

# THE DRIFTWOOD TIMES

FALL EDITION

October 2015

The Driftwood Vacation Villas Condominium Association

The Driftwood Ocean Villas Condominium Association

The Driftwood Breakers Condominium Association

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3150 Ocean Drive  
Vero Beach, Florida 32963

## **From the Manager's Desk...**

Oh my, we created quite a stir among the owners after we issued the last newsletter advising that the Board of Directors were seeking proposals for the upgrade of our overtaxed wireless internet at the resort. The "stir" was all good though, with the only negative comments being that we weren't doing it quickly enough. But as the saying goes, "Good things come to those who wait." After much research and consideration the Board has decided on a new provider for this service: Blueport Wireless. After a very long meeting in which 3 different proposals were reviewed, followed by extensive research and consideration, including references, this

company stood out above the others in price, product and service. They will begin the installation of their products this month and hopefully all will be completed by the end of October. We have every reason to expect that every area of the property, including at least some of the beach, will achieve strong internet signal.

The new system will support up to 900 devices at one time! There is no doubt that there will be some "tweaking" of the system until it is 100% because of the odd configuration and different construction of the buildings on the property. This company will also be providing 24/7 support for their system, which will be very helpful for both our owners/guests and our staff,

who have had the unenviable task of keeping our current out-of-date system running and also assisting owners/guests with getting and staying online; mostly *staying* online. We believe, once the system is completely installed, that this issue should be resolved for the foreseeable future. The equipment purchased is state-of-the-art and will enable us to upgrade when necessary. Since we all know how quickly technology changes these days, this was an essential part of the choice made by the Board of Directors. A special “thank you” goes out to Board member Anthony Martino, whose broad knowledge of all things “cyberspace” was essential and a huge asset during this very detailed *and* very expensive, but necessary, improvement to the Driftwood’s internet capabilities. We hope you enjoy your new online experience at the Driftwood.....but remember you *are* at the beach; put that device down and enjoy what Waldo built....long before anyone (even Al Gore) thought of the internet.....

We have been working on several other large projects this year to improve the Driftwood. In Ocean Villas this summer we began the replacement of all the living room and bedroom windows in the cottages. All units will be completed by the end of October. These windows are hurricane-impact and look great. They are “colonial” in design, which maintains the original look of these units, but with a much higher quality window. Not only are they high-impact, they are also double-paned, low “E” windows which will help with both lower utility bills and keeping exterior noises outside. When the old windows were removed, we found that the bay windows in each room were not supported at all; these are now properly framed. We have also replaced all the area rugs in the living rooms and bedrooms of the cottages this summer. In E Building we are replacing a few windows also and reconditioning all the rest with new hardware and framing. Most of this work is taking place during the maintenance weeks this fall. In D Building the balcony railings for D228 were replaced, as was the railing in front of D228 and D229. During the maintenance week for D building we have also replaced much of the decking oceanside between 229 & 232. In addition, we plan to replace the west staircase also, but this may take more time as we await permit approval.

In Vacation Villas we completed the installation of the last sofa beds in B125 & B126. We’ve also purchased and are in the middle of the installation of all new exterior lighting for B Building. About half of the refrigerators in A & B Building were replaced over the summer also. In addition we continue the replacement of the headboards in A Building. We have less than a third of those left to complete. About half of the leisure chairs in A Building

were replaced this year. We are no longer buying recliners because people continue banging them into walls without regard for the damage they are causing to the walls, so we have purchased a very comfortable stuffed chair instead to help prevent further damage. We are continuing the concrete restoration work in A Building. In 2012, as many will remember, we completely replaced the wrap-around balcony on all floors on the oceanfront end of the building. We also restored all the columns and replaced one foot of concrete edge and all railings around the building. Now we are researching what needs to be done to the remaining portions of the walkways from the doors to that new edge. We do know that the third and fourth floors are in better condition than second floor, but all need some work.

In the Breakers we will have more than half the unit’s bathroom vanities renovated by year-end, as promised. The remainder will be done in 2016. We originally set the goal of having the entire interior renovation complete by year-end 2016, and barring any unforeseen problem we will make that deadline. The new vanity areas include granite countertops, new sinks, faucets, mirrors, towel bars, towel rings, lighting and either new cabinet facing or all new cabinets, depending on the condition of the existing cabinetry. We have received so many wonderful compliments on the new look of the units; it makes all the work worthwhile. We have also been slowly reinsulating the air conditioning chiller lines in units. This is a difficult and costly process. The insulation is original and has begun to fail and the only way to fix the problem is to cut holes in the ceilings along the path of the pipes, remove the old and install new insulation and then repair, texture and repaint the ceilings. We are doing this “as needed” but as time goes by it appears all units will need it. This year we finished about 25% of the units. We have also recoated all the walkways in the Breakers this summer and the retention walls around the pool area are being repaired and coated this fall.

I have many things to relate to you in this newsletter but there are three that need to be stated first because of the long-time involvement at the resort that these three individuals have had. First and foremost is to advise that our beloved front desk person, Shirley James, passed away on September 13<sup>th</sup>. She worked at the Driftwood longer than any other employee, for over 27 years (she had me beat by 2 weeks). She was the most loyal and dedicated employee we could have ever wanted. She was loved not only by the staff here, but by hundreds of owners who have gotten to know her over the years. She could talk with anyone and they would know that she

was sincerely interested in whatever they were discussing. She will be missed by all of us. She was such a vital part of the Driftwood, and I, for one, lost not only a trusted, valued employee, but a dear friend. Thank you Shirley for all you did for all of us.

Second, and just as important, long-time Board member and Driftwood Ocean Villas president for many years, Myra Langbehn, also passed away this summer after a short illness. She was one of the best supporters of the Driftwood since the day it went to timeshare in 1979 and served on all three boards for over 30 years. She resigned in 2011, but continued to contribute through her phone calls to me in support of all the Board has tried to accomplish over the years. Her encouragement after the hurricanes in 2004 was so welcome and we are so sorry to hear that she is gone. Thank you Myra for all your guidance and kindness over the years.

And lastly we are so sorry that Driftwood owner of 12 weeks, George Butzer, passed away earlier this summer. He and his wife, Audrey, came to the Driftwood in January and stayed until the middle of April each year. He was a navigator on a B-17 on over 30 missions during World War II and told so many stories of those days during his visits to the Driftwood. He was from Wisconsin and wore his Green Bay Packer hat everywhere. He was a joy to have here and we will all miss his annual visits.

Speaking of people for whom the Driftwood has a special meaning we now have the memorial garden in front of "A" Building if you would like to have a loved one remembered here. We have already added about 50 bricks, with another 20 on the way. The garden was done in honor of John Dean, the longtime friend and architect to the Driftwood, who was so important to us for nearly 2 decades and passed away in 2014. If you would like to purchase a brick you can do so by printing the form that is on our website at [www.verobeachdriftwood.com](http://www.verobeachdriftwood.com) or by picking up a form at the front desk. The cost for each brick is \$50.00. Shirley, Myra and George mentioned above will be with us forever as their bricks have already been ordered.

The Board of Directors hired a firm this year to begin foreclosure proceedings on some long-delinquent accounts. These foreclosures are being done under the recent law passed in Florida which enables timeshare resorts to initiate and complete foreclosures in a much less costly way. We are able to do them in bulk, which makes it much more cost-effective for the resort. By completing these foreclosures, the Driftwood will have title to all these weeks which will enable them to be sold

again to owners who will pay the ongoing maintenance fees. There are quite a few good unit weeks that will be available once the foreclosure process is finished, so make sure you check with the office on your next visit to see if there is one you might be interested in owning.

The Florida legislature passed a law this summer making it illegal for people to try to pass their "emotional support animals" off as a true service animal. A real service animal behaves better than most humans, stays by the side of the person it services all the time, does not bark incessantly, scratch furniture or bother other people as other less-trained animals frequently do. We have had to deal with these fake service animals for several years and are grateful that this law was enacted. True service animals are a pleasure to have around and we welcome them at the Driftwood, but we ask our owners and guests that have abused this privilege in the past to leave their non-service animals at home. Thank you for your help in this matter. For anyone violating this new law the punishment is up to 60 days in jail and community service after that.

You will find the proposed budget amounts for 2016 later in this newsletter. All associations have some increases but the single largest increase is in property taxes. We have not had any increase in assessed values for over 7 years and this year our values were increased by about 10%. That increase coupled with the increased millage rate of the county for all property has resulted in an 18-19% increase in property taxes for next year. We originally had a 20% increase in values, plus the millage increase, but after meeting with the Property Appraiser we were able to cut that in half, which helped keep this increase at 18-19% rather than 30-35% as originally quoted.

When you receive your notice for the 2016 budget, which contains the proxy card for the annual meeting, please note we are requesting you to forward your email address on that card. We are trying to obtain an email list of all Driftwood owners which will enable us to send items such as this newsletter and the bills for annual fees. If we are able to do this we can save thousands each year on postage. Those of you who responded to our request for your email address in the last newsletter should have received **THIS** newsletter electronically; if you did **not** please let us know. If you **did** then this will be the last newsletter you receive through regular mail.

There are also a few units up for auction in this newsletter. These are units taken back from owners in lieu of foreclosure. Take a look; you may find a unit or week that will interest you or a family member.

Of further interest to all, The Driftwood website has been updated to support all mobile devices and touch screen computers. It has a new layout for the virtual tour, new review section and new email section. You also have the ability to pay your maintenance fees on our website now. Once the site is opened on your computer, click on the link "Fee Payments" and follow the instructions. It is very easy to use and we are pleased to have this option for our owners. That's all for this newsletter. We look forward to seeing all of our owners this coming year!

Jeanne L. Radlet, General Manager

While all members of the three Associations Boards of Directors have indicated their desire to serve again in 2016, anyone else who is an owner in good standing may ask to be added to the ballot for the Board of Directors at the annual meetings by simply informing Jeanne Radlet at the resort prior to December 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Budget Meetings and the Annual Meetings of Driftwood Vacation Villas Condominium Association, Inc., Driftwood Breakers Condominium Association, Inc. and Driftwood Ocean Villas Condominium Association, Inc. will be held on Saturday, December 05, 2015 at the Costa De Este hotel next to the Driftwood on Ocean Drive in Vero Beach.

Each Condominium will meet separately at the following times:  
**Driftwood Ocean Villas Condominium Association, Inc.**

**9:00AM** - Budget Meeting and Annual Meeting to immediately follow Budget meeting to 9:50AM

**Driftwood Breakers Condominium Association, Inc.**

**10:00AM** - Budget Meeting and Annual Meeting to immediately follow Budget meeting to 10:50AM

**Driftwood Vacation Villas Condominium Association, Inc.**

**11:00AM** - Budget Meeting and Annual Meeting to immediately follow Budget meeting to 11:50AM

**PROPOSED MAINTENANCE FEES & TAXES FOR 2016:**

**BREAKERS:**

**2 Sleeper**

Maintenance	\$327.40
Property Taxes	\$ 21.81
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 20.88</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$370.09 2.42% increase</b>

**4 Sleeper**

Maintenance	\$544.36
Property Taxes	\$ 36.31
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 34.74</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$615.41 2.42% increase</b>

**6 Sleeper**

Maintenance	\$796.97
Property Taxes	\$ 53.17
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 50.87</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$901.01 2.42% increase</b>

**VACATION VILLAS:**

**B125, B126**

Maintenance	\$486.17
Property Taxes	\$ 26.70
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 29.89</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$542.76 5.0% increase</b>

**VACATION VILLAS continued**

**All Others**

Maintenance	\$ 471.05
Property Taxes	\$ 26.69
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 29.10</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$526.84 5.0% increase</b>

**OCEAN VILLAS:**

**D228 & Cottages**

Maintenance	\$434.90
Property Taxes	\$ 35.78
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 34.70</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$505.38 3.0% increase</b>

**All Others**

Maintenance	\$620.08
Property Taxes	\$ 51.03
Windstorm Ins	<u>\$ 49.49</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$720.60 3.0% increase</b>

**UNITS UP FOR AUCTION:**

**OCEAN VILLAS**

The following units in Ocean Villas are available for auction:

<u>Unit#</u>	<u>Week #</u>
E109	35
E109	48
E110	49

E109 is an oceanfront one bedroom unit with a partial kitchen and one bath and has a minimum bid of \$1,500. E110 is an oceanfront townhouse with a partial kitchen, two baths and sleeps 6 with a sleep sofa on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, a king bed & another sleep sofa on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. E110 has a minimum bid of \$1,800. E Building is on the National Registry of Historic Places. These units are all Friday-Friday occupancy.

**BREAKERS**

The following units in Breakers are available for auction:

<u>Unit #</u>	<u>Week#</u>
3002	05
3030	43

3002 is a 1-bedroom, 2-bath park-side unit with a full kitchen and has a minimum bid of \$1,000. 3030 is a second floor Oceanfront 1 bedroom, 1 bath unit with full kitchen. The minimum bid on this unit is \$1,500. These units were all newly renovated in 2014. These units are Friday-Friday occupancy.

**VACATION VILLAS**

The following units in Vacation Villas are available for auction:

<u>Unit#</u>	<u>Week#</u>
B105	08
B105	11
B213	06
B213	07
B215	09

All "B" units are studios which sleep 4, have a full kitchen and a minimum bid of \$900. These units are all Saturday – Saturday

If you are interested in bidding on any of the above referenced units: Please send envelope to Jeanne Radlet at the Driftwood Resort, 3150 Ocean Drive, Vero Beach, FL 32963. **Mark the outside of the envelope "Bid on Unit \_\_\_\_"** and include the unit number on which you are bidding. The bids must be received prior to December 3, 2015. The winning bids will be announced at the Annual Meetings on December 5. If you are bidding on more than one unit please indicate how many you actually wish to purchase and list the units in your order of preference.