



The Country Place

MARCH • APRIL 2020

Chronicle

A Deed Restricted Community

THE OFFICIAL *Newsletter* OF COUNTRY PLACE

from the **PRESIDENT**

Did you get a letter from an attorney about a deed restriction?

A common misconception is that homeowners in Country Place are paying for the attorney who is asking a homeowner to bring their home into compliance with Association Standards. This is a common mistake and I wanted to shed light on this process and clear up any confusion.

When I got on the board at Country Place, there was a fining policy of \$1,000 per violation in place. In order to enforce this fining policy, a fining committee was in place to review each violation before fining. This left a small committee of homeowners (who could not be board members) to review dozens of violations monthly. It eventually became a monumental task that just couldn't be managed due to the number of homes in our Association. Additionally, homeowners felt the board "just wanted their money", when in fact, the board just wanted homeowners to bring their homes into compliance with the community standards. This, of course, increases the value of all our homes!

The board then decided to use the attorney to enforce compliance, if the violation letters sent to homeowners went unanswered. The **Association** hires the attorney to send letters to homeowners asking the homeowner to bring the home into compliance. Nine times out of ten, this works and the homeowner – if unable to immediately comply, makes arrangements to comply and bring their home into community standards. This is part of our Association annual budget and is NO COST to the individual homeowner.

If the homeowner, however, feels the deed restriction is wrong, the homeowner has the option of going to a hearing as per Florida

Statute. Or if the homeowner just refuses to comply, or doesn't respond to the attorney, the association can request the hearing per Florida Statute. There IS a fee for both the homeowner AND the Association, and it is well-defined by Florida Statute. The homeowner must respond quickly in the time permitted on the letter, or else the homeowner will bear the cost for both parties regardless of the outcome. Both parties will bring their views before a third party who will review the Association documents and make a decision. Once the court is involved, it is the only time a homeowner would be forced to pay for anything relating to compliance. To date, the board is happy to report that this hearing has only been initiated a few times – and over the year, more than a hundred homes have complied with Association Standards at no cost to the homeowner and no 'profit' from fines. The board feels strongly that this approach is what is helping all our home values.

The board wants to remind you – if you get a letter from Greenacre about your home – simply reply back with the action needed to fix the issue. We all want our home values to increase and the only way that happens is when we have a great looking neighborhood, because every homeowner is doing their part. Nobody likes to get violation letters – but the manager (Mike) can't pick and choose who gets them and who doesn't, as that would be selective enforcement. As an example, if he happens to be driving the neighborhood the one day you have a trailer in your driveway to haul away trash.... Just respond letting him know it's moved. If he doesn't send one to you, he also can't send one to that one neighbor who ALWAYS has one out front.

I hope this helps better understand how deed restrictions are enforced in Country Place. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Mike or any board member who would be happy to help you.

Tina Rhodes
President,



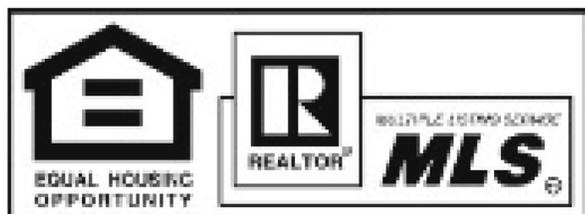
High Sale Price	\$314,900.00
Low Sale Price	\$205,000.00
Average Sale Price	\$261,811.00
Average Price per sqft	\$145.06
Average Days on Market	22
Homes Sold	9
Pending	7
Currently on the Market	6



What Stands Out

As usual, the market is still robust in our beautiful neighborhood. Days on the market remain low, even foreclosures are selling for over \$200k and the top homes are now easily going for over \$300k. As a matter of fact, the highest price we have seen since I started publishing this article was \$360,000. I wouldn't be surprised if we are just a few short years away from the first \$400k sale price. However, we did have one number fall to it's lowest point in over a year and that's the average price per sqft. So, I decided to do some research and see if I could find out why. The answer in my opinion, is i-buyers. I-buyers are those buyers that send you the flyer in the mail offering immediate cash prices for your home. They are also those companies that offer you instant on-line quotes for an immediate purchase price. The problem is, they are in it for a profit. Many homeowners will give up tens of thousands of dollars in favor of what they believe will be a quick and painless transaction. What the i-buyers don't tell you is that selling in a traditional format can be just as painless with an experienced agent to help. I-buyers have marketed so heavily in Country Place, that they have succeeded in actually lowering home values as a whole.

(Data was comprised from CP homes sold over the last 90 days ending on 2/6/2020)



BONUS: Interest rates saw another drop this week bringing the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage down to 3.45% from 3.51%. The key rate stood at 4.41% a year ago. The average rate on a 15-year mortgage eased to 2.97% from 3% last week. The historically low rates have been a boon for potential homebuyers. A positive outlook has come from signs of strength in the U.S.

economy recently and expectations that the global economy could start to expand more quickly after being held back by trade conflicts. All this means now is the time to buy, sell or refinance. I've said this before, but we may never see these rates again.

(All data is courtesy of Realtor Multiple Listing Service. Opinions included are not meant to be taken as facts, but are the professional opinion of the below agent. If you are working with a Realtor, please disregard any advertisements. All requests for business are meant solely for those not currently represented. Joe Benson is both a resident of Country Place and a licensed Real Estate agent).



Joe Benson

Benson Family Realty

813-324-1384

joebenson@bensonfamilyrealty.com

www.bensonfamilyrealty.com





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Homeowners Board Of Directors**

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Greenacre Properties, Inc.**

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Tampa, FL 33618
ph: 813-936-4154
mspall@greenacre.com

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**COUNTRY PLACE
Special Maintenance District**

The Country Place Special Maintenance District was created and purposed to manage and maintain the common areas and property of Country Place. This includes all areas of ingress and egress to our community. Signage, landscaping, mowing, mulching and other misc. maintenance functions are overseen by this Board.

For more information on how to attend a Country Place Special Maintenance district meeting contact:

Darrel C. Spacone, bCRE
darrel.spacone@donordatadone.com
Donor-Data-Done, LLC

blackbaud Certified in Raiser's Edge consulting
darrel.spacone@donordatadone.com
<http://www.donordatadone.com>

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Wayne Swift

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Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month
Meeting time: 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Meeting location: Northdale Recreation Center,
15550 Spring Pine Drive, Tampa, 33624
Contact information: PO Box 340218,
Tampa, FL 33694
countryplacesmd@gmail.com

Can't wait for the next newsletter? Visit our website at
<http://www.countryplace.org>
for events, newsletters (current and past), board meeting
minutes, photos, and so much more.

What To Do With A Violation Letter



GREENACRE
PROPERTIES, INC.

When you receive a violation letter from the Association, it

is to just point out something minor that needs to be corrected. The first thing you should do is look at the letter and determine what needs to be corrected. It could be as small as your mailbox needs to be cleaned or as large as your house is discolored. The letters contain a picture that is small but should direct you to the area of the issue. If after checking these items out you can not determine what needs to be done, the next step would be to send an email to Mike Spall at mspall@greenacre.com for more clarification. Please do not call because I am out in the field most of the time, and you will have to leave a voice mail message. Probably when I return your call you may not be available, and we start the telephone tag. If you send an email, I can send you more information like a larger picture or maybe a form that is needed.

Once you have determined what needs to be done, you may need more time than is given in the letter. Again, please send an email requesting an extension of the amount of time you need. In most cases this will be granted, but you will receive a response in writing as to the extension date.

Once the work is completed please send a final email stating the violation has been corrected and you are finished with the task.

Following this simple process will prevent any of these small issues from becoming a large problem with a second letter or a fine. The key to this process is the written communication, so that everyone is on the same page. When there is verbal communication, often times the two parties are not on the same page and they do not know it. That is why everything in the process needs to be in writing. Thanks in advance for everyone's support to keep the community looking "Pristine".

Mike Spall

Greenacre Properties



Hello neighbors! We are getting more and more visitors to our website every month. We invite you to check us out at www.countryplace.org where you can get the most up to date forms, newsletters, and access to our monthly podcast which highlights business owners in Country Place.. In addition to all of the great features of our website and Podcast we are opening our website to any Country Place Homeowner who owns their own business and would be interested in listing their business information for their neighbors. All businesses must be approved before posting. Please visit www.countryplace.com/businesses to get more information.

www.CountryPlace.org

Find your Center.

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS START THE WEEK OF APRIL 13.

"Copper Leaf" by Leslie Hendersen

ENTERTAINMENT • COMMUNITY EVENTS • CLASSES & WORKSHOPS • GALLERY

TITANIC

THE MUSICAL

Story & Book by **Peter Stone**
Music & Lyrics by **Maury Yeston**

Directed by
Paul Berg & Aaron Washington

Vocal Direction & Live Orchestra Directed by
Mary Jo Hahn

MARCH 27 • 8 PM
MARCH 28 • 8 PM
MARCH 29 • 2 PM
APRIL 3 • 8 PM
APRIL 4 • 8 PM
APRIL 5 • 2 PM

Tickets: \$23-\$29

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MUSIC OF DAVE BRUBECK

w. JIM BURGE & THE JAZZ DIRECTIONS

MARCH 13
7:30 pm

JAZZ WEEKEND

JIM BURGE JAZZ FESTIVAL

w. VALLERIE GILLESPIE & MORE!

APRIL 17 & 18
various times

SUMMER CAMPS

****SAVE 15%****

REGISTER BY APRIL 30

ALSO COMING SOON:

- MAR 1 Raise Your Voice
w. CARROLLWOOD WINDS
- MAR 6* The '70s Decade Party
PRESENTED BY CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE HOAS
ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTED BY AARP
- MAR 13 Music of Dave Brubeck
PRESENTED BY JAZZ WITH JIM
- MAR 14* North Tampa Market
PRESENTED BY TAMPA BAY MARKETS
- MAR 20* Gallery Event
OPENING FOR "FLOATING VESSELS"
- MAR 20* Artist Meet & Greet
w. BIBZI PRIORI

- MAR 27-APR 5 TITANIC: The Musical
- APR 6* "Easter Parade"
PRESENTED BY CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE HOAS
- APR 17-18 Jim Burge Jazz Festival
w. VALERIE GILLESPIE, DR. LOHERTZ & MORE!
- APR 26 Mr. Tommy
- APR 30* Family Game Night
PRESENTED BY CARROLLWOOD VILLAGE HOAS

*FREE ADMISSION



**CARROLLWOOD
CULTURAL CENTER**
4537 Lowell Rd., Tampa, FL 33618

(813) 922-8167
CarrollwoodCenter.org

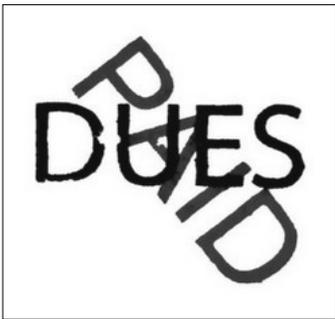
Architectural Guidelines

The board will soon be adopting our first set of Architectural Guidelines. This long-overdue document is designed to give homeowners some general guidelines when doing improvements to their home and for general home/neighborhood appeal and consistency. Look for this document in an upcoming mailout this Spring!

\$180,000.00

Years ago, prior to Greenacre and Web Melton (the Association Attorney), the amount that we showed homeowners owing Country Place Association was over \$200,000.00. When we hired Web and Greenacre, they both worked with homeowners – if someone could show they paid their dues and Associa just didn't have it reflected in their account, it was written off. Web worked with dozens of homeowners to come up with payback plans that worked for the homeowner. With the help of Web, we were able to collect so much over our anticipated annual collection amounts, that we re-vamped the Summerwind Entrance last year with that excess money. In the last 4 years or so, our collections have gone from over \$200,000.00 to around \$20,000.00.

Keep in mind, if you ever forget to pay your dues, work out a payment plan IMMEDIATELY. The longer the Attorney has it, the more money it cost the homeowner. It's no secret that attorneys are expensive. They charge the same amount per hour REGARDLESS of how little our dues amount happens to be. The board is VERY willing to let homeowners come up with a plan to pay their dues and attorney fees.



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let homeowners come up with a plan to pay their dues and attorney fees.

I've heard from many homeowners that Bush Ross was in the news for their business practices in the past. I get it, I really do. But our community works with Web Melton and he has been nothing but awesome to work with as far as the Association goes. He knows we want to work with homeowners – and he and his office staff reach out to us when a payment plan is offered. The board of directors are very grateful for Web Melton and his staff for their dedication to Country Place in reducing our collection amount by \$180,000.00!!

Did You Know?



Sidewalks in Country Place are owned by Hillsborough County. GENERAL maintenance (keeping them free of debris and clean) is the job of the homeowner who's property abuts the sidewalk. Repair for lifting, cracking or other maintenance is the job of the County. As many of you know, the County came out for what they called "Stage 1" of at least 3 stages of repair to our neighborhood sidewalks. To get a sidewalk on this list – as many homeowners as possible

need to put in work orders with the County. The more homeowners, the more tickets, the better! To submit a request for repair visit: <https://tinyurl.com/HCSidewalkRepair>

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neighbors are, there are dozens of examples every day of how lucky we are to live in Country Place.

Moving forward, we will be accepting nominations for the bi-monthly good neighbor award to honor an individual who represents the culture of CP in an outstanding way. To nominate, you simply need to email JOEBENSON@BENSONFAMILYREALTY.COM.

After Hurricane Irma, we all breathed a collective sigh of relief. While we boarded up and prepared for the worst, we were spared the devastating winds that were originally forecast for our area. However, we were left with piles of debris and in many cases no power for days. The bright spot from what became piles of tree limbs, days of no AC and even a few damaged homes was the way our community came together. Groups of neighbors with chain saws, trucks and other tools went door to door answering the call of those without the ability to help themselves. It was truly inspiring to see the way our neighborhood came together to help each other out. While this was a large example of how great our

The first winner of the Good Neighbor award and the winner of the Darden Restaurants gift card is Eric on Gossame. Eric is known for receiving packages, helping with daily chores and being there when a neighbor needs him. However, when Angelica and her family recently went out of town he went above and beyond for his neighbors. Eric noticed water running down the driveway and he sprang into action. After seeing a potential plumbing problem, he immediately shut off the water, contacted the neighbor and began the clean-up. Without his swift action, the damage would have been far greater and his neighbor could have come home to a much bigger disaster. Luckily, Eric made sure that didn't happen. Neighbors like Eric are what make our community great. Cheers to you sir!



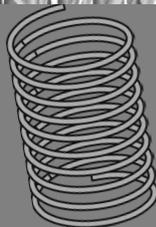
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aalvarez@hcsos.tampa.fl.us