



# PACA News

April - June 2009

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## Meeting Info

Second Thursday of

Every Month

at 7pm

Land O'Lakes

Community Center

5401 Land O'Lakes

Boulevard

(US Highway 41)

## Website

[www.myPACA.org](http://www.myPACA.org)

## Oakstead: 'Truly a nice place to live'

By Norman Keith

Oakstead HOA president

As elected officials in Tallahassee look for ways to cut state spending, they might find their solutions here in Oakstead. The Community Development District (CDD) Board of Directors has lowered its assessments in each of the past two years. The Homeowners Association (HOA) has kept pace, reducing its dues in 2009.

Oakstead is nestled on the north side of SR54, west of the Suncoast Parkway and east of Land O' Lakes Blvd. It is a deed-restricted community of 1,183 residences divided into nine pristine villages. The community was built during 2001-2005 with homes and villas of 1,500 to 5,500 square feet.

As a result of innovative bond refinancing by the CDD, funds have been generated to underwrite a host of projects. Common ground landscaping upgrades have been completed, along with a 1½-mile sidewalk for the youngsters accessing Oakstead Elementary School. Future projects include expanding the clubhouse workout room, adding a salt system to the pool, building a "kiddie pool," installing a card-swipe pool entry system plus the addition of security cameras around the clubhouse.

The clubhouse architecture and decorating scheme create a friendly atmosphere. The staff present a professional attitude based on a desire to help residents in any way possible.

Activities for residents are conducted throughout the year. 2008 kicked off with a traditional New Year's Eve gala and ended with a Christmas party. Meetings, conferences,

sporting, exercise and evening activities are offered continuously.

Our amenities include a 180,000-gallon pool; tennis, basketball and volleyball courts; playgrounds; soccer fields and a ball field.

A nature trail winds over three miles around numerous ponds, through cypress heads and over boardwalks. It invites exercise-conscious, nature-loving residents to observe an abundance of wildlife. It's a bird lover's paradise with unlimited photographic opportunities.

Homeowners have a reclaimed watering system serving lawns and landscaping to ensure the highest standard of curb appeal.

A Volunteer Community Watch Group operates under a Community Field Manager. These trained volunteers conduct security patrols on an unannounced schedule and have proven to be a valuable asset. Security is also enhanced by the attractive walls and white slatted fences that surround our gated communities. Security is augmented by magnetized gates that require personal codes or coded gate openers to gain access to the villages.

Oakstead Elementary School, Rushe Middle School and Sunlake High School provide a K-12 system within minutes of Oakstead. A recently-opened Publix and a county fire station nearby add essential services for residents.

Oakstead is surely one of the premier communities along the SR54 corridor – and is truly a nice place to live!



# Program Committee

By Wayne Mooney, Program Committee Chairperson



President Parsons (left) presents a PACA cap and documents to Mr. Cox.

## Commissioner Cox details Pasco's budget

County Commissioner Michael Cox detailed the county's budget during PACA's regular meeting on Jan. 8. He said Pasco's millage rate is less than those in five area counties. He said county government is "trying to think outside of the box, and to be very proactive" to control taxes. A plus for development is that Pasco's debt service is less than two percent of its budget. Mr. Cox said the declining economy is going to have a continuing negative impact requiring cuts in county and state expenditures. He said recession-driven reductions in property values mean the county must budget for about \$30 million less in tax revenue when it writes its 2010 budget. Mr. Cox hopes to change the fact that federal aid accounts for only one percent of county spending. He also said the county hopes to use some federal stimulus funds on its two biggest road projects: SR 54 and US 41. He added the county has funds from impact fees to pay for more library and firehouse construction projects, but lacks the tax revenue to staff them. That's why only limited, priority county construction is planned this year.

## Codes chief thanks HOAs, CDDs for help

County Codes Manager Richard Ortiz thanked HOAs and CDDs in his Feb. 12 PACA presentation for their help in enforcement. "CDDs and HOAs do such a good job that we need their help, they don't need our help." He said "Some of the HOAs are aggressive enough (that) they tell us (of violations). A lot of the HOAs have gotten aggressive enough now that they'll say they want us writing violations." Violators are required to appear before the HOA to explain their failure to comply. The law requires disclosure of the names of complainants. Mr. Ortiz said residents can ask the HOA to file complaints to protect resident anonymity. He also discussed codes relating to lawns, watering, pools, parking, set backs, lanais, RVs and boats. He urged each community to maintain its beauty by enforcing codes.



Mr. Ortiz (left) answers questions from PACA members following his presentation.

## TBARTA sees buses, trains in our future

Pasco County's transit future may rely upon a combination of short- and long-distance bus and rail service to move travelers through the seven-county region from Citrus to Sarasota counties, according to Brian Bollas of Parsons Brinckerhoff. He spoke at the March 12 PACA meeting in his role as a member of the Public Engagement Team for the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA). It has until this summer to present mid- and long-range plans for the region's transportation future. He said if Pasco County tried to build roads to address



Mr. Bollas uses map to discuss Pasco transit plan.

its transportation needs, "there'd be pavement from Dade City to the beach." He noted the Tampa region is the only one of the nation's 25 largest metro regions not to have a long-term transit plan in place. In Pasco, he said the plan could call for increased bus service on the Suncoast, SR54 and I75. It could include rail service along the north-south CSX corridor, and from Wesley Chapel to Temple Terrace and on into Tampa. More details on TBARTA's plans can be obtained at [www.tbarta.com](http://www.tbarta.com) or by calling its info line at (813) 217-4048.

### Programs for Next Quarter

April 9  
Panel Discussion on  
Financial Management

May 14  
State Representative  
Will Weatherford

June 11  
Deed Enforcement  
Panel Discussion

# Government Affairs Committee

By Fred Krauer, GAC Chairperson

## We need help when owners abandon damaged homes

A home in the villa community of Tanglewylde in Oakstead caught fire on Feb. 21, 2008. Damage to the villa was estimated at \$100,000.

Since the home was insured, it should have been repaired in a timely fashion, right?

Unfortunately, that was not the case.

The homeowner instead took the insurance money, paid off the mortgage and walked away from the home – sticking the Homeowner Association with not only the cost of the repairs, but also to absorb the loss of maintenance fees.

The residents owning the attached villa have not been able to move back into their home because of the smell of smoke permeating through the firewall in the ceiling.

So for over a year since, these people have been living some place else and have been very ... very ... patient.

I contacted Commissioner Pat Mulieri to see if the county had any laws on the books to prevent homeowners from just setting their homes on fire, collecting the insurance money and walking away.

The county's lawyer, Jeffrey Steinsnyder, checked on county and state law.

He found that there is no law on the books stopping the homeowner from collecting the insurance money; what happens to the proceeds is a matter between the insurance company and the insured.

I would like to see a state law similar to that



*Damage from a fire in the boarded-up villa at left has rendered its partner at right uninhabitable for more than one year.*

which now affects condominiums.

If enacted, that would force homeowners to put HOAs on their homeowner insurance policies. That would ensure that in case of massive property damage, communities would be able to put the residence back into its original condition.

I sent state Representative Will Weatherford an e-mail asking him to look into this matter. He said he will have staff look into it.

At this time, Tanglewylde HOA has this homeowner in court so the community can take control of this home and get it back into livable condition as soon as possible.

I think this fight has only begun. But time is of the essence with hurricane season fast approaching.

### Pasco libraries need help

At a recent PACA meeting, members asked for help in getting new libraries in the areas of Wesley Chapel and Trinity/Odessa.

I went to see Commissioner Mulieri and we had Commissioner Michael

Cox speak at a recent PACA meeting on the county's budget. It is cut to the bone and lacks funds to build any libraries at this time.

I spoke recently to Linda Allen, Libraries Director for the Pasco County Library System. She said that with budget cuts she will have to close libraries and lay off staff.

She did say that a Pasco Library Foundation has been established and is looking for donations to keep the libraries open.

For more information about the foundation and how you can help, call the Pasco Library at (727) 861-3020. Or you can choose to go on line and visit its website at <http://pascolibraryfoundation.org>.



*The wing added in 2007 on the right side of the Land O' Lakes branch is one of the few library construction projects in recent years in Pasco County.*

If PACA members have any issues that they cannot find a solution to and would like PACA to help, they can email PACA President Bill Parsons at [BParsons@mypaca.org](mailto:BParsons@mypaca.org) or Government Affairs Chair Fred Krauer at [FKrauer@mypaca.org](mailto:FKrauer@mypaca.org).

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