is a weird purple color. What can be done?

Reply: We reached out to TECO and the purple bulbs are defective. Ms. Jacobs at TECO asked that the resident report a purple street light in our neighborhood, fill out the form at

<https://www.tampaelectric.com/forms/residential/streetlightout/>.

You will need to use your cell phone to snap a picture of that 10-digit number on the pole. You can report that street light, basically report it as if it were out," said Jacobs. She added that it will also help to note the street intersection for the light. TECO says the bulbs are covered under warranty, so it won't cost extra to replace them since fixing street lights are a part of the job.

Looking For SOMETHING TO DO?

Be sure to check out the events at the Carrollwood Cultural Center, Events – Carrollwood Cultural Center (carrollwoodcenter.org). There are concerts, art classes, dance classes, music classes, Community musical groups welcoming new members, book clubs and other clubs.



Garden Myths



Every pursuit has its myths and legends; gardening is no different. Here are more of our favorite garden myths, along with the grains of truth that inspired them.

Snakes Are Aggressive (FALSE)

The sight of a snake in the landscape often sends gardeners into a panic. Obviously, we don't suggest approaching unidentified wildlife, but even surprised snakes are rarely aggressive. Far from being a nuisance, snakes play an important ecological role in our Florida-Friendly yards.

The best way to protect yourself while gardening is to wear thick boots and gloves. Take care when working in areas that may serve as a hiding place for a snake. And while it's best to never approach any snake, approaching a venomous snake can be dangerous, even deadly. If you think a snake may be venomous, call a professional. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has a list of professionals you can consult. For more on garden snakes, invasive snake species, and the difference between "poisonous" and "venomous," take a look at the UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions article [Snakes in Florida](#).

Vibrations Deter Moles (FALSE)

Wouldn't it be lovely if it were true? Devices claiming to emit mole-repelling sonic vibrations seem like the perfect alternative to mole traps. Unfortunately, these vibrating devices have not been found effective in scientific trials. In fact, UF/IFAS researchers point out that mole tunnels next to highways suggest that even the vibrations of heavy traffic don't deter moles.

Mothballs Deter Moles (TRUE but...)

It is true that the smell of mothballs is obnoxious to most creatures (gardeners included). It is not true that a dusting of mothballs will drive moles from your property. We're sorry to say that this treatment, too, has not been found effective in scientific trials. The moles may block off the treated tunnel, but they will happily dig a new one a few feet away.

Fruity Gum Deters Moles (WHAT?)

With vibrations and mothballs off the list of deterrents, gardeners have gotten desperate. Many people claim that putting sticks of fruit-flavored gum into moles' tunnels will eliminate the moles. We're not sure if they believe gum is toxic to moles or if the smell alone will do the trick. Regardless, this is another method not supported in scientific tests.

On that note, sorry to say that there are no methods of eliminating moles that do not endanger these furry creatures. There is information on methods to deter and trap moles but most traps are lethal. The good news is that damage done by moles is usually cosmetic — no plants were (seriously) harmed in the making of those mole hills. Better still, moles eat insects, including pests like mole crickets, cutworms, and beetle larvae. True, some of mole tunnels disturb the roots of young plants and may dry out grass roots, but most plants recover quickly. Moles are just another sign of a thriving landscape ecosystem. Congratulations — you did your job well, gardener! Once you're ready to make your peace with moles, you can learn more about *Scalopus aquaticus* in the article from AskIFAS.

Lovebugs are a UF Experiment Gone Wrong (FALSE)

Franken-bug: created by mad scientists, now escaped and profiting only the auto-detailing industry. This final myth makes such a compelling story, doesn't it? We have no idea how the lovebug myth began, but it's been circulating at least since the 1970s. Alas, the truth in this case is less exciting than the fiction.

"Lovebugs" are actually flies, scientific name *Plecia nearctica*. They arrived in Florida via natural migration along the Gulf of Mexico. Dry years result in lower populations since lovebug larvae develop in wet areas. They need moisture and decaying vegetation to survive, but so do hundreds of other beneficial species. Removing this habitat might decrease your lovebug populations, but overall, it would do more harm than good. There are no approved chemical controls for lovebugs, either. Sorry gardeners; lovebugs are here to stay. Other than washing your car regularly to avoid etching, there isn't much you can do.

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/florida-friendly-landscapes/>



What To Plant

IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY



Bedding plants: To add color to the winter garden plant masses of petunia, pansy, and snapdragon.

Bulbs: Amaryllis is a popular plant for the holiday season. It can be forced to bloom now or planted outdoors for spring blooms. The blooms die it can be planted in a sunny spot and it will bloom next year.



Herbs: Plant herbs that thrive in cool weather. Some examples include parsley, thyme, sage, dill, fennel, and cilantro.

Vegetables: Reliable cool-season vegetables to plant this month include celery, cauliflower, lettuce, cabbage, and carrot.

What to Do



Poinsettias: Enjoy one of the most popular indoor holiday plants. Protect it from cold until spring, and then plant it in the garden for next year.

Cold protection: Prepare now to protect tender plants should cold weather threaten. Old bedsheets are the best!

Lawn disease: Continue to watch for brown patch and large patch, fungal diseases that cause areas of grass to turn brown. Since treatment is difficult, prevention with proper cultural practices is key. These diseases become active when the soil temperature, measured 2–4 in. deep, is between 65°F and 75°F and go dormant when the weather warms in May.



Compost/mulch: Use fallen leaves to provide the carbon ingredient needed for successful composting and also to make good mulch.

Landscape and garden pests: Continue monitoring and treat as needed. While cooler weather generally means fewer pests, some populations actually increase at this time of year.