October-November, 2025 Edition

The Lakes

Lake of the Woods of Jacaranda Newsletter

News and Events

The LOWOJ Road Resurfacing Project

The final two streets in our paving project have finally been completed. The Board of Directors thanks all of our residents – and especially those on Silk Oak Lane and Lakescene Drive – for their patience during our transition to a new paving contractor.

It was an arduous process but we are finally done. The tick list has been completed and Pickett's Paving has received their final payment.

LOWOJ Incurs Significant Damage to Preservation Area

It is extremely frustrating and concerning for the Board of Directors to have to report that one or more of our residents have apparently caused a significant amount of reportable environmental damage to the Preservation Area located west of the walking path, near it's south end, and on the east side of Park Estates. This act will require

UPCOMING EVENTS

LOJ Clubhouse Events (LOJ only)

10/24 and 11/28: Sip n' Dip Event (5pm-7pm)
10/10 and 11/14: Community Mixer (7pm-9pm)
10/17 and 11/21: Morning Coffee (10:00-12:00)
Yoga/Pilates (every Tuesday/Thursday 8:30 – 9:30 am)
Tai Chi (every Tuesday/Thursday 9:45-10:45 am)
Water Aerobics (every Monday & Thursday 10-10:45 am)

General Community Events

10/10 and 11/7: LOJ Board Meeting (9 am)
10/15 and 11/19: Landscaping Committee (10-12 am)
10/22 and 11/26: LOWOJ Board Meeting (10 am)
10/22 and 9/8: ARC Committee Meeting (10:00-11:00) at the LOJ Clubhouse
10/13 and 11/10: Wetlands Committee Meeting (11:30-12) at the LOJ Clubhouse
10/29 (11 am -12): Compliance Committee

expensive mitigation efforts that will be mandated by Sarasota County, and which will most likely increase our homeowner annual dues, going into the future. Sarasota County Environmental representatives are on-site as this newsletter is being written to assess the damage. We anticipate receiving a binding non-compliance letter from Sarasota County which will address how the HOA must now react to the extensive damages that have been caused due to homeowner actions.

Preservation Areas and Conservation Areas are "no-touch" areas. Both the HOA and all of our homeowners and residents are forbidden from dumping, cutting, pruning or removing any vegetation from these areas. Our community has multiple such areas and this requirement applies to **all** preservation and conservation areas in LOWOJ. Causing damage to them is not only a violation of our Covenants, but also a violation of both Sarasota County ordinances and Florida State Law.

Park Estates Declaration of Covenants, Article 7.20

(In section 7.20): "the Tracts A, B and C have been identified as PRESERVATION AREAS on the Plat of PARK ESTATES. No activity shall be undertaken or performed in preserved wetlands, created wetlands, or upland preservation areas which are contained within and described in Tracts A, B or C of the recorded plat of the Community, unless prior written approval is received from the Sarasota County Natural Sciences Division. Prohibited activities within preserved wetlands, created wetlands and upland preservation areas include the removal of native vegetation, excavation, placing or dumping of soil, trash or land clearing debris, and construction or maintenance of any building, residence or structure."

Park Estates Declaration of Covenants, Article 7.20.01

"It is an OWNER's responsibility not to remove native vegetation that becomes established within the wet detention ponds or preservation area abutting his UNIT. Removal includes pulling, dredging, the application of herbicide, and cutting. OWNERS should address any questions regarding the authorized activities within these areas to the Sarasota County Natural Sciences Division."

Sarasota County's Unified Development Code (UDC), Article 13.-Subdivision or Site Development Plan Regulation, Section 124-251.-Environmental Protection, Subsection (a)(2)

"All activities involving filling, excavating, disturbing of vegetation (both trees and understory) and storing of materials shall be prohibited within preservation or conservation areas and buffer areas."

The Florida Statutes, Section 704.06(1)(b and c), titled "Conservation easements; creation; acquisition; enforcement"

Generally prohibits or limits any or all of the following activities within any designated conservation easement (a Preserve area is a conservation easement which runs with the land, as defined under State law):

"(b) Dumping or placing of soil or other substance or material as landfill or dumping or placing of trash, waste, or unsightly or offensive materials.

(c) Removal or destruction of trees, shrubs, or other vegetation."

Figure 1: Path carved through a sensitive preservation area near south end of walking path and Park Estates (view from walking path toward Park Estates.

Figure 2: Environmental damage to the Preservation Area viewed from Park Estates toward the walking path.

Figure 3A and 3B: Evidence of significant trimming and pruning in Preservation Area

Figure 4: Numerous piles of dumped vegetative debris

It is very likely that our wetlands and environmental costs will be going up in future budget cycles. The Board of Directors intends to limit the potential cost to the community for remediating this type of environmental damage. To do so means that we must enforce our covenants, use our legal resources where necessary, and notify County and State authorities as required to pursue those responsible for any such damage. Please do your part to help us avoid this scenario in the future.

Fun Things to do in Venice

Are you looking for something fun to do in Venice this month? Here's a clickable link to a great source of information on fun things to do in the Venice area! → Fun things to do in Venice

The Fall Yard Sale is Coming!

The Lake of the Woods of Jacaranda Fall Yard Sale will happen on November 8, 2025 from 9 am to 2 pm. Do you have items that you are ready to part with? What better way to recycle your 'treasures' than selling them to others?! The LoWoJ Fall yard sale is a great opportunity to re-home all that stuff. Clear out your garage, cabinets, closets and shelves and participate in the neighborhood Fall yard sale. In the event of inclement weather, the rain date will be Sunday 11/09. If you have questions, contact Lisa Gold: lisachroniclesofborea@gmail.com (734) 272-6600.

This year the LOJ clubhouse will also be open for sales of used books and smaller items. Proceeds from the book sales will go towards clubhouse supplies, paper plates, napkins, forks.

If you would like to donate books, please contact Patty: patricia2br@gmail.com

Additionally, we have a limited number of 4x4 tables available in the clubhouse for residents of the Lakes of Jacaranda who would like to reserve a table to sell small items/ crafts / knickknacks / jewelry.

Small items only! You would be responsible for tending your table. Tables must be reserved in advance by November 1st.

To reserve a table, please contact Patty: patricia2br@gmail.com

Messages from Your Board

Continuing Problems with Parking Violations

Over the summer months, the incidence of parking violation complaints in the LOWOJ HOA has been ramping up. Accordingly, HOA enforcement has also ramped up as we respond to those complaints. Our homeowners are reminded that according to section 7.12 of our Declaration of Covenants, recreational vehicles, campers, boats and trailers, may not be parked or stored overnight or for more than four (4) hours in any day, unless fully enclosed inside a garage.

Upon the first violation, Keys-Caldwell will send the homeowner a violation notification letter. The violation letter will include a 30-day cure period, during which the owner can correct the violation without further penalty. In the case of homeowners who have been cited in the past 2 years for a specific violation and then allow the violation to repeat, the violation notification grace period in the violation notice will be reduced to 14 days, the minimum allowed by Florida statutes. If the violation is not corrected within the cure period, it is possible that the homeowner will be levied a fine of $100 per day with a maximum of $1,000 in aggregate. This can happen repetitively in the case of a continuing violation. The compliance procedure can be found by clicking this link.

Don’t Get Charged Late Fees/Interest Because of a Late Special Assessment Payment

We would like to remind all of our residents that the special assessment payment was due on September 11th. If you did not pay by the deadline, you will soon be accruing late/interest charges, if you haven’t already. The easiest way to pay your assessment is to make your payment online at the Keys-Caldwell / CINC website via e-check.

Here is a link containing simple, detailed instructions, in the case that you are not familiar with the process:

Click here to read the Keys-Caldwell / CINC payment instructions

Mandatory No-Mow (Buffer) Zone Rule

The Board previously announced that the No-Mow Zone rule that was approved by the Board of Directors will not be enforced until the HOA is first able to demonstrate implementation of these no-mow zones in our common areas. That process commenced almost two months ago. We are working with our landscape contractors to establish these areas.

The Board has verified that these required buffer zones have been established in most of the

common areas. Therefore, homeowners on wet pond platted properties must now comply with the new rule as well. The Board of Directors will begin enforcing the rule for all homeowners in the next weeks, immediately after distributing an educational resource flyer to the community via eblast with important information that they need to know about no-mow zones. That information packet will also provide helpful guidelines to assist homeowners and contractors with proper maintenance practices to prevent further erosion and wet pond deterioration.

A No-Mow Zone is defined as a six- to eight-foot buffer of grass or natural vegetation between a homeowner's property and the edge of a wet pond. The rule aims to reduce nitrate runoff and erosion, which can lead to costly dredging. The full No-Mow Zone Rule can be found by clicking the link below. The document discusses the purpose, legal obligations, and examples of common issues such as erosion from clear-cutting lawns to the waterline. Click the following link to read the full text of the LOWOJ no-mow Zone rule.

Establishing no-mow zones and letting our wet pond shores "Go Wild" naturally stabilizes the shore, filters and cleans dirty runoff, maintains greater privacy, increases property value, enhances scenic beauty, prevents erosion and allows for healthy habitat for fish, birds, and other important species.

We ask our homeowners to please understand that we are ***required*** under our wetlands permit, which was issued many years ago by the Southwest Florida Water Management District, to maintain these buffers. Compliance is mandatory to allow the HOA to avoid potential fines, remediation costs and potential legal issues related to non-compliance.

If you want to learn even more about how these no-mow zones work, you can learn about why no-mow zones are important in southwest Florida by clicking on this link.

LOJ Pickleball Update

As a result of a mediation process that concluded in April 2025, the LOJ Board of Directors now has a binding requirement to mitigate pickleball related "noise" (called sound power) such that it does not exceed the levels specified by the Sarasota County noise ordinance.

The LOJ Board of Directors has hired an acoustics engineer to perform and analyze sound measurements at the property lines in proximity to the LOJ pickleball courts. After these measurements have been completed, the LOJ Board will review the results and make a determination regarding the resumption of activities on the recently refinished LOJ pickleball courts.

LOWOJ Wetlands Committee

The Wetlands Committee, which reports directly to the Board of Directors, has been very active in keeping our wet pond system working properly. The committee consists of eight homeowner members who offer expertise in engineering, biology, and water management.

The Association recently completed a project, which was conducted by SOLitude (environmental contractor) that addressed short-term goals and priorities, including addressing wet pond inlet/outlet vegetative overgrowth, debris from storms and erosion around control structures in certain areas that had been identified in a prior engineering inspection by TGW Engineering.

The next phase of the project will address the performance of two areas of drainage concern, one in the Park Estates area, where there has historically been some drainage issues in a small wet pond, and a second area in the common area swale, north of the Cedarwood parking lot. We will also ask the Board of Directors to approve funds to allow a contractor to perform the following work scope:

1. Inspect all remaining equalizer and transfer pipes, pond inlets/outlets for free flow and operating condition (those that were not inspected during the work scope accomplished earlier this year). Subcontract hydrojetting as necessary. Repair any damaged concrete and/or rip rap. Remove vegetative growth, as required.

2. Inspect and mitigate outflow from small wet pond in Park Estates and verify clear flow to wet pond "Lake 1".

3. Perform or subcontract catch basin cleanout throughout LOWOJ (there are well over 150 catch basins in our drainage plan).

4. Inspect and photograph condition of our two terminal outfall weirs S-1 and S-2.

5. Assess buffer zone adequacy on all wet pond peripheries. Provide photographic (with date/time stamps) as well as written documentation of deficiencies and recommendations.

6. Active management (in perpetuity) by a licensed environmental contractor of the preserves area along the walking path as well as the mitigation area on the east side of the walking path.

In addition to the goals for the next phase, which are described above, the committee will now also begin to concentrate on intermediate goals, which were provided in the 2022 TGW Engineering study.

Landscape Committee

The LOWOJ Board of Directors has terminated the HOA's contract with Brightview (our former landscaping contractor) due to long-term performance issues. We have recently contracted with a company called Twin Palms to perform the same services at a lower cost to the Association. They will begin acting on behalf of the HOA in mid-October 2025.

After a great deal of research into the governing documents of the master association and the sub-associations, the LOWOJ Board has developed new documentation that clarifies the ownership and maintenance responsibilities of the Master Association and Sub-Associations. Recently, several properties have been identified with issues such as dead trees or unmaintained monuments that belong to Sub-Associations. Future violations will be issued to both the homeowner and the Sub-Association and the LOWOJ master association will treat sub-associations in the same manner as it handles violations for individual property owners.

The Board has frequently emphasized that the community relies on volunteers to keep HOA fees low and the absence of a fully functional Landscape Committee has been discussed specifically, in this regard.

If you have interest in contributing to your Association in a very meaningful way, please consider volunteering for this important Committee. **This is important – please consider being a volunteer and** contact Mike Gnaegy at Director-LOWOJ@lowofj.com.

Newsletter Team

The Newsletter team is happy to announce that we have added one new member to our small group of dedicated volunteers. Please welcome Patty Klier as the newest addition to our newsletter team!

We are still in urgent need of one or two volunteers who are willing to work collaboratively with the two Boards (LOWOJ and LOJ), our homeowners, and our newsletter team to help create newsletter content. We have had to slow down the newsletter to bi-monthly because we simply don't have enough volunteer help from our community to send it out monthly.

It's not necessary that you be an excellent writer. But you do need to have some ideas, creativity, and passion, not to mention a willingness to reach out to other members of our community to develop "straw-man" article outlines. If you are willing to volunteer a few hours each month to participate in the newsletter team, please contact Bob Last secretary-LOWOJ@lowofj.com.

IMPORTANT: Register Your Contact Information with Keys-Caldwell!

The Board of Directors and Keys-Caldwell are continuing with an effort to obtain electronic contact information for ALL LOWOJ residents. Currently, we are down to about 90 homeowners who have not provided opt-in email information on the Keys-Caldwell website. In order to keep your annual assessments as low as possible, we request that ALL RESIDENTS have an opt-in email on-file with Keys-Caldwell. Reducing the number of USPS mailings will reduce our costs and allow us to keep your annual assessments as low as possible. If the HOA is successful in moving to all-electronic notifications, we can save both time and money, and better use the funds that our homeowners have entrusted us with. This is especially important because of the importance of the participation by as many homeowners as possible. If you did not receive this newsletter via email, you are NOT on the opt-in list.

If you're uncomfortable with obtaining or using an email address, we can help you to set this up and provide training/coaching to make it work for you. It's really very easy to do! Keys-Caldwell has developed special training tools to help those who don't know how to approach this. You can contact Keys-Caldwell for additional information and assistance. Please consider submitting a valid opt-in email address if you have not already done so.

We previously provided details on how to add your email into the opt-in list in the June Newsletter on the first page (click the link to the left to open the June Newsletter).

Upcoming LOJ Clubhouse Activities (LOJ residents)

Every month there are several activities for LOJ residents in the Clubhouse. These include the Monthly Mixer, the Morning Coffee, and the Sip & Dip.

Also included in Clubhouse Activities are The Book Club, Mah-Jongg, Men's Poker, Water Aerobics, Pilates and Tai-Chi. If you are interested in joining in on the fun, here is some contact information:

Water Aerobics

Monday & Thursday 10-10:45 am. Bring a noodle. At the clubhouse pool. (Summer only, May-November: when water temp is greater than 78 degrees)
Contact: Helmine (helmine.junger@gmail.com)

Yoga /Pilates

Tuesday & Thursday 8:30-9:30 am bring mat, strap and weight, if you have them. At the clubhouse.
Contact : Patty (patricia2br@gmail.com)

Tai-Chi

Tuesday and Thursday 9:45 - 10:30 am at the clubhouse. Contact : Patty (patricia2br@gmail.com)

Book Club

First Thursday of the month 1 – 2 pm (October – May)
Contact: Lisa Gold (LHGold246@gmail.com)
Summer Contact: Joyce (jkl770@comcast.net) schedule varies in summer

LOJ Mixer

Every month on the 2nd Friday, potluck & BYOB at the clubhouse 7 – 9pm.
Contact: Joyce (jkl770@comcast.net)

LOJ Morning Coffee

Every month on the 3rd Friday, at the clubhouse 10:00-11:30 am, bring a mug. Coffee is provided; just show up with a breakfast dish to pass and enjoy!
Contact: Patti and Gary Gardwell (mgpgardwell@gmail.com)

LOJ Sip & Dip

Every month on the 4th Friday, 5 -7 pm. Potluck and BYOB at clubhouse.
Contact: Patty (patricia2br@gmail.com)

You can also check the LOJ calendar on the Keys-Caldwell website for the dates/times for all the activities. Participating in the Clubhouse Activities is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors and make new friends.