

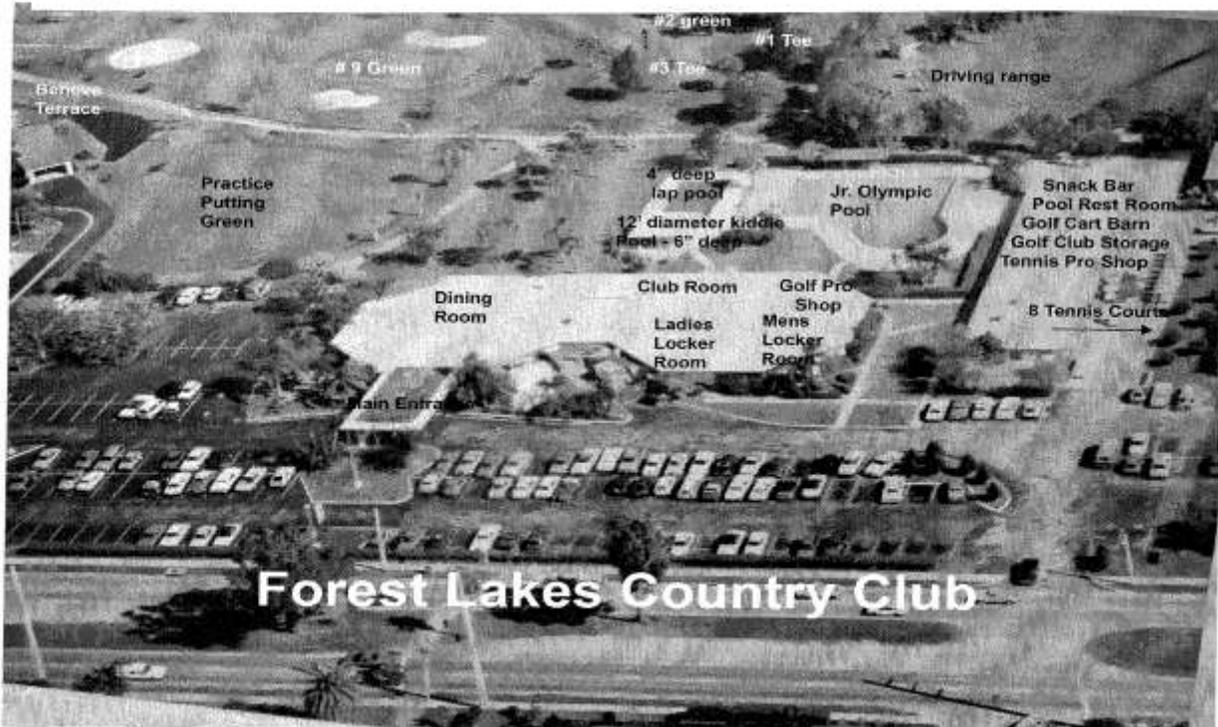
Forest Lakes Country Club Estates
Homeowner's Association
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"A DEED RESTRICTED COMMUNITY"

ORIGINAL CLUBHOUSE GROUNDS



SUMMER 2013

Dear Homeowners:

June 2013

We had a great turnout for the special homeowner meeting. Mr. Neal Neilinger, owner, informed homeowners on the status of the golf course and presented concept plans. Many questions were raised by homeowners and answered by Mr. Neilinger and his team. Much positive feedback was received after the meeting. Everyone should have received the results of the straw poll and based on the results, Mr. Neilinger is pursuing the golf course concept plan and has dedicated his efforts and money toward this goal.

Mr. Neilinger has been in talks with D.R. Horton builders since M/I homes contract expired on April 23. The local office of DR Horton (builder) signed a contract this week. They now have 30 days to get approval from the home office. D.R. Horton is currently building in the area. Per Mr. Neilinger the design will be consistent with the townhomes presented at the special meeting.

Mr. Neilinger just informed me that the First Tee Board of Directors voted in favor of a partnership with Forest Lakes. This is very exciting for Forest Lakes to be a part of this non-profit youth development organization created by the LPGA, Masters Tournament, PGA of American and USGA. Corporate partners are Shell Oil, Johnson & Johnson, Golf Channel, Southern Company who provides annual gifts ranging from \$2000 up to \$1 million. There are over 80 Trustees that provide a large percentage of funds with many providing a minimum of \$1 million dollars (example – AT&T, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Deere & Company, Dicks Sporting Goods, Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus). The youth leadership and curriculum focuses on how to manage emotions, set goals, resolve conflicts, introduce themselves, and communicate with others. First Tee core values are: honesty, respect, perseverance, integrity, confidence, courtesy, sportsmanship, responsibility and judgment. The First Tee Sarasota/Manatee was formed in 2000 and serves over 1200 youth from both Counties providing golf and life skills programming. There is an annual registration fee and a nine-week session which is fee based depending on skill level. I want to thank Rick Howe for researching and providing the First Tee information.

The Board met with Mr. and Mrs. Neilinger at his request at the beginning of June to view the most recent drawings of the golf course and Clubhouse. As he stated at the special meeting, the drawings are continuously being fine-tuned to be most efficient and economical. The golf course plan was revised to improve the flow and to include a Par 5 hole, putting green, and still will include an aquatic driving range and charity hole. The Clubhouse drawing and floor plan was completed also. The architecture will be similar to homes in FLCCE. The Clubhouse is proposed to be 5000sf air conditioned space with 2500sf dedicated to the First Tee for study areas, personal computers, etc. The remaining 2500sf is dedicated for a pro shop, restaurant. There will also be 1200sf outside, covered lanai for dining.

As a reminder of the previous owner's (Westwater) project. Legends at Forest Lakes as it was included 189 condominium units ranging in price from the low \$400,000s to the low \$600,000s (based on marketing information I retrieved from my personal file) with very few if any of the units under contract. In comparison, the new plan is for 202 townhomes ranging in price from \$190,000-\$250,000, far less than the previous plan. Mr. Neilinger is not a speculator and feels the pricing is in line with the current market and is confident they will sell.

These new plans for the golf course are very exciting. All of this is dependent on approving an Amendment to our Restrictive Covenant re-zoning 7 acres and expanding the currently approved development footprint. This would also increase the number of units in the footprint by 11 units and per Mr. Neilinger the

revenue required to build the golf course. The official vote process will be in the near future. Be alert for email blasts and notices in your mailboxes.

Personally, I am very excited about the prospect of Forest Lakes CCE reclaiming its positive notoriety and acclaim as we re-invent history. FLCCE is the best community in Sarasota with a history like no other!

This newsletter is being dedicated to our history. Please enjoy the article submitted by one of our long time residents, Doug Erb, a previous Forest Lakes golf course owner who still lives in and loves Forest Lakes.

Have a great summer!

Vickie Bass, President

Douglas Erb and his family have been residents of Forest Lakes since 1977. He is a PGA Life Member, retired. Doug was a former owner, general manager and Director of Golf for Forest Lakes Country Club. He is also a past President of our Forest Lakes Home Owners Association. We're sure you will enjoy his reminiscing, the highs and the lows!

In June 1964 the grand opening of Forest Lakes Country Club was about to happen. It was as much a social event as it was another golf course. The original builder was First Development Corporation headed up by a man named Roland King. Many of the homes were to be built by Arthur Ruttenberg along with a new generation of custom builders that were to make a beautiful neighborhood around the 100 acres plus country club.

The golf course architect was Andy Anderson who built over 100 courses including Sunrise, Rolling Green and Capri Isles golf clubs just to name a few local courses. The land the club sits on what was once orange groves planted by the Spanish in 1600's. Australian Pines were planted as wind breakers. Many of the Florida Pine trees were tapped for sap and there still exists a metal "V" nailed into the tree with the pail hook still attached to the outer bark. Ask me and I'll show you .

The course was par 71 and was only 6300 yards but the Florida Golf Association gave us one of the highest target ratings in the state. The greens were very small and surrounded by 36 green side bunkers along with 19 fairway bunkers in the original design. There were out of bounds markers visible on every hole and on 10 holes you could see out of bound markers on each side of the hole, It was easy to see why the PGA hosted one of their events in the second year of operation. Golf's golden boy, Tom Wisekopf was one of the participants.

The club was built with a unique road structure - one way in and one way out. You entered the club off Webber and found yourself driving north on a boulevard look. The turn-around was just north of Seaview Drive. During the early 70's Beneva was opened to help the north south flow on Tuttle. The original entrance had 2 white brick pillars with iron gates on each side of Beneva Road. Only one stands today. On the east side of the road the center of the boulevard was irrigated and planted with beautiful flowers and no traffic lights. Soon other roads such as Tanglewood and Brookline offered a way into Forest Lakes Country Club Estates.

Forest Lakes was billed as the grand social getaway for Sarasota County. Sara Bay was the ultimate Country Club but was in Manatee County. Forest Lakes was for all ages, especially the young families attested by 8 tennis courts, 3 swimming pools; a Junior Olympic Pool with a 3 meter and 1 meter diving board, a 4 lane lap pool- 4 ft deep, and a round kiddie pool 12 ft. in

diameter and 6 inches deep with 3 giant golf clubs set as a tripod over it. Inside the clubhouse was a giant frame plaque hung in the entrance. It consisted of all the Founding members, Charter members and the rest of the original Life members. After living here for several years those names became more and more impressive. It was the WHO'S WHO of Sarasota with over 300 names.

The clubhouse was a monster. It covered 14,500 Sq Ft. and 17,300 ft of roof, The roof was constructed as the rain-proof roof of the future; constructed of steel framing as to support the gypsum slabs 3'x2' and 4 inches thick. The roof was probably Florida's worst engineering disaster in the states history. I honestly believe the morning dew seeped through. For over 40 years no one was able to keep the rain out of the building.

THE BUILDING INSIDE CONSISTED OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Coat room at front door
2. Small front office
3. Pro Shop with inside bag storage
4. 2 locker rooms with 200 lockers each and a shoeshine room.
5. Mens shower- circular with 8 faucets
6. Ladies showers- 5 stalls
7. Sunken Bar in the middle of the clubhouse
8. Grill room with 80 seats
9. 350 seat dining room that could be divided with sliding walls for sectioning.
10. Parquet dance floor with flowers and a light hanging in from a glass sky light 20 feet above.
11. The entire back of the clubhouse was glass with a tremendous view.
12. Outside snack bar for the pool and golfers going from the front nine to the back nine.

After a few years US Homes bought out First Development and the club was sold to the Tiso family. During the early 70's the economy started to tank and the club followed suit, the course went bankrupt in 1976 and the eviction was speedy. People having dinner were simply told to leave and everything came to a complete halt. The club was shut down along with the electric. There was still food in the kitchen coolers and bottles at the bar.

In June of 1977 four of us bought the club off the courthouse steps for \$680,000. What we found inside was unimaginable. Ceiling tiles and drapes were all over the floor, food rotting everywhere, and the carpet had lifted off the floor from all the rain coming through the roof for nine months. We won't talk about the critters. I remember well taking a Bobcat 5' blade bulldozer, and going from one end of the clubhouse to the other scraping up everything and pushing it out a glass wall that we had removed. You walked around the inside of the clubhouse with a wet towel covering your face, because of the odor. You could look up and see outside through the roof.

The pools were a beautiful yellow-green color and all of the sixty golf carts had been thoroughly vandalized. The tennis pro shop had been broken into and half of the golf course equipment was missing, or of no use at all.

We were not restaurant people so we leased that part of the operation to Bill Wells and he named it Guido's. Forest Lakes now had an Italian Restaurant. Wells put over \$350,000 in to the restoration, which we learned the hard way that he had paid no one. He lasted 10 months and we were stuck. We also had spent \$50,000 to restore the pools and tennis courts.

THE COURSE;

1. Where there was grass there were no roots.
2. Where there was no grass it was all sugar sand.
3. Storm water drainage was totally over grown.
4. Two cart path bridges had almost collapsed.
5. Only 3 or 5 pieces of equipment were operable.
6. The irrigation pumps were blown out.
7. Much of the irrigation had been cannibalized and sold for cash
8. You could take all the grass on the property and a cow on a diet would have starved.

We tried to bring the course back to the original design but had to remove several sand traps and put in a new irrigation system. All the grass on the greens and tees had to be replaced and the remaining bunkers cut back to their original shape.

Overall the cost of rebuilding the course and clubhouse was \$1.4 million. We spent \$200,000 alone for new course equipment. When we realized we were going to be in the restaurant business each one of us went out and brought in a new partner. One of those men was the legendary great, Otto Graham. In 1978 we bought the 16 apartments on the north side of the clubhouse and discovered a piece of property between the apartments and the clubhouse that no one owned. We contributed 150 feet of our property from the sidewalk to the course along with the new strip parcel of property we purchased and sold it to US Homes and is now known as the Beneva Terrace. That money sure did help.

After 2 years of operation we had 300 full memberships, 150 swim memberships and 100 tennis memberships.

A years full membership was \$500. a year with no dues. A golf cart could be rented for \$6. With Otto Graham's heart for charity, energy and knowing so many great athletes we hosted the Otto Graham Celebrity Golf Classic, which year after year was a tremendous success. The tournament benefited the Boys and Girls Club Inc. Over the years we hosted a PGA Senior Tour qualifying and with each player playing 36 holes the low score was a 69 by Jim Albus, a local golf Professional. Sam Snead came in one day and after golf signed autographs, and cheerfully talked with people during lunch. Walter Payton and Geraldo Rivera used the club as an incognito get-a-way for a round of golf. Members of AC/DC and Allman Brother bands played quite frequently. Chuck Such was continually bringing out such stars as Wayne Garrett, World Series Champ of the Mets, and Carl Yastrzemski, a Boston Red Sox Hall of Famer. Bill Short used to live on the course, who unfortunately became famous for giving up the longest home run in baseball history to NY Yankee's Mickey Mantle. Pee Wee Reese, friend of owner Tom Rich, played Forest Lakes frequently during the winter along with Forest Lakes resident, Lou Burdette, another baseball great.

Besides sporting events Forest Lakes hosted weddings, banquets, homeowners meetings, numerous civic groups and charity events.

We sold the club in 1993 and since then the club has been under three different ownerships up to the present. The last group fell victim to the recession just before completing a complete renovation of the course.

A successful golf course on the property would definitely raise our property values and be an amenity and make home sales so much easier. I believe it is important to renew the Forest Lakes tradition as one of the finer housing areas in Sarasota County. I would definitely like to be the first in line for a full membership. Homeowner participation in this venture will play a large part in the success of our community renewal.