

Long Leaf Sentinel

Board Meeting Highlights

The annual meeting was held on November 6th at Immanuel Presbyterian Church. Twenty-eight (28) residents attended. Minutes from last year's annual meeting were read aloud and approved.

The Chairman discussed the lawsuit the HOA brought against a resident for repeated violations of the covenants and refusal to arbitrate. The HOA prevailed and \$4000 will be collected when the property sells. He also reported that both the 4th of July parade and Oktoberfest were well attended.

The treasurer gave her report, which was also approved. Once again, we were within budget for this past year. It was decided not to purchase another CD as we have some major expenditures coming up and may need to use some of these funds.

ACB requests for the year were tree removal, builds, roof replacement, lawn issues, and trailer parking, in that order. The Maintenance committee said an entrance and many street signs will soon need replacing. Bids are being sought. Membership this year is 130 paying members. Three residents ran for the board and were elected: Doug Phillips-75 votes; Duncan MacKenzie-74 votes; Teri Christopher-74 votes.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Fellow Homeowners:

For all of those who attended the Annual Meeting of the Long Leaf Homeowners Association on November 6th, thank you for being present. For those who could not attend, we look forward to seeing you next year. I would like to thank Teri Christopher for serving not only as Treasurer but also as Secretary as well due to Georgette's illness. We had a successful meeting in which Teri Christopher, Doug Phillips and I were elected for a two-year term on the HOA Board. Discussions took place regarding street signs and the proposed roundabout at the North entrance. The new Board will focus on these issues during the upcoming year.

The follow-up meeting of the new Board will be held on 4 December whereby new officers will be elected. Your new Board is looking forward to continued steps in maintaining a desirable neighborhood for Long Leaf Plantation.

This will be my final Chairman's letter as I conclude my three years as your Board Chairman. It has been a privilege to serve this amazing community.



Duncan MacKenzie Chairman
Long Leaf Plantation Homeowners Association

UPCOMING EVENTS

The next board meeting is January 24th at 6:30 PM at 958 Torchwood Dr. All residents are invited.

.....Key Information.....

POISON CONTROL	800-222-1222
W VOLUSIA CO POLICE, FIRE & EMS	386 254-4657
Duke Energy	800-228-8485
VOLUSIA CO ROAD & BRIDGE	386-822-6422
Report pot holes, drainage issues, signs & mowing	
VOLUSIA CO ANIMAL CONTROL	386-248-1790
VOLUSIA CO CODE ENFORCEMENT	386-736-5925
In residential areas, motor vehicles my not be parked in the front yard except on driveways.	
W VOLUSIA TRANSFER STATION	386-423-3862
For recycling and household hazardous waste	
WATERING DAYS (before 10am)/ <u>Daylight Saving Time</u> ...	
Even house # Thurs & Sun; Odd house # Wed & Sat	

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Duncan MacKenzie - Chair
pdesign1001@att.net
386-873-7266

Michael Campany - Vice Chair
michaelcampany@gmail.com
408-721-1641

Georgette Varela - Secretary
786-237-9500
gvhrg@aol.com

Teri Christopher - Treasurer
jfctc@hotmail.com
386-956-8895

Teri Wrhen
Tess16301@yahoo.com
814-758-1204

Nada Acquaro
nadaacquaro@gmail.com
954-681-1313

COMMITTEES

—**Maintenance**—
Teri Christopher
386-956-8895

—**Membership**—
Nada Acquaro
954-681-1313

—**Yard Beautification**—
John & Teri Christopher
386-956-8895

—**Architectural Control Board**—
James Hermann
386-216-8589

NEWSLETTER

Rebecca Verrastro
386-310-2404

Teri Christopher
386-956-8895

Winter Preparedness: Keep Home Safe & Seasonally Prepared

In addition to the holidays, winter brings cooler evenings, thinner wallets, busy schedules, and increased travel for many of our neighbors. We all know our area doesn't have harsh winters, but this season still brings unique considerations especially after a long, hot summer. A little preparation now can help keep your home safe, efficient, and ready for the months ahead.

Give Gutters & Rooflines a Quick Check

Even during the dry season, gutters somehow manage to collect leaves, twigs, and enough mystery debris to start a new ecosystem that thrives better than that one spot in your yard where nothing will grow no matter what you do. A quick cleanout now helps everything drain properly when those occasional winter showers roll through.

Adjust Irrigation for the Dry Season

Winter is Central Florida's driest period. Fortunately, most lawns and plants need far less water during this time. Reducing irrigation helps conserve water, prevents fungal issues, and supports healthier root systems. Volusia County limits winter irrigation is limited to once a week, with odd-numbered addresses watering on Saturdays and even-numbered addresses on Sundays, from 4 p.m. to 10 a.m. All watering should occur during these cooler hours to minimize evaporation and be limited to a maximum of one hour per zone, or no more than one inch of water per zone per day. This is in effect until March 8, 2026.

Prepare Your Home if You're Traveling

The holidays are a peak travel time. If you'll be away, consider:

- Placing mail/packages on hold or using Amazon/UPS pickup locker
- Securing outdoor furniture and décor
- Putting indoor lights on timers
- Asking a neighbor to watch for unexpected deliveries or company

These steps help protect your home and keep it looking lived-in.

Decorations are Great; Lawsuits Are Not

With packages arriving more often during the holidays, keeping sidewalks and entryways clear of trip hazards from holiday decorating improves safety for residents and delivery drivers and helps to mitigate homeowner liability for injuries that occur on your property. If using seasonal decorations, make sure they don't block access or visibility. Also, a little courtesy goes a long way. A Harvard University study reported that homeowners who remove their holiday décor before February are 90% more admired by their neighbors*.

Prepare for Occasional Cold Snaps

Central Florida does get brief dips into the 30s. Consider covering sensitive plants, protecting newly planted landscaping, and making sure irrigation timers won't run during freeze warnings. If you have a pool, and temperatures drop below 32°F, just keep your pool pump running overnight. Moving water won't freeze, and it's the best way to protect your equipment during a Florida cold snap. If temperatures fall near freezing, consider removing and storing items that can crack, such as automatic cleaners, vacuum heads, fountain attachments, and small plastic accessories to prevent cold-weather damage.

Planning Outdoor Projects?

Cooler weather is a great time for exterior updates. If you're planning painting, new fencing, or similar projects that change the exterior appearance of your property, please remember that most changes require ACB approval. When in doubt, our ACB is always happy to answer questions.

YARD OF THE MONTH



October
Linda Hicks
1077 Torchwood Dr.



November
Frieberg Residence
1106 Torchwood Dr.



December
Noyes Residence
1106 Torchwood Dr.

Goodbye 2025 - Hello 2026

Well, we are at the end of another year. How did we get here so fast? I've always heard that the older you get the faster time passes. This year certainly bears that out for me. I've been thinking of New Year's Resolutions and of course food.

For good luck in the new year, people eat foods symbolizing prosperity **pork** (progress), **greens** (money), and **black-eyed peas/lentils** (coins), often with **cornbread** (gold) for wealth, while **long noodles** and **fish** represent long life and abundance, and eating 12 **grapes** at midnight brings luck for each month. Ring-shaped foods like **cakes** or doughnuts are also popular for completing the year's cycle, and some traditions advise avoiding foods that move backward like **lobster** or **chicken**.

My family roots are German and we always ate pork and sauerkraut with mashed potatoes and gravy over everything. Can't say whether it brings good luck, but it sure is tasty. I happened upon this video of a New Year's Day meal that includes five good luck dishes. Let's try it!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9J1-M6KiBmM>

HOLIDAY LIGHTS WINNERS

Jill Sheldon and Jef Morris
795 Torchwood
Scott and Hanna Carraro
917 Torchwood
Alvaro and Beverlyn Britos
1638 Wild Indigo
Don and Anita Sanz
1088 Torchwood

RESOLUTIONS FOR 2026

Americans' top [New Year's resolution](#) is to exercise more, according to a [survey released this week](#). YouGov found that 25% of respondents listed exercising as a goal for 2026, the pollster said. The next most common choices for the new year included being happy (23%), eating healthier (22%) and saving more money (21%). Twenty-one (21) percent of respondents said improving their physical health was most important, while 17% of participants said they'd like to lose weight. YouGov notes adults younger than 45 are more likely than people older than 45 to resolve to save more money, improve their mental health and learn something new.

Real Estate News

Eleven (11) homes were sold during 2025. Two (2) houses are currently listed for sale. Many of the homes have been bought by younger buyers. Comparing last year's prices to this year's, the per-square-foot price has declined about 8% and homes are definitely taking longer to sell. On the bright side, interest rates have declined slightly – about 0.5% from the start of the year, making homes more affordable.

Heading into 2026, affordability is finally improving as rates ease, price growth slows, and inventory continues to build. Still, the pace of further progress will depend on the path of inflation and whether the Fed feels confident enough to cut rates again.

I want to encourage everyone to join the HOA this year. Approximately 75% of the residents pay their dues, but that leaves 25% that do not. It would be wonderful to have 100% membership as we are looking at some costly repairs this year. The board works very hard to maintain the standards we all expect without being too restrictive and overbearing.

MANY THANKS TO OUR ADVERTISERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT!

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1109 W. Euclid Ave.
DeLand, FL 32720

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office@patselectricinc.com

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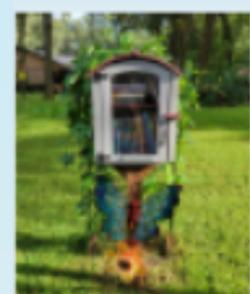
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