

FALL/WINTER 2024



Message from the President

Dear Community Members,

I hope this finds you and yours safe from Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Please be mindful and adhere to the 25mph speed limit community wide as school is in session and the cooler weather means more bikers and walkers in the neighborhood. Let's keep everyone safe on our roads. Your board has been hard at work behind the scenes this past summer working on potential by-law and deed restriction updates, keeping on the county to get our potholes fixed and roads re-paved as well as property maintenance and restriction violation enforcement. There are several pieces of news as well as upcoming events in this newsletter we are excited to share with you. The board will NOT be asking for any increase in dues for 2025. With the Brown case wrapping up and the Deed Restrictions committees' work resolving issues without the need for legal involvement, we are on good financial footing for 2025 at our current dues of \$150 per year.

As my first 1-year term comes to an end and I am eligible to be president for 1 more year upon re-election, I would like to make it official that I will be running for re-election for 1 more 1-year term as President of SEPOA. It has been an honor to serve the community the past few years and I look forward to another year to continue the amazing work this board has started in 2024.

I look forward to seeing you around the 'hood!

Henry Kellner
President



www.sorrentoeast.org
SEPOAinfo@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

- 11/7 Annual Meeting
- 11/12 Board Meeting
- 11/16 Community Picnic
- 11/23 Holiday Gate Decorating
- 12/10 Board Meeting
- 12/18 Holiday Decorating Contest
- 1/14 Board Meeting
- 2/11 Board Meeting

Annual Meeting

Thursday, November 7th

Our Savior Lutheran Church
2507 N. Tamiami Trail
Nokomis, FL

7:30PM



Deed Restrictions

In an effort to be more transparent about which violations have been reported to the Deed Restrictions Committee and what action(s) have been taken, below is a list of reported violations. House numbers have been redacted for privacy.

Street	Violation	Date Notice 1	Date Notice 2	Comment	Update
DaVinci Dr.	Illegal Shed	5/25/2024	6/15/2024	Owner emailed will be removed 1/25.	
DaVinci Dr.	Illegal Shed and Pergola	6/12/2024	6/15/2024	Attorneys engaged	
DaVinci Dr.	Overgrown Lawn and bushes	7/13/2024	7/13/2024		Owner responded he would have things cleaned up in ten days
DaVinci Dr.	Commercial vehicle in driveway	9/18/2024	9/18/2024		
Degas Dr.	Roof/yard	2/22/2024	3/2/2024	Letter sent	
Degas Dr.	Roof Violation - Tarped	7/31/2024	9/3/2024	In progress, owner waiting on insurance	
Duchamp Dr.	Pool cage not fixed, overgrown lawn	1/18/2024	1/18/2024		County has been called due to rodent infestation. Owner cut lawn
Giotto Dr.	Dirty Roof	5/8/2024	5/9/2024		
Giotto Dr.	Commercial vehicle in driveway	7/31/2024	9/3/2024	Currently parking truck at entrance three on vacant property.	
N. Rosetti Dr.	Boat/Trailer/Truck in road overnight	9/12/2024		Ongoing violation	Attorneys involved
N. Rosetti Dr.	Treehouse in backyard	1/10/2023	1/10/2023	Owner hasn't complied	Legal/mediation next step
Rubens Dr.	Dirty Roof	1/25/2024	1/29/2024		Legal/mediation next step
Signorelli Dr.	Roof tiles missing, lanai screening torn, and cage in poor condition	4/9/2023	7/3/2023		Homeowner notified new roof/lanai fixed before Fall 24
Signorelli Dr.	Commercial vehicle in driveway	9/28/2023			SEPOA won case against homeowner for same violation in '22. Final letter sent seeking compliance.
VanDyck	Boat on Trailer parked in grass	10/9/2023	5/10/2024	Letter warning of legal action sent 9/3/24	
W. Rosetti Dr.	Boat in Driveway	11/23/2023	11/28/2023	Removes boat but brings it back often	Legal/mediation next step

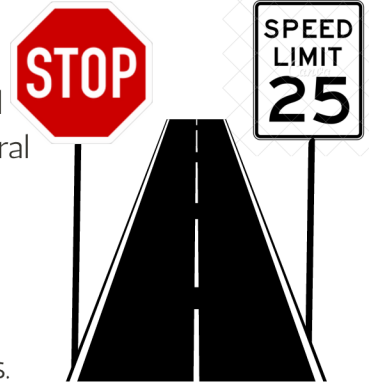
SEPOA VS. Brown (104 Degas) Update

After a 2-year legal battle that single handily caused the last 2 dues increases, the judge in the case has found with the Association on all counts and counter claims. Final judgement orders have been filed.

The 6-foot fence at 104 Degas has been court ordered to be either lowered to 4' or removed completely. It has been found that SEPOA does NOT selectively enforce our restrictions. The judge has found that SEPOA has claim to seek reasonable attorneys' fees for these matters. SEPOA attorneys will be requesting over \$65,000.00 in Attorney's fees at a December 4th hearing, as that is what we have spent to date on this case and its frivolous counter-claims. There has been an additional filing from the Browns in this case and our attorneys are working to dispose of yet another frivolous claim. There may or may not be additional hearings on this latest matter, but this has definitely cost the Association more money.

Watch Your Speed

As we move into season, more neighbors are back in town and school is back in session. Please mind the 25MPH speed limit throughout Sorrento East. SEPOA will begin the process of collecting petition signatures for additional stop signs in several locations throughout the neighborhood in November. The board will also be requesting that the county sheriffs office assist with speed enforcement if complaints continue as they did last season.



As always, we are looking for volunteers to assist in the petition collection process. Please email hkellnersepoa@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering.

SEPOA Neighborhood Park

Over the summer, SEPOA was contacted by Sarasota County surplus property department. They inquired as to whether SEPOA is interested in purchasing the vacant plot of land next to Donut Lake. The county is unable to do anything with the parcel due to our covenants and by-laws and we assume they are tired of maintaining it.

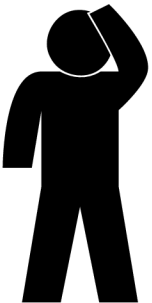
The SEPOA Board thinks this could be a great opportunity to create a park or some type of community gathering space amenity that our neighborhood currently lacks. The lot is approximately 3/4 acre. Upon hearing of our plans, the property department suggested that SEPOA petition the county to donate the land to use for a park type amenity to be developed at a later date.

On September 8th, SEPOA submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for this parcel. It will be a few months before we hear anything back, but fingers crossed we will have a free parcel of flat, cleared land that we can use to develop a meaningful space for our community. Stay tuned!



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Misconceptions Re: Changes to HOA Laws



After several residents parking commercial vehicles in their driveways made the claim that recent changes to Florida's HOA laws means we can no longer enforce the commercial vehicle restriction, we feel the need to clear up some common misconceptions about this law as it pertains to SEPOA.

The short answer is, these changes to the law **DO NOT** affect SEPOA or **ANY** of our deed restrictions in any way. The reason for this is simple. The recent changes to the law pertain to Florida Statute 720 that governs all home owners' associations (HOA's) and Property Owners' Associations (POA's) formed after **1989**. SEPOA is NOT a Homeowner's Association. We are a not-for-profit Property Owners Association that was formed in 1969. Because of this, we are governed by Florida Statute 617 and **NOT** 720. Therefore, none of the recent changes regarding garbage cans, work trucks, flags, etc. apply to SEPOA. We will still be enforcing all of the established deed restrictions as we are required to and agreed upon by all homeowners.

Annual Meeting & Board of Directors Election

Thursday, November 7th @ 7:30PM
 Our Savior Lutheran Church - 2507 N. Tamiami Trail Nokomis, FL

Sorrento East Property Owners Association
 Annual Membership Meeting - November 7, 2024
 Ballot for 2025 Officers & Directors

Vote for one person for each position by filling in the oval by their name with ink pen.

President Henry Kellner <input type="radio"/> Floor Nominee _____ <input type="radio"/>	Vice President Mark Walker <input type="radio"/> Nancy Groth <input type="radio"/> Floor Nominee _____ <input type="radio"/>
Secretary Rita Wicht <input type="radio"/> Floor Nominee _____ <input type="radio"/>	Treasurer Rose Schiear <input type="radio"/> Floor Nominee _____ <input type="radio"/>
Director 1 Sarah VanderWal <input type="radio"/> Floor Nominee _____ <input type="radio"/>	Director 2 Lynn Deutch <input type="radio"/> Floor Nominee _____ <input type="radio"/>
Director 3 George Booth (incumbent) Completing 2 nd year – term ending 2025	Director 4 John Richardson (incumbent) Completing 2 nd year – term ending 2025



Special thanks to the 2024 Nominating Committee:
 Susan Strauss, Berni LeBeau and Mary Jane Composto.

Holiday Decoration Contest



Decorate your home for the holidays and you could win cash and serious SEPOA bragging rights! No Entry Required

 Judging to take place between December 18th - 22nd



CASH PRIZES

- 1st Place - \$75
- 2nd Place - \$50
- 3rd Place - \$25

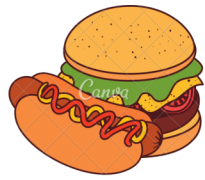
SEPOA Picnic



WHEN: Saturday, November 16th (rain date 11/17)
TIME: 11AM - 4PM
WHERE: Laurencin & Rubens
COST: FREE for all residents

Bring a chair, drinks, and a side dish or dessert to share! Hamburgers, hotdogs, will be served.

RSVP to sepoainfo@gmail.com



Sorrento History

(Publication Source & Date Unknown)

Sorrento celebrates 30 years

Staff Report

Thirty years ago this month, C.E. Pitts was putting the finishing touches on a property investment that was to have a long-term effect on the Venice area. The fledgling community was a 600-acre tract known as Sorrento, with sub-divisions Sorrento Shores, Sorrento South, and Sorrento East.

Pitts purchased part of the ground from a Boston businessman, Thomas Diab, shortly after Diab had rescued the previously sold land from two Massachusetts residents. The Massachusetts duo had arrived with lots of flash and bravado, and proceeded to sell the land without clear title. When the ruse was discovered, the men had already taken the funds and fled the country. With a \$50,000 down payment, Pitts took over the land and arranged with Diab to establish clear title, making everything legal.

Before Diab owned the property, the original buyer, a man named Vanderkloot, had begun development of the plan. Because he was a flier, and loved to travel to the peninsula of Sorrento, Italy, he named the settlement after his favorite European city. The name also was chosen because of its proximity to other Italian-named Florida cities, Venice and Naples. Vanderkloot was drawn to the Gulf coast location because it also was a peninsula, and he visualized canals (which Pitts later developed) running through the area. Being an art lover, the original owner named its streets after well-known Italian painters. Pitts later continued the practice, as well as naming Vanderkloot Drive in honor of its first developer.

At the time Sorrento was being put on the map, Tamiami Trail (U.S. Hwy. 41) was a simple, two-lane road, the Kentucky Military Institute maintained its winter quarters here, and Venice was still a part of the mainland. Pitts recalls selling regular lots for about \$3,000, which today

average \$35,000. Lots on the newly built canals were \$5,000, and bayfront property was available for \$12,000. Currently, these same lots sell for as high as \$110,000 and \$425,000.

Before settling in Florida, C.E. Pitts had established himself as a major auto dealer, and developed other properties in Colorado, Georgia, Northwest Florida, and Alabama. Besides the original three Sorrentos which he master-minded, other Sorrento divisions were founded with the help of C.E.'s son, Lauden. They are Sorrento Ranches, Sorrento Inlet, Sorrento Woods, and Sorrento Place. All told, Sorrento includes about 1,700 units of single family homes, condos, apartments, and villas, housing over 3,000 people. The Pitts family is also developing a 300-acre mountaintop tract in Northwest North Carolina, between Boone and Blowing Rock, known as Sorrento to Skies. It is next to the Blue Ridge Parkway, and includes streams, waterfalls and lakes.

Lauden, a son, joined the fam-

ily business in 1962 after his graduation from the University of Alabama. He is currently owner/broker of Century 21 Sorrento Realty, with an office at the entrance to Sorrento Shores, the same location it has occupied for 30 years. Besides his involvement with the Sorrentos, Lauden was also instrumental in the acquisition and planning of Calusa Lakes, a golf course community just east of Nokomis.

The real estate company recently welcomed a third generation to its environs, Lauden's son, Hansel. The younger Pitts, a recent alumni of his father's alma mater, and president of his father's former fraternity, undoubtedly has two very capable teachers from which to "learn the ropes."

Still very active, C.E. Pitts gets a sparkle in his eye when he talks about the projects he's still developing. Not only has he passed a legacy on to two succeeding family generations, but he's made the Sorrento communities the pride of Venice area residential living.



Lauden, C.E. and Hansel Pitts celebrate the 30th anniversary of Sorrento properties.