

THE DRIFTWOOD TIMES

Spring EDITION

March 2024

The Driftwood Vacation Villas Condominium Association

The Driftwood Ocean Villas Condominium Association

The Driftwood Breakers Condominium Association

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From the manager's desk.....

I am happy to start this newsletter by reporting we made it thru 2023 without any hurricanes 😊. We did have a few fall storms that brought tropical storm force winds and a lot of rain, but no significant damages. We did lose sand and had to close the stairs at Waldo's a few times, but the sand came back. Last year, as you know, we saw a huge increase in our windstorm premium. This year we saw another increase not as large as last year, but an

increase none the less. With so many companies leaving the state after Hurricane Ian, finding coverage has been difficult for many homeowners and businesses. We can only hope we do not see any major storms for the next few years and more companies will take the risk and offer windstorm coverage. The more companies offering policies the more competition there is to provide better rates. Hopefully the Florida legislature will really start working on this

issue which has become a crisis for residents and businesses alike.

As many of you know 2023 was the year of roofs. By the end of 2023 we replaced all roofs, except for Waldo's which had been done a few years ago. This was a huge undertaking, and I want to thank all our owners who were here during any of the roof work. It was noisy and messy, and I know not the vacation experience anyone wants and not how we would have replaced roofs if we were given a choice. I am glad to have that project behind us, and we should not have to think about roofing for another 15 years.

To our fall owners in A building, thank you for your patience and endurance walking up 4 flights of stairs while the elevator was being modernized. The project that was scheduled to take 5 weeks, started 2 weeks late and took them 6 ½ weeks to complete. This impacted not only our owners, but our contractors who had projects lined up on either side of this work.

To our week 39 and 40 owners in the Breakers, I appreciate your cooperation in being moved around to other units so we could update the electrical panels in both buildings. I knew this project would be difficult to complete on time, but our owners were very accommodating when it ran past the scheduled end date.

Last fall we updated the kitchen cabinets, counters, and bathroom vanities in the 6 oceanfront A building studios. We moved the microwaves off the counters and installed a larger kitchen sink. This is part of what we had hoped to do in 2020/2021 with a full renovation, but Covid put those plans on hold. This fall we are hoping to

update 101B kitchen & bathroom cabinet and counters, and a few other B building studios depending on funds. This work is being completed with funding we added into the reserves for this year, there is no special assessment planned for this update. It will take a few years to complete all the kitchens and bathrooms, but we hope to move forward and update as many as possible each year.

Speaking of cabinets, we are still looking into updating the cabinets and counters in the cottages. We have not found a cabinet company at this time but are looking at getting quotes and seeing what we can accomplish with the funds we have available.

In January we had the west wall of the A building repaired, new stucco and paint. It looks really nice; this fall we are planning to get the rest of the building painted during the maintenance weeks. We are also hoping to finish the south wall of the Breezeway building this fall. We completed 2 of the 4 sections in October 2023 and hope to complete the other 2 sections this September when the building is down for maintenance. We are hoping not to impact the same owners as last year.

We are currently working on quotes for new sliding glass doors in the Breezeway. Depending on the cost, we may be able to start replacing some of them later this year. In the A building, replacement of the front doors is another ongoing project. We finished the 2nd floor last year and are working on the 3rd floor and hope to get a few more completed this year.

At the beginning of the year our rentals were much slower than in the past several years.

Between our wet January, and the very mild winter up north we have not had the same demand as in previous years. February began the same way but picked up toward the end. March rentals have been better, weeks 10 & 11 busier than we have ever been. This summer our rental rates have been raised to our high season levels. We are usually very busy from mid-June to mid-August and thought it was time to move closer to what other area hotels and resorts are charging for the summertime. With our increase in maintenance fees this year hopefully the higher rental rates will help offset some of those fees. We will be watching closely for any resistance to these rates and will lower accordingly if the units aren't filling up.

We have seen an increase in unit sales over the past few months, new owners joining us as well as existing owners adding weeks so they can stay longer or have family join them while they are here. If you would like to buy or sell, please reach out to Zach or Amy and they can assist you. Our available units are listed on our website under Owners Info.

Many of you may have noticed the new tables added to the picnic/BBQ area on the oceanfront side of the A building that our in-house carpenter Chris built last year. These tables are a great addition for our guests to gather and enjoy outdoor dining. We use this area in the high season for our wine and cheese and it has been a great space to get together. In addition to the new tables, we recently replaced both gas grills in front of the A building and are adding an additional grill to our cottage BBQ area. This will be a great help to Zach in the winter and spring months when we have our hot dog roast.

You will notice when you check in this year, we made some changes to the line-up of events we host for our guests. The events are as follows:

Monday – 9 am-10am Donuts & Coffee

Tuesday – 2 pm Picture Hunt and

5 pm - 6pm Wine & Cheese social

Wednesday -Noon Hot Dog Roast

(January-April)

Thursday - 1 pm Treasure Hunt and

2 pm-2:30 pm Ice Cream Social

Monday-Thursday 8am pick up daily quiz at the front desk.

**** REMINDER **** Maintenance fees are due in the office by the last day of February to avoid late fees and interest. Mailing your payment on February 28th will not get it to our office by the last day of February. Your payment will be late, and there will be a \$25.00 late fee and interest added to the account. We accept payments by check or money order with no additional fees, credit or debit card with a 4% service fee, or by wire transfer with a \$20 fee. We are happy to set up payment plans before the fees are due. We ran into an issue with our online credit card service in January, it merged and the program we had online stopped working. If you would like to pay with a credit or debit card, please call our office and we can help you over the phone.

I have mentioned in previous newsletters the issues we have had with local teenagers and young adults coming onto the property and harassing guests and employees. At the beginning of the year, we installed cameras in several areas of the property to help to deter them from coming onto the property. The city police have increased coverage on the beachside to help deter the groups from hanging out in the park at night. I want to

remind everyone not to leave items outside on your patios and porches. Also, as a reminder, please make sure you have your key with you, do not leave it hidden or in your door.

We are now in turtle nesting season. Just a reminder, if you own an oceanfront unit, please keep your drapes closed after 9 pm, or turn off your interior lights at 9 pm. We do not want to cast a glow of light onto the beach and cause harm to the sea turtles. If you walk on the beach at night, please remember no white light. A red filter on a flashlight makes your light turtle friendly. Remember to fill in any holes you dig or knock down any large piles of sand when you are done so the turtles do not get trapped coming in to nest or when they hatch trying to get to the ocean. All beach gear needs to be taken off the beach daily, the county does ride up and down the beach at night and will dispose of beach gear they find including chairs, tents, and toys. Last year we partnered with Coastal Connections and they marked the nest on the beach in front of the resort. They also do “turtle digs” and “turtle walks”. Please check out their Facebook page for upcoming events that may line up with your stay at the resort. The events are a lot of fun and very educational.

That’s all for this newsletter. Hope this finds all our owners well and I look forward to seeing you around the property this year.

Amy Raymond
General Manager



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