



The Oak Tree

The President's Message

The election for the three open seats on the GHMA Board of Directors was held on January 15th. In the event that you did not receive the earlier E-Blast, those elected were David Alfin, Rob Carlton and Jim Gallo. The full Board for the upcoming year is as follows.

President	Dr. Robert Jay Carlton
Vice President	Mr. Murray Salkovitz
Treasurer	Mr. David Alfin
Director	Mr. Vic Natiello
Director	Mr. Jim Gallo

Now that the election is behind us and as we head into the New Year, I would hope that the residents of our community will agree that the time has come to move beyond the somewhat negative rhetoric that was expressed by a few residents during the election process and commit our energies towards working together for the betterment of Grand Haven.

There is no question that in a community as large and diverse as Grand Haven there will almost certainly be differences of opinions, needs and goals. These differences serve to generate new ideas and perspectives that are needed in order to bring about positive change as the community grows and ages. I believe that through constructive change, within the legal limits imposed upon the Board, we can continue to improve the lifestyle that we all have chosen.

As was stated by a number of residents in recent months, Grand Haven is a truly unique and gratifying place to live. Through the years, many residents have contributed a countless number of hours in their efforts to improve our lifestyle and quality of our community. As with most things in life, we have not, nor are we likely to ever attain perfection. There is always room for improvement and change through input, discussion and constructive decision making on the part of the Board.

Continued on Page 2



GHMA Meeting Schedule

The Board of Directors of the Grand Haven Master Association (GHMA) meets on the 3rd Friday of every month (unless otherwise noted.) All residents are welcome to attend.

When: 2 PM, Friday, February 20
2 PM, Friday, March 20
2 PM, Friday, April 17
2 PM, Friday, May 22

Where: Creekside Amenities Center
2 North Village Parkway

GHMA Board Members

President	Rob Carlton	447-5536	rjcarlton5@aol.com
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Treasurer	David Alfin	585-0903	diapalmcoast@me.com
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Director	Jim Gallo	609-636-1143	Jim.gallo49@gmail.com

The Oak Tree

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The Oak Tree is always looking for articles with ideas, topics and articles for future issues, especially those that would be of interest to Grand Haven residents—Grand Haven activities, clubs, happenings, sporting events, resident volunteer activities and opportunities. Please contact Nancy Carlton at ncarlton096@gmail.com with your suggestions.

President's Message....continued

On behalf of the GHMA Board of Directors for 2015, I invite all of our property owners to attend our monthly meetings and become a part of those discussions. Productive participation combined with an open minded approach towards resolving existing difference will assist in maximizing the effectiveness of the Board. This in turn, will serve not only to enhance the beauty and desirability of our community, but also the reputation of Grand Haven and the ultimate value of all properties within our community.

As we enter a new year, we have the opportunity to either work cooperatively in serving the best interests of this community or continuing to foster a divisive atmosphere that can only result in conflict and discord among our residents. I truly hope, both personally and on behalf of your Board of Directors, that 2015 will be viewed as a time of commitment and cooperation, with the overall quality of Grand Haven lifestyle as our highest priority.

*Dr. Robert J. Carlton, President
Grand Haven Master Association*

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Neighborhood Watch

Hello neighbors. My name is Bob Carlsen, and along with Lisa Mrakovcic and Pat Maloney, we form the Steering Committee of the Grand Haven Neighborhood Watch program. I want to briefly describe this program to you.

Neighborhood Watch is a network of residents who volunteer to watch over the houses and properties in their villages and our Grand Haven community. Simply said, we “Watch, Observe and Report”. We watch for suspicious activities and gather information about crimes through volunteer Village Captains and their assistants.

When a crime or an attempted crime occurs we immediately gather the facts. Once all of the information is gathered, we send an email E-Blast as soon as possible to all Grand Haven residents informing them of the incident. We also send quarterly email “e-blasts” with general information to residents and write quarterly articles in this publication.

In our incident E-Blasts, we include the street but not addresses which are withheld in all cases. We may not be able to relate all the information about events, as directed by the Sheriff’s Office. We will not mention any names of people involved in events, for privacy and so we do not to interfere with the Sheriff’s Office investigation.

Neighborhood Watch Village Captains and their assistance are volunteers that gather information about what’s happening in their village and coordinate with their neighbors. They are the liaison to the Neighborhood Watch program and the Steering Committee.

Really, every resident in Grand Haven is a part of the Neighborhood Watch program. We all must be observant of what is happening in our neighborhoods and to our neighbor’s homes and property. In this way we will keep Grand Haven the safe community it is.

If any resident sees a crime in progress they should immediately call 911. If they see something suspicious and out of the ordinary, they should immediately report it to the Sheriff’s Office, using their non-emergency number, 386-313-4911. They should afterward report these events to their Village Captain or a member of the Steering Committee.

Residents can directly get information about events happening in Grand Haven by going on-line to the <http://www.crimereports.com> website and to the Sheriff’s Office website at <http://www.myfcso.us/>.

Your Grand Haven Community Information Guide contains information about your organizations and programs, such as the CDD, GHMA/HOA and the Neighborhood Watch.

*Bob Carlsen
Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee*



Lake Bank Maintenance – Each owner living on a detention pond needs to continually maintain their lake bank. Each lake bank (where there is not a concrete stem or retention wall) was originally developed and planted with spartina grasses. These are the feathery bushes or clumps of grass about 4 feet tall that were planted to keep the lake bank from eroding. REMEMBER – if your spartina has died or is not there, then you will need to replant them.

Please go to www.grandhavenmhoa.com and click on “Detention Pond (lake bank) Planting Scheme” at the top of the page (under General Forms/Documents) for further details on planting requirements. It is each lake bank owner’s responsibility to preserve those spartina grasses and keep the lake bank free of weeds, vines and/or wild growth. This maintenance responsibility is best accomplished with regular monthly attention.

Landscape Mulch – Landscape mulch/ground cover is required for landscape beds pursuant the GHMA ADC Standards. It is necessary to add to or refresh your landscape mulch from time to time (bi-annually).

The default approved landscape mulch/ground cover for all properties is naturally colored, organic (pine) bark chips. Red, black or green mulch is not permitted.

REMEMBER – you should only add to or refresh the same landscape mulch that has been approved by the ADC for your landscape plan. If you would like to utilize a different type of mulch or mulch alternative (rock) you will need to submit to the ADC for approval prior to installing.

Mold on Roofs and Concrete Surfaces – Each owner should take a look at their roof and consider having it cleaned. The roof itself can and will get dark in color and/or moldy (particularly tile roofs). Also the border or fascia around the edge of the roof may need attention as well. This is something to plan for at least annually if not more frequently.

Remember, driveways/walkways/sidewalks tend to develop mold this time of year. Cleaning roofs and concrete surfaces all at once can save time and/or money.

If you have questions about any of these items, please contact Troy Railsback at [386-446-6333](tel:386-446-6333).

The ADC Corner

The members of the Architectural Design Committee (ADC) often take for granted that property owners living in Grand Haven know what they need to do when they wish to make changes to the exterior of their home. However, the reality is, many property owners do not know what to do and what forms they need to complete for submittal to the ADC.

The simplest answer is to go to the Grand Haven website at: grandhavenmhoa.com and follow the directions under the ADC tab. The entire ADC Standards and submittal forms are right there. But, even that is sometimes difficult to do. Some of us do not have access to the internet or do not know how to maneuver through all of the pages of the website. Hopefully, we can share a little “easy to understand” information so that everyone knows what to do.

When do I have to make a submittal to the ADC?

Submittals are required whenever a change is made to the exterior of your property. (Any exterior change means things as major as painting your house or installing a brick paver driveway or pool to something as minor as adding black jack edging or a satellite dish, and everything in between. If you have a question as to whether you need to submit, please call Southern States Management Group at (386) 446-6333.)

Where do I get the forms?

The forms are on the website or you may contact SSMG to request them. You may go by their office to pick them up or they will mail them to you.

What should my submittal include?

- Architectural Review Application (Exhibit #4)
- Home site survey plan, usually a copy of the property’s survey plan (obtained at closing or available from the county tax assessor’s office) will suffice with added pencil sketches and notes detailing proposed modification. (See Architectural Review Application, page two, for additional details.)
- Photographs showing the area(s) of intended modification.
- Product literature.

Where do I send the submittals once they are completed?

You may send the forms along with all of the aforementioned documentation and deposit if required to:

Grand Haven ADC, P.O. Box 354785, Palm Coast, FL 32135 or Southern States Management Group, 2 Camino Del Mar, Palm Coast, FL 32137 or drop them in the ADC white box located on Marlin Dr.

When are the meetings and how do I know if my submittal will be heard?

The meetings are scheduled every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 9:30 A.M. at the Creekside Athletic Center. All applications received by 12:00 Noon on the Friday before the scheduled meeting will be placed on that meeting’s agenda.

How do I know if my submittal has been approved or denied if I am unable to attend the meeting?

Property owners will receive a letter in the mail confirming the ADC action with notes and requirements.

What if I make the change(s) without getting it approved?

There is a “Post Installation Fee” of \$100.00. Without this fee, application will be rejected and the enforcement/violation process will proceed.

All property owners are always encouraged to attend the ADC meetings so that if questions do arise, you will be there to answer them. We hope this small article has helped in some way to explain the process. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact SSMG or any ADC member.

*Tom Byrne,
MADC Chair*



Winter Croquet at Grand Haven

Croquet is considered an “all weather sport” and it is not unusual to see members of the Grand Haven Croquet Club out on the courts, in their “whites”, in all sorts of weather from the hot stuff in summer to the really chilly winter mornings of winter. Rain doesn’t stop the games either, although there are some weather rules as far as lightning is concerned and the first growls of thunder tend to send people scurrying off the court.

During winter months you’ll see jackets and scarves, gloves and even boots, on occasion, on the players but, by late morning, the outerwear ends up piled on the court furniture as the combination of Florida sun and activity often make heavy clothing un-needed. We welcomed eight new members into our Club from the Fall “Beginner’s Class” and it was a delight to have them turn out for our annual Holiday party in early December but, even more inspiring was to see them out playing in one of our many coached games on one of the coldest days of the season, so far. Coached games with experienced coaches are a regular part of the education new Croquet players receive when they become members of the Croquet Club. We are anticipating offering another Beginner’s Class in the early spring. Contact John Fitterman, (jjfitterman@gmail.com) if interested.

This year we have much to look forward to as we await warmer spring weather. After many delays we will finally see the resurfacing of our croquet court. A special and very hardy grass, designed for athletic fields will provide us with a more lasting, smoother play surface. While the court will be closed down for a number of weeks during the re-construction, the croquet players all say, it’s well worth it!

*Submitted by: Cassandra Gaisor
President, Grand Haven Croquet Club*



Make a difference Mentor a Child

Are you looking to do something productive with your time? Flagler County Education Foundation offers a unique opportunity to make a difference in the life of a high school student with a dream to go to college. The Foundation’s Take Stock in Children scholarship program pairs good students who have the odds stacked against them with mentors who provide the support, encouragement, and guidance they need to succeed in school and go on to college.

As a mentor, you’ll spend just one hour a week (usually lunchtime) with your student – and the difference you make will last a lifetime.

If you’d like to know more about Flagler County Education Foundation’s Take Stock in Children Program and becoming a mentor, please contact Megan Mahoney, 386-437-7526 ext 3104 or email mahoneym@flaglerschools.com.



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Thinking about redecorating, finding unwanted items taking up valuable space. Do not fret. The Flagler Humane Society would greatly appreciate your donations.

After a year of thriving business here in the Palm Coast area, we are thrilled to have the great opportunity to expand our location. Expanding allows us to take in larger furniture and the ability to accept more donations. All of the proceeds go to Flagler Humane Society, benefiting the homeless, abandon and abused animals. We offer a great selection of items at wonderful prices which also helps to serve the needs of our community. **We are open Monday through Saturday from 9:30-4:00. For furniture pick up please call and leave a message 1-386-597-2839.**

Our friendly staff consists of mostly volunteers that make the overall shopping experience a pleasant one. We offer excellent customer service and will help unload any items. Many of the items we accept as donations are Clothing, Shoes, Linens, Jewelry, Collectibles, Kitchen Items, Electronics, Tools, Home accessories, Furniture, and Holiday Items. Each item is carefully inspected by staff to insure quality.

We appreciate our community coming together to help out the animals of Flagler County. This is only one of the many ways you can help The Flagler Humane Society.

Submitted by: Dennis Amone

Tennis Anyone ??

For nearly the past ten years, I have had the pleasure of working with the Grand Haven tennis community as their USPTA certified tennis teaching professional. My clientele during this time has ranged from beginning players to competitive team and tournament players. Whether you want to develop/sharpen your strokes or strengthen your strategy skills, I can help. Private lessons can be scheduled at your convenience. If you're looking for a group lesson for doubles play, I can assist with finding other participants who are at your playing level. I also perform racquet restrings and grip replacements.

The tennis facility in Grand Haven went through a major renovation a couple of years ago and now boasts some of the finest Har-Tru (green clay) tennis courts in Central Florida. The seven courts utilize an underground watering system that allows the surface to maintain a uniform level of moisture to ensure safe and consistent traction. All of the courts have windscreens to temper the elements and lights to allow for night play. Keeping the courts in pristine condition is not an easy task. This care is provided by Village Center facilitator Bryan Roth, whose meticulous care is evidenced throughout the facility.

There are several ways to get involved with the tennis community in Grand Haven. Whether you are new to the game, coming back to tennis from a hiatus, or just looking to meet other tennis players, there are daytime community tennis groups that meet on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 8am. There are also evening community tennis groups that meet on Mondays and Thursdays at 5pm. All of the groups include a mix of men and women players. Sign-ups are available in Village Center office. No matter what age or ability level, tennis is a sport that can be enjoyed for a lifetime.

*Submitted by: Brian Counts USPTA
briancounts1@earthlink.net*



CDD CORNER

EARLY 2015 UPDATE ON CONTINUAL GH CDD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE OUR GRAND HAVEN LIFESTYLE AND EXPERIENCE

The CDD Board of Supervisors has approved a list of capital improvement projects for fiscal year 2015. These projects will be completed in stages throughout the year by the CDD Operations staff. The following is a list of all approved 2015 Capital projects including their current stage of completion.

Projects in Contract or Permitting Stages:

- Additional parking at Creekside by expansion of the rear parking lot
- The Crossings – Replace 3 gate operators & 3 gates improve drainage, resurface and repave roads – Sailfish & Marlin WSP to Lakeside Way
- Install concrete on two entrances to pump house & next to building
- Install exit gate cameras & signage for improved monitoring of exiting vehicular traffic
- Marcite resurfacing of Creekside pool and spa (Feb, 2015)
- Marcite resurfacing of Creekside kiddie pool
- RegROUT/repair Creekside pool and spa coping
- Replace 2 gazebo columns @ South Entrance
- Construct Pickleball courts at the Village Center

Projects in Process:

- Landscape repairs
- Repair sidewalks lifted by tree roots
- Replace stop bars/arrows

Completed Projects:

- Center park pavers
- Install power and air conditioning to one storage shed
- Marlin Drive pump house equipment repair

Projects to be Completed:

- Refinish GH Room Wood Floor at Village Center
- Replace GH Room Ceiling at Village Center
- Add 6 Fans to GH Room at Village Center
- Repair GH room a/c ducts above ceiling at Village Center
- Install an electrical cabinet in Village Center office closet
- Replace 2 boilers with hot water tanks at Village Center
- 36" heavy-duty open burner range
- Replace café bar top
- Creekside Croquet Court resurfacing
- Construct Petanque Court at the Village Center

Submitted by: Dr. Steve Davidson, CDD Chair



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Undercover Intrigue Comes to Palm Coast

Every now and then we hear about spectacular art thefts from museums, palaces, estates and galleries around the world. Daring art thieves, who develop elaborate ways to steal Renoirs, Rembrandts, Picassos and Warhols worth thousands or millions of dollars, are not particular who their victims are.

Brought to you by the Flagler County Art League - enter the "art detective." *The Wall Street Journal* called him a "living legend." *The London Times* dubbed him "the most famous art detective in the world." Robert K. Wittman, author of *Priceless: How I Went Undercover to Rescue the World's Treasures* and the founder of the FBI's Art Crimes Team will bring to life and entertain you about such cases as the one that involved three countries, wire taps, Hollywood mobsters and a trio of punks from Iraq, resulting in the recovery of two Renoirs and a Rembrandt worth more than \$40 million; and the case that involved catching a dishonest appraiser who stole countless heirlooms from Civil War heroes' descendants. (**Learn** more at www.RobertWittmanInc.com)

Going Undercover

Rescuing the World's Stolen Treasures

With Robert K. Wittman

Tuesday, April 7 ♦ Flagler Auditorium ♦ 7 p.m.

General Admission Tickets \$20*

Book sale and signing following the presentation

You may also choose to meet Mr. Wittman at a private VIP reception before his presentation and special seating in the Auditorium along with a copy of "Priceless" for him to sign for you as you ask him about his adventures.

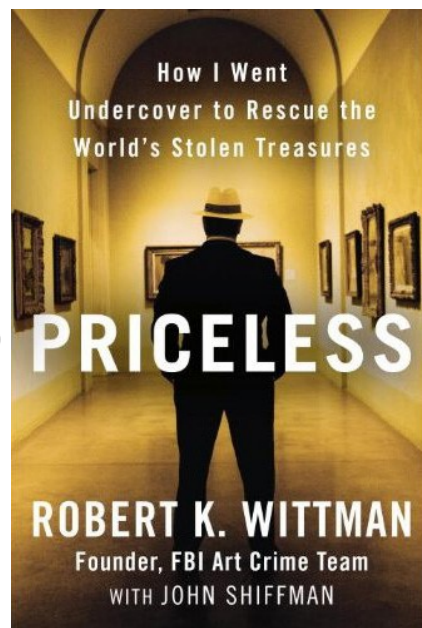
VIP private reception 5:30 p.m. Tickets \$60

Meet the man whose book has been described as more realistic than "The Thomas Crown Affair," and more entertaining than "Catch Me If You Can"

Tickets for the event are available at the Flagler Auditorium for \$20 (*\$17 if you are a group of 10 or more) by phone or online: 386-437-7547 or 866-352-4537, or www.FlaglerAuditorium.org

Proceeds from this event will allow FCAL to perpetuate the arts for all ages in our community now and into the future. Flagler County Art League is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization. www.flaglercountryartleague.com

Submitted by: Ann DeLucia and Rita Mass



Frequently Asked Question

Q. There appears to be an excessive number of acronyms used around Grand Haven. What do they all mean?

A. Here is a short list of the most important acronyms utilized on a daily basis.

GHMA—“Grand Haven Master Association” is the resident controlled board responsible for enforcing the deed restrictions (CC&Rs) and architectural design guidelines (ADC) of Grand Haven. The Fine Committee is also under the purview of the GHMA.

CC&Rs—“Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions” is the document that most people did not read, but all signed and agreed to when they purchased their lot or house in Grand Haven. It places consequential restrictions on what you can do with the exterior of your property. It sets a standard for the nature of the community and its appearance.

CDD – “Community Development District” is the resident controlled board that owns and manages all of the commonly owned property within Grand Haven. If it is outside your property line and not the GH Golf Course, it is their scope or responsibility. This includes the Village Center, Creekside Amenities Center, tennis courts, croquet courts, Waterside Parkway (and all other roads), street lamps and bond debt.

MADC – “Modification Architectural Design Committee” reviews and approves major modifications and minor changes to the exterior of resident properties.

NCADC – “New Construction Architectural Design Committee” reviews and approves new home construction and landscaping plans. The ADCs are a major factor in maintaining the nature and appearance of the community.

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Grand Haven Woman's Club

First and foremost, all of our members (all 203 of us) would like to say Happy New Year and thanks to everyone in Grand Haven for making our club such a success. From the staff at the Grand Haven Golf Club to the chefs and wait staff that serve us on the 3rd Monday of every month (from September to May)....we would like to say a big THANK YOU TO EVERYONE!

As a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs Florida, the GHWC holds a solid 1st place in number of members and contributions to our community within our District. General Federation of Women's Clubs Florida was founded in 1897 in Green Cove Springs, Florida, and has a motto that our club is following in true manner:

In great things, Unity;
In small things, Liberty;
In all things, Charity.

The Grand Haven Woman's Club was founded in 2005 by a handful of Grand Haven women, many of whom are still members today. Our Club's theme for this year is "Volunteer...and Make a Difference". And that we have done! Due to the generosity of its members, the GHWC has made contributions to Special Olympics, Heifer International, Family Life Center, Florida Hospital Flagler, Flagler Humane Society and Palm Coast Arts Foundation, to name a few. We provide an annual scholarship to a graduating senior from Matanzas High School & Flagler/Palm Coast High School, support the Stuff Bus and we donate food and dollars to Church Women United's Food Bank in Bunnell. In 2014, over \$29,000 was donated to local organizations through funds raised by the Grand Haven Woman's Club and contributions of cash and goods by individual members. Aside from the monetary donations we make, many of our members donate their time and services to these organizations as well.

We salute and thank our neighbors in Grand Haven for supporting us through our annual Book Sale, Day of Games and other activities where the entire community can contribute.

Happy New Year and a fun and Prosperous 2015 to one and all!

Submitted by: Pam Walker
GHWC Publicity Chair

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My, How Time Flies ... Grand Haven Eagle Update

Nesting season at the Wild Oaks nest is full of action and truly "flying by"! After 37 days of incubation, we have two little nestlings keeping parents, Romeo and Juliet, busy. What a gift to have a hatch on Christmas Day! Numerous fish species have been delivered (including eel, armored catfish, and needle nose gar and more), coot, gull and the frequent squirrel delivery. The little nestlings are getting quite the smorgasbord!

Not only do Bald Eagles acquire the largest habitat in North America (residing Alaska to New Mexico), they are the fastest growing birds as well gaining approx 1# per week until fully grown at 10-12 wks (in FL mature Bald Eagles weigh approximately 7-10# depending on gender).

At hatch the chicks weigh approximately 3-4oz and covered in light grey natal down. They are completely dependent on their parents (altricial) and are unable to regulate their body temperature (thermogulate) for approx twelve days. So the parents typically remain close or lightly covering them with their body (brooding) during this time to provide necessary heat.



Within 3-4 wks their second thick, wooly down has grown in providing insulation that will ultimately warm or cool them. They are approx 1' tall and weigh approximately 3-4# sporting beaks and feet almost the size of their parents!



By 6wks their signature dark contour feathers have grown in and a quick and remarkable transition has taken place.

By the time this article is distributed, our nestlings will be through all those stages and soon be on the branch and ready to take flight! Stay tuned

for the next progress report.....as time "flies" at the nest!

(Should you see any disturbing activity in the nest area, please notify: bengals2@earthlink.net)

*Submitted by: Gretchen Butler
Audubon EagleWatch Nest Monitor/Volunteer
American Eagle Foundation/Volunteer*



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By Appointment

Looking for something to do?

Are you looking for some exercise now that the holidays are over? Are you wondering what activities are available at the Amenity Centers? Well, wonder no more. You can check out the website at www.grandhavenamenity.com and find activities from Ballet to Yoga and many things in between. You can also check out the Village Café menu. If you have a question, call them at 447-0192



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**Are you an amateur "Who dunnit?"
Then this one is for YOU!**

Murder in Morocco

Murder Mystery Dinner
Saturday, April 18, 2015, 6—10 PM

It is 1937 and the port of call will be Tangier for sightseeing for all guests during the daytime.

Tour guide will be "Thelma Anderson"

The event will include a delectable three-course Murder Mystery Dinner at the Club Tangier

Be careful...danger lurks in the Casbah!

Proceeds from this event benefit the
**University Women of Flagler
Scholarship Fund**

For more information, contact
Louel Larkin, 445-4236

The Generous Grand Haven Spirit... Volunteer Spotlight

In this issue, we place the spotlight on the numerous Grand Haven residents who were so generous over the holiday season. While there are way too many to mention in this article, it is important to know that the Grand Haven community once again embraced the joy of giving back to those who are less fortunate and struggling to survive. In addition to all our residents who participated with their churches and the Angel Trees, the following are a few more examples of our community's generosity:

- The Big Red Box, that was located at the Village Center, received a record collection of \$1,640 in cash, check & gift cards, in addition to 14 bicycles and 2 loads of toys. These were donated to Project Share, sponsored by the Flagler Beach Rotary Club, and benefits needy families in Flagler County.
- The Third Annual Holiday Home Tour took place on December 9 & 10 as four homeowners opened their beautifully decorated homes. More than 200 tickets were sold to Grand Haven residents, and all proceeds from the Home Tour benefit Project Share.



*Pictured above the Holiday Home Tour Hosts:
Mark and Cindy Kimmel, Ricki and Ron Leal, Lynn Tobin,
Loretta and Roger Consolla.*

Continued on Page 15

Buying or Selling In Grand Haven?



*Turn to the Team
That Knows
Grand Haven Best!*



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Critter Corner...Turtle Or Tortoise?

Occasionally, a car stops and waits for a turtle to cross the road. To be very technical, it is probably a gopher tortoise taking that stroll. There are distinctions between these two; a tortoise is terrestrial and spends life on land while its reptilian cousin, the turtle, is aquatic and lives in the ocean or, if it is a fresh water variety, in lakes or ponds.

Tortoises are nicely adapted landlubbers with that tough high domed shell, into which they can safely retreat if threatened, and sturdy stubby feet well suited to navigate over land. On the other hand, aquatic turtles have streamlined shells and paddle-like feet that allow them to swim quite rapidly but traversing the sand to dig a nest is a laboriously hard task.

The Florida Gopher Tortoise acquired this name due to the unique and long deep burrow it creates for its residence. These often range upwards of forty feet. (Hopefully not under our homes!) Their shovel-like front feet and claws help them dig. They are very neighborly creatures sharing their burrows with hundreds of other animal, such as rabbits, armadillos, quail, mice, lizards, snakes etc. Many animals besides the gopher tortoise depend on this shelter, making it an important element in our eco-system. Being herbivores gopher tortoises eat many grasses, leaves, plants, flowers and berries.

In spring, a male gopher tortoise's fancy turns to thoughts of love so he visits female burrows to serenade a mate. She will lay about 6 ping-pong eggs outside the burrow entrance. The babies pop out 3 months later but only 20% will survive. Mom keeps them safe through the winter and later they dig their own burrows. In 15 to 20 years these babies will look for a lover. The gopher tortoise will not win any beauty contests with its drab brown or gray color but hatchlings have brighter yellowish coloring.



The Florida gopher tortoise is on the endangered list and numbers are dwindling rapidly due to loss of habitat and road kill. So if you see a car stopped please do not pass. Someone may be helping a tortoise cross to safety.

Submitted by: Anne Sciuto



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The Generous Grand Haven Spirit... Volunteer Spotlight *continued*

- The Christmas Family Giving Project began 7 years ago with a group of ladies tennis players recognizing the need and raising over \$1,600. This year its participation increased from a varied group of GH residents (male, female, golfers, croquet players, full-time and seasonal residents) who contributed, bought gifts, wrapped and delivered. What they all share is their generosity of spirit! This group contacted several churches in Flagler County to find there was no shortage of people deserving help, including single parent families, grandparents raising grandchildren and traditional families. This year the group raised over \$4,500 and helped nine deserving families.
- Another group of ladies created 17 Christmas baskets valued at more than \$535, which were donated to the Family Life Center's Domestic Violence Center for the women staying at the center during the holidays. When they asked the Family Life Center what their biggest need was during the holiday time, the Center's response was that the children were usually remembered with toys and things on their wish list but often times the mothers do not receive anything. So the Christmas baskets project was formed.

Once again, it makes you proud to be a resident of such a wonderful community of residents who see a need and respond in a generous way. THANK YOU GRAND HAVEN

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GHMA NEWSLETTER

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Village Center Waterside Café		(386) 447-0239
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