

FAIRWAYS III CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION INC.
HISTORY as of February 10, 2019

Fairways III got its start in March 1972 when Lehigh Corporation, the company behind the development of Lehigh Acres, started another expansion to construct "Fairways III Condominium Corporation of Lehigh Acres Phase Three." The original plan called for 158 units in 5 buildings.

The condos were purchased by new owners but also used by the corporation as a place to house potential buyers of lots being sold in Lehigh. There were no restrictions on age, family units, or rental time limits. Except for individually owned units it was almost operated as a motel.

In 1979 when a sufficient number of units had been sold in the two buildings (A & C), the Corporation having financial difficulties decided to end the project. It proposed that the owners take over. There was a vote in favor and the sale was consummated. In the sales contract the Corporation agreed to replace the roofs (they were originally flat), repair the pool, paint the buildings, reseal the parking lot and driveway, and plant shrubs. These were the most significant matters addressed.

Once the new owners took control in July of 1981 they applied to the state of Florida to make Fairways III a 55 year and older senior housing facility. Other rules were promptly put in place. Minimum 3 month occupancy rentals only, single family only, no children under 21, no pets, and assigned parking spaces to mention a few.

Fairways III has, as we know it today, always been governed by the owners. There was a time when the position of secretary was "farmed out", but, other than using H&R Block for the taxes and occasional consulting of a lawyer, the administration was all done by the Board of Directors. This was largely due to the diligence, dedication, and hard work of the owners. The monthly fees were set to provide funding for reserves and until hurricane Irma there had never been a formal assessment. The monthly fees in the 70's were \$40 per month. In 1989, they were \$90. Currently they are \$185, and very economical compared to most condominium associations. Then again if it weren't for the many volunteers, the fees would be much higher. Owners and renters have pretty much always been more like a family than 70 separate units.

We are noted for parties and having plenty of activities. Highlights were Helen Peter's Ground Hog Day Party, Annie Maibach's annual Follies (held "off campus") in which the owners participated in a variety of skits. Cocktail parties were sponsored by four separate groups. Each had a theme and they tried to outdo one another! These parties, as well as the Ground Hog Day party have been taken over by the Social Committee. A Chinese Auction was the main fund raiser for the Social Committee and many of the events were free or low cost. This has since been changed and it's "pay as you go" currently. Annual activities include the Shuffleboard Tournament and the Horse Race.

Most of the events were held in the courtyard. Originally only the pool (with a diving board), bathhouse, the gazebo, and a putting green were in the pool area. There also were 3 concrete block fireplaces since gas grills were not allowed. The putting green is now the basketball court and where the horse races are held.

In 1996 the building of the clubhouse was the largest project ever taken on by the owners. The construction was done by a builder, but the inside work was done by volunteers. Naturally the parties and other activities moved there and now we have dancing! Bingo was started along with Bridge; followed by Euchre, Texas Hold'em, exercise classes, line dancing and even a movie night. Other physical changes were made. The original golf cart storage sheds were turned into trash can storage. When we got dumpsters, one shed became the office, another the work room and shop, the exercise room and the bike room. The Grounds Committee over the years expanded the gardens, planted trees and shrubs. River stone was spread around the buildings, and the trees are mulched annually.

In the Fall of 2018, hurricane Irma hit central southern Florida and did more damage in that area than any previous hurricane. Fairways III suffered so much roof damage, a special assessment was required to pay for its replacement. In 2018 the idea of a Pergola in the courtyard was born. It is our current project of the Building Committee. It was totally designed and constructed by our volunteers and definitely an asset to our property.

To commemorate this project there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony and a "Time Capsule" will be placed in one of the stone corners.

Written by Don Leavitt, unit 131 owner since 1989, edited by Ed Albers and my daughter Dianne.