



The Country Place

MARCH • APRIL 2025

Chronicle

A Deed Restricted Community

THE OFFICIAL *Newsletter* OF COUNTRY PLACE

From the Country Place Maintenance District - CPMD

Meeting Dates:

2nd Monday of each Month

Time:

7:00pm - 8:30pm

Meeting Location:

Bill Castens Gymnasium Conference Room at Northdale Park & Recreation Center

Where's Our Sign?

If you've driven into Country Place lately and thought, "Hey, something's missing..."—you're not wrong! Back in October 2024, our entrance sign had a not-so-friendly encounter with a vehicle. (Spoiler alert: The vehicle won.) Unfortunately, signs don't come cheap—repairing ours rang up to a hefty \$14,000.

Since our fiscal year runs from October to September, the timing couldn't have been worse. With a yearly budget of around \$75,000, every dollar is already working hard to keep Country Place looking great. The majority of the budget covers landscaping at our 10 entrances—so there

wasn't exactly a "rogue car vs. sign" line item available to tap into.

We finally received our insurance settlement check in January 2025 (cue the celebration music)—but it didn't exactly cover the whole bill. We came up about \$4,000 short, which in community budget math is like realizing you've got champagne problems on a soda budget. But fear not! With some creative budgeting cuts and a lot of patience, our newly repaired sign is scheduled to be reinstalled very soon.

We work hard to stretch every dollar, and if you're curious about where those dollars go, our budget and annual audits are posted on our website for all to see. Transparency is key—we want you to know how we're keeping Country Place beautiful and running smoothly (even when cars try to mess with our vibe).

Visit our website at countryplace.mydistrictwebsite.com for more information, including our budget, audits, and updates on community projects.

Thanks for your patience—and keep an eye out, because our sign will be back before you know it.

The Country Place Maintenance District Board of Trustees Meeting Information Meeting Dates: 2nd Monday of each Month Meeting Time: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM Meeting Location: Bill Castens Gymnasium Conference Room at Northdale Park & Recreation Center – 15546 Hooting Owls Pl, f/k/a 15546 Spring Pine Dr, Tampa, 33624

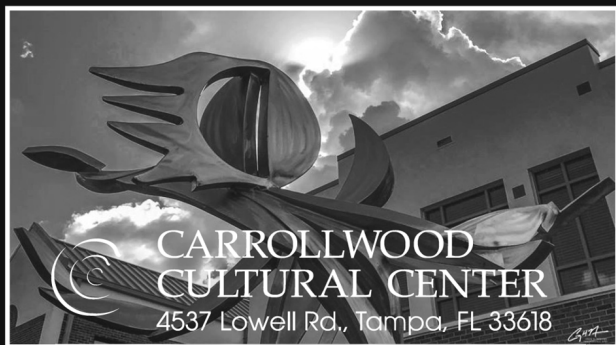
All Country Place residents are invited to attend!

Country Place Maintenance District - CPMD Exterior Curb Appeal of Country Place Responsibilities

The CPMD responsibilities as they relate to exterior curb appeal include, but are not limited to:

- Maintenance of County Right of Ways and Easements
- Maintenance of 7 Light Posts along Hutchison Road, near the White, Vinyl Fence
- Maintenance of the White, Vinyl Fence along Hutchison Road
- Maintenance of the County Pond at Country Place West Park
- Maintenance of 10 Entry/Exit points to Country Place that includes Electrical, Irrigation, Landscaping, Lighting, Mowing, and Signs. These 10 locations are as follows:
 - Ehrlich Road/Summerwind Drive, both Islands
 - Ehrlich Road/Winterwind Drive
 - Casey Road/Winterwind Drive
 - Huntsman Court/Shillington Drive
 - Winding Drive
 - Wilcox Road/Pebblebrook Drive
 - Wilcox Road/Marshfield Drive
 - Hutchison Road/Country Lake Drive
 - Hutchison Road/Pennington Road
 - Pennington Road/Grainary Avenue
 - Initiated a Volunteer Resident Park Advocate Program for both **The Country Place Recreation Center, (Central Park), (15728 Country Lake Dr), and the Country Place West Park, (15821 Hutchison Rd)**. These Volunteers regularly checks on the grounds Maintenance and report needs and deficiencies to Hillsborough County Parks & Rec.

Please report any issues or concerns, (especially Water leaks), to us at countryplacesmd@gmail.com



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CAMP REGISTRATION OPENS

March 3 • 10 am

15% Early Bird Discount Expires April 30



BLACK ART MATTERS

March 7 • 5:30-7:30 pm

A night celebrating artists and their work!

Steel MAGNOLIAS

Come and keep good company at Truvy's beauty salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana, where all the ladies who are "anybody" come to have their hair done.

STEEL MAGNOLIAS

Written by Robert Harling
Directed by David J. Valdez

March 14 • 8 pm
March 15 • 8 pm
March 16 • 2 pm
March 21 • 8 pm
March 22 • 8 pm
March 23 • 2 pm

TICKETS: \$30-34

Reserved Seating

Presented through Dramatists Play Service

ASL Interpreter: March 21

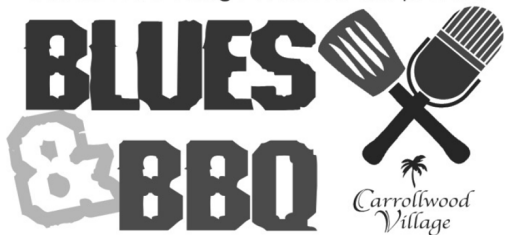


CARROLLWOOD MARKET

March 8 • 10 am - 2 pm

Presented by Tampa Bay Markets

Carrollwood Village Phases II & III present



LIVE MUSIC & FOOD TRUCKS

April 5 • 11 am - 6 pm

Free Admission & Parking

IN THE GALLERY



Black Art Matters
presented by The Gallery

Urban Paradise
by Sue Graef

Halcyon Days
by Mike King

Photography
by Craig Nowicke

Spiritual Beginnings
by Cheryl Yellowhawk



THE JAZZ DIRECTIONS

March 28 • 7:30 pm



PAT BENATAR TRIBUTE

April 12 • 7:30 pm

DISCOVER MORE



CARROLLWOOD
CULTURAL CENTER



COUNTRY PLACE
Homeowners Board Of Directors

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Paul Van Steenberg

VICE PRESIDENT
Matt Massuto

SECRETARY
Patrick Shaefer

TREASURER
Eric Mosley

DIRECTOR
Ellia Sliwiak

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGER
Greenacre Properties, Inc.
Melinda Spall

4131 Gunn Highway
Tampa, FL 33618
ph: 813-936-4154
meilindas@greenacre.com

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COUNTRY PLACE
Maintenance District

The Country Place Maintenance District was created and purposed to manage and maintain the common areas and property of Country Place. This includes all areas of ingress and egress to our community. Signage, landscaping, mowing, mulching and other misc. maintenance functions are overseen by this Board.

TRUSTEE
Chuck Urbinek

TRUSTEE
Donna Schramer

TRUSTEE
Tina Rhodes

PRESIDENT
Darrel Spacone

VICE PRESIDENT
Matthew Banas

SECRETARY
Keith Colini

TREASURER
Chris Rhodes

<https://www.countryplace.mydistrictwebsite.com>

Country Place
Maintenance District
3853 Northdale Blvd, P.O.Box 282
Tampa, FL 33624

Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month
Meeting time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Meeting location:
15546 Hooting Owls Place
countryplacesmd@gmail.com

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A Message from the PRESIDENT

Paul Van Steenberg

For those members who have moved into Country Place in the last dozen years or so, in 2000, Country Place had 16 separate sets of deed restrictions one for each new section that was opened up as developers built out our subdivision. The last major build-out area was in 1986...87. By 2000 the entire subdivision basically had no enforceable deed restrictions whatsoever, a series of failed and reconstituted HOA attempts and voluntary dues of \$ 25/year, which very few paid. In 2003 or thereabout, an enterprising group of homeowners decided to set up a homeowner to sue the HOA because of the non-uniform pattern of deed restrictions within the same sub division. Once in court, the Judge asked the plaintiffs what they wanted and asked them to come back to him with their proposed solution. They melded all 16 sets of deed restrictions into one set of deed restrictions, the judge approved their plan and put a three year phase- in for that uniform set of deed restrictions to cover all residences in Country Place.

Now that the HOA had a steady source of funding, we could hire a management company to oversee the enforcement of our documents. A few years later one of our lawyers remarked that there might be a technical legal flaw in the way our deed restrictions came about, so we engaged another law firm who was supposed to be the experts in this type of legal issue, they concluded that yes indeed there was a legal flaw in our prior case and that any enforcement procedure that led to a collection suit could open the board to litigation that we were not likely to win. It was at this point we engaged the Bush Ross legal firm, who came to us highly recommended as the largest and best firm to engage for this type of HOA issue. After a few years and any number of pleadings and two court proceedings our Deed Restrictions were approved as legally sufficient to enforce without any fear of litigation regarding their legal standing. It was shortly thereafter that the board was able to re -start full enforcement of the deed restrictions and collection activities which were seriously in arrears, since all during the years that we were relitigating our deed restrictions we were not pursuing any legal action to collect our dues, knowing that our collection activity may not have a sound legal basis.

The almost decade long effort was not only successful but also gave us an in-depth view of many property management companies and lawyers. The current management team

we have had in place for the last 10 years or so has really brought our management structure into focus so that we now have the best, oldest, largest and most competent property management company in West Central Florida ,Greenacre Property Management Co with about 200 HOA or condominium associations under their management, 50 years in the property management business, close to 100 employee's and the 2023 Award winner for BEST IN THE BAY property management company. Greenacre's experience and professional management brings to our subdivision very steady, informed and well-balanced deed restriction enforcement. Similarly, Bush Ross law firm is the preeminent HOA and Condo Assoc law firm in West Central Florida and has an entire division devoted to Community Association law. For years they guided us through the entire issue with our documents at a very reasonable cost and then helped us clear up hundreds of thousands of dollars in receivables after we emerged from our court cases.

Well we are now entering a more precarious time for both property values (softening demand) and more serious issues enforcing the current deed restrictions given (A) The age of our homes (40-50 years) where more structural issues can arise and an inadequate maintenance response can result a diminished curbside appeal resulting in homes around non maintained residence losing some of their value and (B) Our unfortunate members who live adjacent to Brushy Creek (some 80+ homes) and are now and will be struggling with repairs from that disaster . (See report from Hillsborough County Storm Water Investigation Manager, Hillsborough County Technical Services, Stormwater Services Section on Vantaca Website). The majority on this current board believe that the primary purpose of an HOA is the fair and efficient enforcement of the deed restrictions. Basically, we have all of us have signed a contract agreeing to this specific set of deed restrictions.

Most large subdivisions have outsourced deed restriction enforcement to professionals similar to our team, the cost for this service is not free and for us at least almost a third of the budget cost will be offset by the Frontier income (10 % of Frontier yearly revenue) for the next 10 years. Under normal circumstances the BOD has very little to do with the day-to-day deed restriction enforcement which for a few reasons is preferable. One reason is that volunteers inspecting residences and citing violations is a recipe for unequal enforcement, I witnessed 14 years of volunteer inspectors trying to enforce deed restrictions and it just never worked well. Secondly, as you can imagine having

neighbors giving violations to neighbors is also sub optimal as far as neighborly relations go. Greenacre's managers are professional, have inspected thousands of residences, know the deed restrictions cold and have the unemotional view of what will work in each neighborhood setting. The process is simple; violation, resolution, if no resolution the board is then asked whether or not to send to legal, from that point on there are a few prescribed steps all of which the team at Bush Ross has done hundreds and hundreds of times ..there are very few issues where intense board deliberation is either programmed into the system or is desirable .The important take away from this is that our deed restriction management is the gold standard as far as steady , legal, ethical, and fair for our members...we need to keep this team on board and supported by whoever sits on the board of directors.



St. Patrick's Recipe

Have some green fun with the kids this St. Patrick's Day by making this yummy treat.

Be sure to invite your Leprechaun friends!

Leprechaun's Shake

- 1 cup skim milk
- 2 scoops vanilla nonfat frozen yogurt
- 1 teaspoon peppermint extract
- 2-3 drops green food coloring

Pour all ingredients into a blender and whirl until smooth and green. Serve with a shamrock.


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HELLO March

A new month is another
chance to start afresh, so
don't lose hope!
Best wishes!

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WHO TO CALL

- TECO Power Outage: <https://outage.tecoenergy.com/>
- TECO Power Outage: (877) 588-1010
- TECO Street Light Out: <https://www.tampaelectric.com/forms/residential/streetlightout/>
- TECO Street Light Out: (813) 223-0800
- Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Non-Emergency: (813) 247-8200
- Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Main: (813) 247-8000
Master Deputy J. Wolfe / ABN #227549
District 1: Community Resource Deputy
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
Work Mobile: 813-546-1555
Office: 813-247-0600
jwolfe@teamhcs.com
- Hillsborough County Public Utilities Department Customer Service: (813) 307-1000
- Frontier Communications: 877-599-1870
- Spectrum Customer Support: (833) 949-0036
- Report an issue with the Common Areas/Entrances managed by the Country Place Maintenance District: CountryPlaceSMD@gmail.com
- HCPRC (Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center): 813-744-5660 (Injured stray dogs or cats, affordable spay/neuter)
- HSTB (Humane Society of Tampa Bay): 813-876-7138 (homeless dogs or cats, affordable spay/neuter)
- VEG (Veterinary Emergency Group): 813-265-4043 (Injured dogs, cats, birds, squirrels...)

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.
Traditional Irish wish



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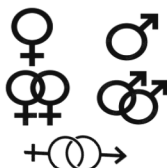
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High Sale Price	\$485,000.00
Low Sale Price	\$340,000.00
Average Sale Price	\$427,667.00
Average Price per sqft	\$285.14
Average Days on Market	39
Homes Sold	6
Pending	8
Currently on the Market	5

What Stands Out

The Country Place housing market experienced a slight cooldown in the past few months, with both high and low sale prices dipping compared to December's figures. The high sale price for this period reached \$485,000, down from \$550,000 in December, while the low sale price was \$340,000, a decrease from \$400,000.

The average sale price also saw a minor dip, landing at \$427,667, compared to \$443,250 in December. However, the average price per square foot remained relatively stable at \$285.14.

One positive sign is that homes are selling faster, with the average days on the market dropping to 39 from 56 days in December. The number of homes sold remained low at 6, roughly the same as in December, with 8 pending sales and only 5 homes currently on the market.

Overall, the Country Place market shows signs of a slight slowdown, with lower sale prices and a similar number of homes sold compared to December. However, the faster selling time and stable price per square foot suggest continued demand for homes in this desirable community. (Data was comprised from CP homes sold over the last 90 days ending on (2/11/2025) Article was also written with assistance from AI.



BONUS: Last November, Florida voters approved a constitutional amendment that ties increases in the homestead exemption to the rate of inflation. This change takes effect this year, meaning your property tax exemption could be higher than ever as inflation persists.

Act Now: Homestead Exemption Deadline

While the March 1st deadline for this year has passed, it's crucial to remember that the homestead exemption is cumulative. Though it doesn't apply retroactively, securing it now will ensure you benefit from increased savings in the coming years.

Don't miss out on this valuable tax break! Take the time to apply for your homestead exemption and lock in future savings.

(All data is courtesy of Realtor Multiple Listing Service. The opinions included are not meant to be taken as facts but are the professional opinion of the below agent. If you are working with a Realtor, please disregard any advertisements. All requests for business are meant solely for those not currently represented. Joe Benson is both a resident of Country Place and a licensed Real Estate agent).



Joe Benson
Benson Family Realty
813-324-1384



joebenson@bensonfamilyrealty.com
www.bensonfamilyrealty.com