

A Great Egret stands in a marshy area with tall grasses and water in the background. The bird is the central focus, shown in profile facing right. It has a long, sharp beak and a long, slender neck. The background is a soft-focus landscape of green and yellow reeds and water.

The Cottages

Fall Newsletter 2023



Kiki Scovel
President

President's Letter

WELCOME BACK!

The GREAT FALL MIGRATION has begun! Whether you are already here or planning your trip to The Cottages, WELCOME BACK.

This has been a blessedly uneventful summer in regard to weather events. The most concerning is the continuing drought our little "Bonita Bubble" is experiencing. While locations just a few miles away to the east have had plentiful rain, Pelican Landing has not had nearly the normal amount of summer rain. Combined with several weeks of 100 degree temperatures in July our plants have been stressed. I expect the CDD to implement watering restrictions much sooner than usual and, like all of you, I find it incredibly frustrating to try to keep my landscape alive when the CDD turns off the pumps.

Oaks - a love / hate relationship

I now know more than ever we need to address the problematic curb gutters. The oaks we treasure so much also cause a myriad of problems from their expansive roots and several curb areas along the street have been lifted to the point where water can no longer drain into the storm drains so the water just sits. This "ponding" has accelerated very rapidly. The board gathered 3 proposals to replace these curb areas. The first step was to grind out the problem roots and that was completed in early September. I was stunned to see an oak root measuring 18 inches across and heading under the road. It looked like an entire other tree! The next step is demolish the damaged curbs and pour new curbs. These concrete repairs are expensive and will run about \$15-20k by the time the concrete work is completed and landscape and irrigation is restored. The urgency of this unexpected project means we may have to postpone other projects in order to fund it. The 2024 budget process begins at the end of the month so we will have more clarity once treasurer Paul Barnicke looks at the year-end projections. Thanks to Dennis Lowe for coordinating all the details.

The Cottages Fall Social is scheduled for Nov. 6th at the gazebo and I hope to see many of you there. I love to hear about the interesting and varied activities our neighbors experience during their summer away. See You Soon!

Travel safely and stay well.

Kiki

Tree roots & curb repair

Tree roots have been lifting sections of the street curbs so that rain and sprinkler water do not flow properly to the storm drains. The accumulated water becomes stagnant and in some areas so deep that frogs have actually laid eggs and tadpoles have grown to over one half inch. The accumulated leaves and debris begin to rot & give off an odor.



Curb repair & tree roots

Soto Tree Service has cut out the offending roots. The board has 3 proposals from



concrete contractors to replace sections of the curb so they flow properly. The price estimates are between \$15,000 and \$20,000.



Tree roots \$1,875

Tree root removal



Fall landscaping

Green Acres will apply mulch to the fronts of the Cottages homes in October. Soto Tree Service has trimmed our palms and unsightly boots in August.



Mulch \$10,605



Palms \$7,250



Critter Control

Eric Kelly has left Critter Control and is heading north to be with family. Gene Kepes is the owner of Critter Control and will temporarily be filling in until a replacement is trained. As this article is being written Gene is re-filling our bait boxes. Gene can be reached at:

(239) 731-6255

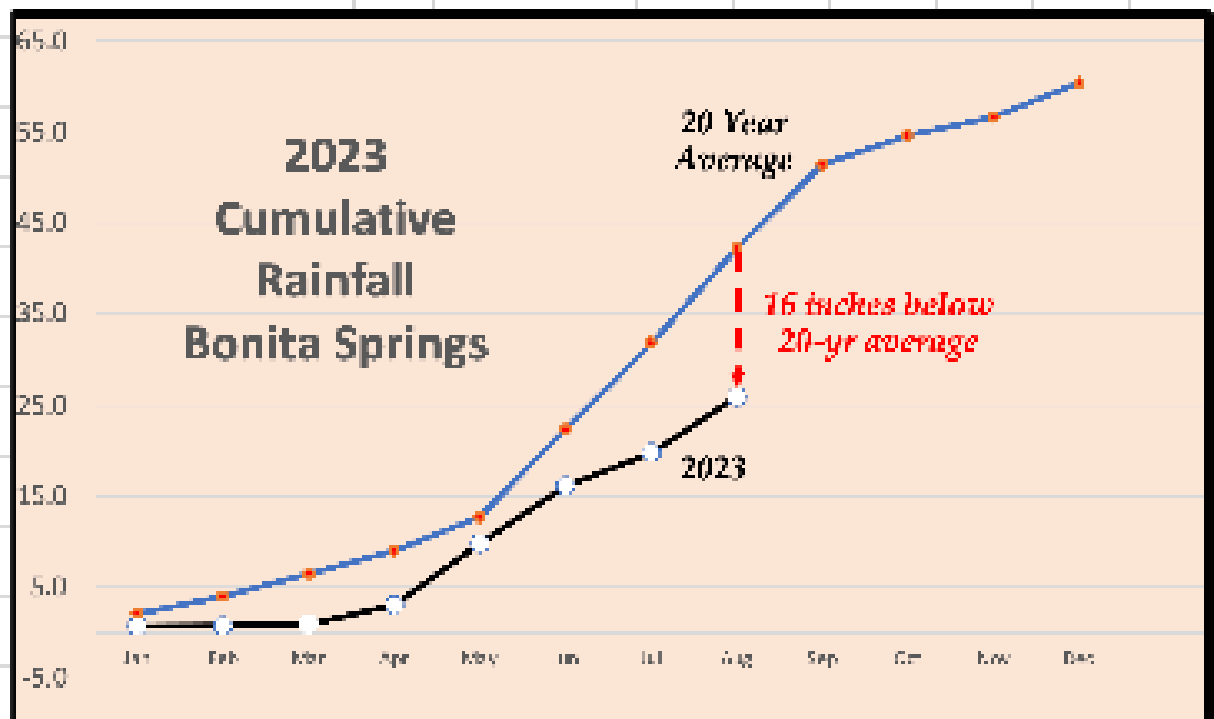
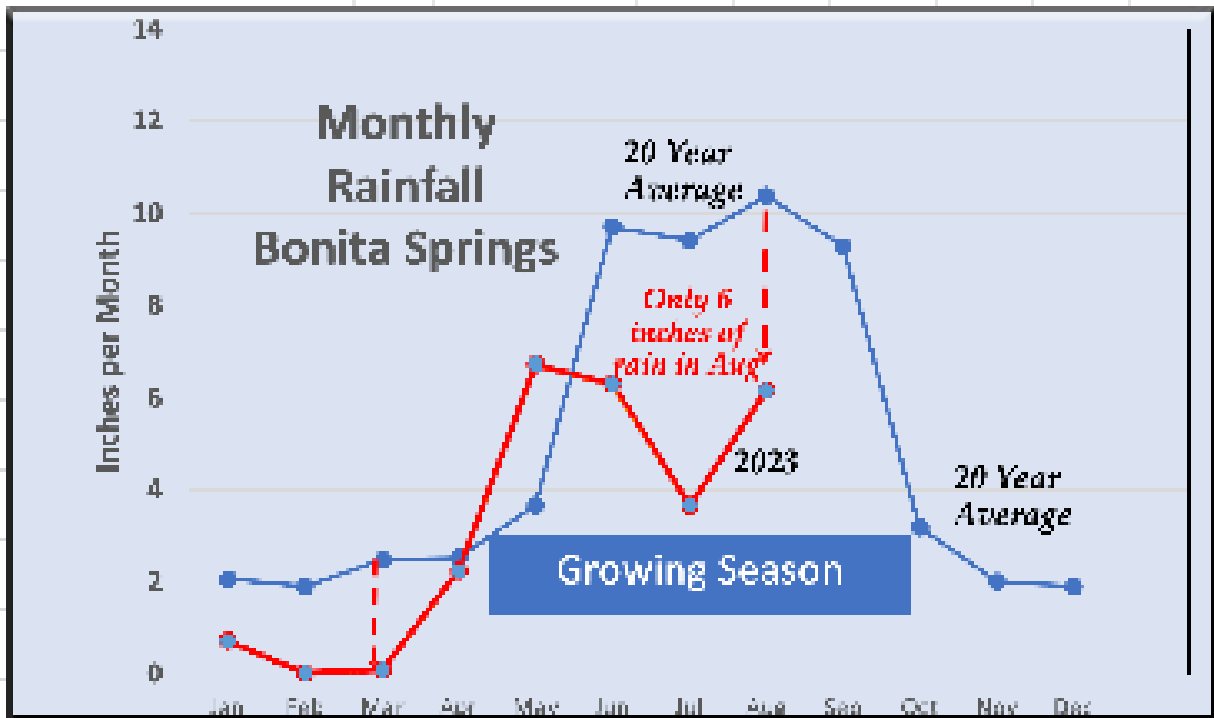
swfl@crittercontrol.net



Gene Kepes

Rainfall below 20-year average

The 2023 year-to-date rainfall between Jan - Aug was 16 inches below the 20 year average. The August rainfall was only 6 inches compared to the 20-year average of 10 inches. Much of the August rainfall of 6 inches came at the end of the month from Hurricane Idalia. We will need to be prepared for the CDD to turn off pumps and implement more draught restrictions.



Green Acres installs landscaping for Catanzarite's

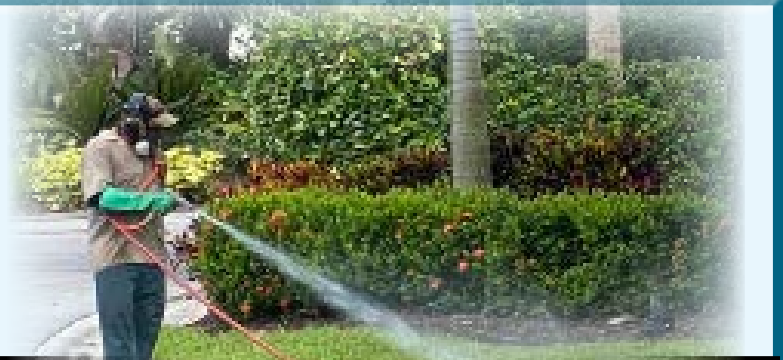
New landscaping has been installed on the east side along the Gazebo to enhance the view.



Steve Kubicsek
President, Green Acres



Pesticide applied to plants and lawns



Tropical Storm Idalia

Hurricane season is upon us in the Cottages through October. Storm Idalia came through on August 23rd. Idalia brought flooding to many areas. The Cottages received a lot of lightning, thunder and rain but there was no flooding or significant wind or damage in the Cottages. In 24 hours 3 inches of rain was reported in Bonita Springs.

Cost increases

As a result of continuing increases in operating expenses, some of our contractors have had to increase monthly maintenance charges. The costs of insurance, equipment, fuel, chemicals, fertilizers, etc. and the cost of retaining and hiring qualified employees has increased considerably.

The house and trim painting estimate has increased 17% to \$157,000. Mailbox replacement has increased 33% to \$12,000.





Finances



Paul Barnicke
Treasurer

We have a balance of \$55,317 in our operating account at the end of August. We will use some of this healthy balance to fund the approved expenditure for the curb repairs. The upcoming expenditures for mulch and tree work are provided for in our annual budget. As noted above, our suppliers are experiencing staff shortages and inflation in their material inputs. However, we are pleased that our monthly Green Acres fees (which make up 42% of our annual operating costs) has only gone up 2.2%. As we move forward with our annual budgeting process we will be looking at an increase in our quarterly assessments to fund these price increases in both our operating account and the reserve accounts.

Finances

2024 Budget Development

2023			2024	
October	November	December	January	February
 Preliminary Budget Oct. 26 10:00 am	 Budget draft approval Nov. 30	 Budget updates Dec. 14 10:00 am	 Final budget Jan. 25 10:00 am	 Annual Meeting Wednesday Feb. 22, 2024 4:00 pm



Cottages 2023-24 Board Meetings

Zoom or PL Community Center -TBD

Last Wednesday of each month (except Dec)

	Date		Time	
2023	September	27	10:00 am - 12:00	Zoom
	October	25	10:00 am - 12:00	
	November	29	10:00 am - 12:00	
	December	13	10:00 am - 12:00	
2024	January	31	10:00 am - 12:00	
	February*	28	4:00 pm- 5:00 pm	Zoom
	March	27	10:00 am - 12:00	
	April	24	10:00 am - 12:00	
	May	29	10:00 am - 12:00	

* February 28 - Annual Meeting

Zoom Meeting 4:00-5:00pm

Pizza Party at Gazebo 5:00- 7:30 pm

Welcome new neighbors

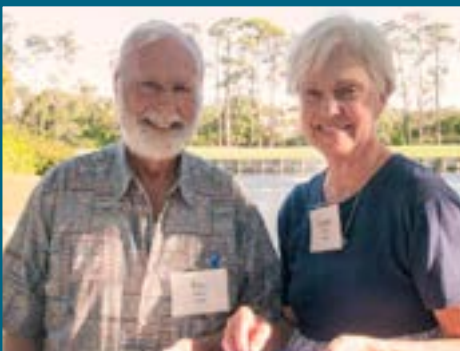
Dan Vinup
Rebecca Seidel
3687

Kathy Frost
3671

Fall Social



The Social committee is planning a Gazebo social for Monday, November 6th 5:00 pm. *Please mark you calendars.*



Cottages Board



Kiki Scovel
President /
Landscaping /
Website



Paul Barnicke
Treasurer



Dennis Lowe
Secretary /
Maintenance /
Newsletter



Megan Tatum
Property Manager



HAPPY FALL!