



# The Fountain

## Cape Haze Community Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue 4

November 2011



### CHPOA President's Letter

Cooler weather has returned and so have many of our friends and neighbors. It's nice to have you back. We had a great CHPOA Member Meeting on November 12 followed by a Pizza Party sponsored by the Cape Haze Women's Club. I'm pleased to report that CHPOA membership has increased slightly from last year, and once again, thank you to the Women's Club for organizing so many events in Cape Haze.

We provided some neighborhood updates at our Members Meeting:

First, the Placida Road Widening Project has been cancelled! Approval from the County Commissioners was requested in October to proceed with the purchase of needed land beyond the County right of way. This included the tree line that separates our neighborhood from the road. We confirmed over the summer that much of this tree line would have to be removed to accommodate the road width and required drainage. We met with the Commissioners once again prior to the vote to encourage them to stop this excessive design and consider a more reasonable project to improve the present road and add a bike path and sidewalk.

At the October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting there was a 3-1 vote to stop the present project and transfer funding to higher priority road projects, including Gasparilla Road. They also directed the County staff to report back on the funds required for repaving the present road and adding a bike path and sidewalk. I believe this was a real win for Cape Haze. But we'll keep monitoring the process. Thank you to everyone who contacted the Commissioners. And thank you to Art Hanson for speaking at the Board of Commissioners Meeting on our behalf.

We all got a good look at the masterful new landscaping which is nearly completed around our Community Center. The "old" building is beginning to look pretty good. Thank you to Jeanne Corbin, Penny Rieley, Clare Landmann and Pat Witschonke for planning and implementing the project.

Our Deed Restriction Revitalization initiative is progressing. All property owners living on the west side of Placida Road received a package last April outlining proposed revisions to our present deed restrictions. With the approval from a majority of property owners these "revitalized" deed restrictions will be filed with Charlotte County and the Florida Department of Community Affairs in compliance with Florida State Law to remove any ambiguity concerning their validity. Over the summer months we have received responses from fifty-six per cent of property owners with 146 in favor and 19 opposed. We expect to hear from many more property owners as they return for the winter season. All of the deed restriction information that was mailed to you, including the ballot, is available on our website at [www.capehaze.org](http://www.capehaze.org).

Local realtors have confirmed that lack of compliance with deed restrictions has hurt property values in Cape Haze and in some cases has turned away potential buyers. In a tough real estate market our lax approach to deed restrictions is putting us at a competitive disadvantage with other neighborhoods. If this trend is of concern to you, we urge you to support this effort by returning an approval form.

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## CHPOA President's Letter - Continued from Page 1

I'd like to reiterate that this is not a vote to make participation in CHPOA mandatory. As originally established, CHPOA membership remains voluntary. However, both the present deed restrictions and the "revitalized" deed restrictions apply to all properties.

The nine member CHPOA Board is presently operating with one vacancy, and three more positions will be open in January. The tasks are not overwhelming and the support from the Community is high, but it's important that we have a full Board to keep things on track. If you have been on the Board before, please consider joining again. If you have not had the job before, please consider serving now. Just contact Ross Witschonke, Karen Irvine, or Bill Dahms who have been appointed to the Nominating Committee. Or be prepared—they may very well contact you.

I'm looking forward to an enjoyable winter season here in Cape Haze. Please join us at our Annual Meeting on January 21, 2012.

*Ross*

Ross Witschonke  
President, Cape Haze Property Owners Association

## What is a Neighbor? What is a Good Neighbor?

**neigh-bor** (nā̄bər) 1. One who lives near or next to another. 2. A person, place, or thing adjacent.

Yes both those definitions work! You may ask why I'm defining neighbor. Well over the summer when many are absent from Cape Haze, I receive calls or e-mails from neighbors about a variety of matters concerning our *neighborhood*.

Cape Haze is a beautiful Community with a great group of people, people I refer to as **good neighbors**—well at least what I think we all should strive to be. **Good** 1. Being positive or desirable in nature; not bad 2. a. Superior to the average;

This summer a few questions arose concerning neighbors' trees and other plants encroaching onto, or over, other properties, even hanging very low over roads. This led to a discussion at a Board of Directors' Meeting and, as Secretary of CHPOA, I said I would bring the problem to the attention of the Community through *The Fountain*.

So, if your trees or other plantings are overhanging your neighbor's property, please think about trimming them back to your property line. Of course the adjacent property owner has the legal right to cut any branches in their air space, but is it fair that they should incur the cost?

Vines are covering many trees on properties, especially on vacant lots, and plants are overhanging the roads. Will you, the property owner, be a good neighbor and attend to these situations?

This summer photos of two homes and yards were sent to the absent land owners to let them know the status of their property. Even though the home owners were paying someone for landscape maintenance - none occurred. The homeowners were surprised and thanked us for the notification. (*Want to know what your property looks like when you're away? I'll be happy to e-mail you pictures. Just e-mail me, MLZIGFITZ55@Comcast.net. Please include the property address.*)

As we all own property or live in Cape Haze we all need to be **good neighbors**. Whether it is keeping our yards looking nice, neat and trim, picking up litter, walking dogs on a leash, or just looking out for one another, perhaps we all could do just a little more.

Cape Haze is a great Community—let's make it **phenomenal**.

Mary Lou (Fitz) Fitzgerald, CHPOA Secretary

*PS: The foreclosed homes - that's another story!*

## Community Charity - Kids' Needs

Many programs are offered for out-of-work adults, but little is available to help kids during these tough times. Because families simply can't afford the basics, children are going without items like clothing, shoes, personal toiletry items, and school supplies.

It was suggested at a Cape Haze Women's Club meeting that we support an organization called Kids' Needs. We researched the organization and attended two of their meetings. Our heads and hearts agreed that this group of dedicated volunteers truly deserve our support.



Kids' Needs is a local, non-profit, group of dedicated volunteers, who, along with school administrators, assist our kids in need. Donated items are

taken to Englewood area schools and distributed as needed. Cash donations are used for things like week-end food back packs, summer camp tuition and scholarships, as well as to purchase needed items.

All members are volunteers, no salaries paid, very few expenses, so that most of the donations reach the kids in need. The Cape Haze Women have decided to support Kids' Needs and would like this support to be community-wide. We have a drop-off box located in our Community Center. There are other boxes located in many businesses throughout the area. If you are unable to take your items to one of these boxes please call Barbara

Hanson at 828-7447 and arrangements will be made to pick up your donations.

Kids' Needs could use additional volunteers to collect items from boxes, sort items at their warehouse, help pack toiletry bags, etc. If you can spare some time once a week, once a month or even just once, please contact Nancy Buechler at 697-0885 for further information.

Wish List for Kids Needs:

**Clothing** - such as pants, shirts, sweat shirts, socks. Clothing may be new or gently used. New underwear only, please. All sizes are needed, both male and female

**Shoes and Sneakers** - all sizes

**School Supplies** - notebooks, folders, pencils, pens, rulers, notebook paper, crayons, markers

**Personal Hygiene Items** - shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, feminine hygiene products

**Cash Donations**

For additional information, you can visit the website [www.kidsneedsenglewood.org](http://www.kidsneedsenglewood.org) or call Sue Joachim, Secretary, 941-460-1229 at Key Agency.

Thank you for your support.

Cape Haze Women's Club Board

**Please  
Help**



**Halloween  
in  
Cape Haze**



Photos by Mary Landy

## Cape Haze Pioneer Passes at 107

Consuelo Vanderbilt “Consie” Earl, an original member of the Cape Haze community, passed away this past February at her home in Ridgefield, Connecticut, aged 107 years.

She was the great, great granddaughter of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, the developer of a host of United States transportation infrastructure including railways, steamship lines, Grand Central Station and other terminals. He is still regarded as among the wealthiest Americans of all time. Consie’s cousins were the original developers of Cape Haze.

Consie and her fourth husband, N. Clarkson Earl, purchased a two lot property on Pelican Bay in 1961, soon after it was built. The couple used the property seasonally as their “fishing shack” until his passing in 1969 and she continued seasonal occupancy through 1993. Except for landscaping, the home still exists in largely the same configuration today.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of three offspring from the marriage of William Kissam Vanderbilt II and Virginia Fair,

whose father developed the famous Nevada Comstock Lode silver mines, Consie was one of the last children of the famous “gilded age.” She spent most of her childhood at her parent’s Manhattan home on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, summering on Northport Harbor, Centerport, Long Island. Dubbed “Eagle’s Nest” and a fascinating place to visit, the Centerport property is currently being maintained as a Suffolk County museum, open to the public. Side note — an avid automobile racer, William K. founded the Daytona 500 automobile race.

Consie’s social activities – particularly once she reached late-teens – were frequent front page stories in the NY Time’s, Daily News and occasionally the Washington Post, with her first marriage regarded as NYC’s premier social event of the 1920’s.

Consie dedicated her life to animals and was a prominent member of the American Kennel Club, having bred Skye and Silky Terriers. Her sponsorship was instrumental in gaining official AKC recognition for these breeds in 1959.

## Stay Informed!

Stay informed about your Cape Haze Community. Mary Lou Fitzgerald, CHPOA Secretary, e-mails announcements and information for our Community. If you are not receiving these notifications, and would like to, please send your e-mail address to [MLZIGFITZ55@comcast.net](mailto:MLZIGFITZ55@comcast.net). Mary Lou sends all e-mails BLIND CARBON

COPY so no one will receive your address and it will not be forwarded to anyone.

Also check our website at [www.capehaze.org](http://www.capehaze.org) for CHPOA Administration and Strategic Project updates, *The Fountain* on line, social event calendars, and much, much more.

## Emergency Bands in Charlotte County

Emergency collars affixed to signs around Charlotte County identify the area’s risk of storm surge. The bands’ color scheme — either red, orange, yellow or green make it easy to know how likely an area is to get storm surge during a tropical storm or hurricane. *Cape Haze is in the red zone, the highest “at risk” area. We would be the first ordered to evacuate.*

Charlotte County’s Director of Emergency Management, Wayne Sallade, said storm surge is the greatest cause of death during hurricanes,

documented in storms such as Hurricane Katrina. Even though it’s unclear that storm surge has been the cause of any deaths in Charlotte County, Mr. Sallade said, *“Charlotte County has the second highest percent of population at risk for storm surge in the nation, behind New Orleans.”*

When Emergency Management announces a red zone evacuation, all Cape Haze residents need to leave. That’s when our evacuation plan, and friends in the yellow or green zone, will be most important.

# Charlotte County Government Academy

An Article by Lee Buechler, Cape Haze Neighbor

Nancy and I recently attended an excellent program presented by Charlotte County Administration introducing its operations and services. The program is conducted over five consecutive Wednesday morning sessions of 4 hours each. We recommend it highly for anyone interested in the nuts and bolts of a major portion of this county's executive branch.

Not really knowing what to expect, and given the performance and reputation of the County Commission, we were prepared for disappointment. Instead, we were absolutely struck by the professionalism, and deep experience, the county's departmental managers possess. What a pleasant surprise! People tend not to notice the delivery of services when matters proceed smoothly. And presume nothing much is going on. Well, far from it!! These are very busy people with a difficult job, and it is obvious they do it very well.

A few notables:

1. The county's Geographic Information System has been the recipient of a number of national awards over recent years.
2. Following Hurricane Charley, the county constructed a hardened, self-supportable habitat to be used for the maintenance of communications and services during an emergency. Located near the airport, it is a "first of a kind" system and has been

subsequently copied by other counties. This is an amazing structure.

3. From a high of 1,400 in mid-decade, the county currently employs 1,000 people. Yet during this period demand for all but construction-related services has grown significantly, without interruption.
4. We reside in a very large county from a governance perspective. Incorporated entities – towns and cities – generally take much of the burden from county governments. E.g., Sarasota County has Sarasota {city} and Venice assuming responsibility for most of the population's requirements. In contrast, Charlotte County has only Punta Gorda which services less than 10% of the county's population, leaving the county responsible for the rest.
5. The county's storm mitigation programs have resulted in a very favorable risk rating, providing residents' with an approximate 25% discount on flood insurance.
6. The county's annual budget is a little over \$500Mm, 10% of which funds county schools. 25% of budget funding is raised from ad valorem {property} taxes.

The next Government Academy is planned for March/April with applications available on the County's website, [www.CharlotteCountyFL.com](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.com). For further information you may call Katie at 743-1386 or Pat at 743-1225.



## Holiday Decorating In Cape Haze

Mary Lou Fitzgerald and  
Jessica Schimmel  
light the outside trees while  
Nada Foehringer and  
Sharon Blasdell trim the  
inside.

*Thanks to all who helped light  
up the Community!*



# Cape Haze Women's Club

Welcome to a new season of activities. We opened our year with a Women's Luncheon at the Rotonda Hills Golf and Country Club on October 24. The food was great and we raised over \$100 for this year's charity, Kids' Needs. We donated four \$25 gift cards from Sweet Bay for needy families.

Halloween saw our first Trick or Treat celebration for the children of our Community. Thanks to all who participated.

After the November 12 CHPOA meeting we enjoyed a pizza party catered by Lil Tony's Pizza. Thanks to Clare and Nancy for stepping in and coordinating the gala.

The Holiday Decorating committee, chaired by Mary Lou Fitzgerald and Sharon Blasdel, are transforming our Community into a holiday spectacular. Get into the spirit by joining the group (call Mary Lou or Sharon for times) to complete the Community decorating. We also ask that you decorate your property with lights or other touches of holiday cheer. Please put some lights on the waterside, too so Cape Haze can shine as the annual boat parade sails by on December 10.

CHWomen met at the Community Center and planned the season's activities. Be sure to mark your calendars so you won't miss out on the fun. If you'd like to help with an event, call the chair.

We're trying a monthly Game Night the third Thursday of each month, 7:00-9:00 pm at the Community Center. Bring a game or use one of ours. This should be a fun night and all are welcome.

Come join us for our special Holiday Friday Night Social on December 9 beginning at 5:00 pm. CH Women will provide the baked ham, you bring the sides and your own beverages. Please contact Penny Rieley, 697-9811, to sign up and let her know what side dish you'll be bringing. Call Penny by December 1.

The boat parade will travel from Gasparilla Marina to Johnny Leverock's on December. 10. We are

looking for a coordinator for the Cape Haze entries in this annual lighted boat parade so if you're interested, please call Barbara Hanson, 828-7447.

January 12 at 2:00 pm, we'll have a presentation on Historical Cape Haze, led by Mary Kay Chadwick Krantz and Eugenie Clark, founder of the Mote Aquarium — right here in Cape Haze. Eugenie Clark will have copies of the latest edition of her book for sale. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

At our meeting on January 16, 1:00 pm, we will hear presentations from various community service organizations. This program is open to all Community residents and also Women of Windward and Hacienda.

Our CHPOA Annual Membership meeting takes place on Saturday, January 21 at 4:00 pm followed by a catered dinner of barbecued chicken and ribs. More details to follow. Chaired by Cindy Howell.

February will bring our annual Shelling and Lunch on Palm Island. Date to follow. Chaired by Karen Irvine.

February 10 is the Sarasota Youth Symphony Luncheon and Fashion Show on Boca Grande. We'll take reservations for this in January. Contact Nancy Buechler for information.

On March 12, after our 1:00 pm meeting we will present a program by Deputy Dale on keeping your home safe from intrusion. All are welcome to the program. Chairperson is Clare Landmann.

Also, in March, a trip to Punta Gorda is being planned. A carpool will travel to Punta Gorda where we will have lunch, then enjoy a narrated tour of the murals by both trolley and boat. Cost of the trip is \$30 plus lunch. Chairpersons are Hilary Dahms and Barbara Hanson.

The CHW Officer Installation and Pot Luck Salad Luncheon will take place on Monday, April 2. The chair is Nancy Buechler.

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Mark Your Calendars

## Upcoming Events

- December 9**      **Holiday Social - 5:00 - 8:00 PM - Community Center**  
Ham Provided, Bring a Pot Luck Side & your Beverage  
Call Penny Rieley, 697-9811, by December 1
- December 13**      **Book Club - *Room: A Novel* by Emma Donoghue**  
10:00 AM - Community Center
- December 15**      **Game Night - 7:00 - 9:00 PM - Community Center**
- January 10**      **Book Club - *The Last Train to Paradise***  
by Lee Standiford, 10:00 AM - Community Center
- January 12**      **Area History with Eugenie Clark**  
2:00 PM - Community Center
- January 13**      **Friday Night Social**  
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM - Community Center
- January 16**      **Women's Club Meeting - 1:00 PM Community Center**  
Community Services Speakers following meeting
- January 19**      **Game Night - 7:00 - 9:00 PM - Community Center**
- January 21**      **CHPOA Annual Membership Meeting**  
4:00 PM - Community Center
- January 21**      **Catered BBQ Chicken & Ribs Dinner**  
Following CHPOA Meeting - Community Center

**Stay informed, check our website - [www.capehaze.org](http://www.capehaze.org)**

### ***Women's Club - Continued from Page 6***

Let's Role is the theme of our dinner following the April 14 CHPOA Meeting. Homemade casserole dishes will be featured. Chairperson is Mary Lou Fitzgerald.

Don't forget the regular activities that take place in our Community Center:

Aerobics: Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning at 8:00 am.

Book Review Club meets the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am.

Friday Night Socials on the second Friday of each month, except November and April, 5:00 – 7:00 pm. Bring your own beverage and an appetizer to share.

Hope you feel the community spirit here at Cape Haze and hope to see you at our events.

Barbara Hanson, CHW President

## Tattletale Lights

Tiny blue lights have been added to many traffic signals around Charlotte County, and are used to help law enforcement officers catch drivers who are running red lights.

Here's how it works: When a light turns red, the blue light below it turns on and shows on the back and front of the traffic signal. This allows an officer to wait in a safe location, and if someone zips through the light without stopping, the officer can safely pull them over. This prevents the possibility of the deputy also running the red light to apprehend the violator.

Because the most common place for traffic accidents is at intersections - and running a red light is the cause of most accidents at those intersections - the blue lights help police cut down on what can be a very dangerous crime.

It's also been reported that a camera is hidden near the blue light and violators may be ticketed by sending them a photo of the crime, the blue light making the offense obvious. *What do you think?*

## The Fountain

is published January, March, May, and November.

All articles, letters, photographs, and "Upcoming Events" received by deadline will be considered for publication.

Text submissions should be Microsoft Word files.

Photographs should be .jpg files of at least 400kB in size.

Text and photographs should be attached to e-mail with "Fountain Submission" in the subject box, and forwarded to [NancyBue@aol.com](mailto:NancyBue@aol.com).

Hard copy submissions may also be considered.

**January Deadline is  
January 10, 2012**

# The Fountain

Cape Haze Property Owners Association  
P. O. Box 690 Placida, FL 33946

**Holiday Social - December 9  
See Women's Club Report**

*Inside this Issue:*

- **Placida Road Update - President's Letter**
- **Deed Restriction Status - President's Letter**
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*The Fountain* is produced by Nancy Buechler Cape Haze Florida