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OUR MISSION

To serve as the collective voice for the Sky Lake - Highland Lakes area neighborhoods and to promote an exceptional quality of life for our community through advocacy and involvement.

OUR VISION & OBJECTIVE

Through an engaged, interactive and vibrant community, we intend to enhance security, safety, infrastructure, commercial development, traffic, schools, beautification and other areas with a three-step process:

• Communicate: Hold gatherings and discussions open to all residents to identify issues of critical concern.

• Educate: Obtain, share and disseminate accurate information to fully understand these issues and potential impact.

• Advocate: Bring forward our issues to our county and state officials for action.

Please contact us if you are interested in attending or hosting an informal gathering in your neighborhood to discuss how we can best address these issues, at **skylakehighlandlakeshoa@gmail.com**

OUR COMMUNITY

We represent residents who live between North Miami Beach (including Sky Lake) to the South, Hallandale Beach to the North, Aventura to the East and I-95 to the West.

President's Message

Dear neighbors,

It has been an honor to serve as the HOA President for three years. It has been timeconsuming but rewarding work. Three years is a long time to head the HOA, and I have spent countless hours weekly doing the best I can to work with the Board on initiatives, responding to resident emails, phone calls, text messages and Next Door posts, as well as liaising with our local and state politicians, and various county offices.

The HOA is voluntary (with annual voluntary dues at \$30). This means we're not a typical HOA forcing people to cut their grass and paint their houses. We exist to advocate for the interests of our residents, and to do what we can to improve our collective quality of life. We act as liaison to County Commissioner Sally Heyman, State Representative Barbara Watson, State Senator Jason Pizzo, County School Board Member Dr. Martin Karp, the county parks Department, the county Special Taxing District office, county code enforcement, the police, and the local security providers. The HOA has had a lot on its plate this year:

• We have continued the tradition of food truck nights, to facilitate neighbors getting to know each other.

• We have school supply and holiday toy drives (thank you Trudy Lechner!).

• We have a welcome committee to greet new residents (please let us know if you see any newcomers) (thank you Madeline Langbaum and Brenda Auerbach!).

• We have kept a close eye on the plans for an Ives Dairy overpass, which as designed currently would remove local businesses and present an eyesore and noise pollution to nearby homes. State. Rep. Watson's office assures us this project is currently unfunded.

• When an accident wiped out one of the Highland Lakes gates, we worked with the county to capitalize on the insurance money to upgrade our entry systems, which meant new entry cards (and thus, people who no longer lived in the area or who had given cards to others, could no longer use the resident lane) and LED gate arms to enhance our area's look and act as an added criminal deterrent.

• We coordinated the replacement of the area's Special Taxing District's signs to



beautify our area.

• We coordinated the training of several additional residents for the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) (thank you Trudy Lechner and Bill Clayton!). • We were happy to see the remaining Special Taxing District guardhouses switch over to Kent, offering a unified security presence in the area, and enhancements to include adding cameras at the remaining gates.

• We were able to replace several palm trees that were taken out by Irma along Highland Lakes Blvd. (Thank you Bill Clayton!).

Of course, this year's headline was incorporation.

After thoughtful consideration and debate, the Board chose to support the effort to incorporate because we knew first-hand how much our neighborhood could be improved if we had local control. Incorporation would have allowed us to conquer challenges we have been facing for years. But misinformation about higher taxes and the fear of the unknown won out at the ballot box, by a mere 100 votes. In my several years on the Board, I have faced countless county refusals to our requests to improve our neighborhood. Consider these:

• We share our police station with 110,000 people going south to 79th street, east to the ocean, and west to the city limits of Miami Gardens. Our police find themselves reacting to higher-crime areas instead of routinely patrolling our neighborhoods, leaving us more vulnerable.

• Our requests to enhance Highland Oaks Park, to include additional fencing around the playground and to replace the playground sand with foam, were denied due to funding.

• Our requests for traffic calming has been denied. Whether it be simple "no thru traffic" signs to force navigation apps to stop routing traffic through our neighborhoods, as other cities have done, or installing speed humps, we have been told no. • We have not been able to beautify Ives Dairy, or even get the walls cleaned. • The list goes on and on how our area would have only benefited from incorporation.

On the bright side of the vote is that we have more neighbors engaged than ever.



The HOA looks forward to working with these new volunteers to expand our capabilities to do what we can to improve our neighborhood, despite county proclivities to turn down our requests. We plan on being as proactive as ever, with many projects on the horizon. Despite challenges in dealing with the county, we will continue to explore ways to enhance our security, calm traffic, and beautify our area.

> There are many people to thank. I have been supported by an incredible Board of Directors who meet regularly and split up responsibilities. The HOA could not exist without you...thank you! I'd like to thank my mentor, immediate past-President

Lenny Feldman. Thank you to Stephanie Ruiz and David Miller who works so hard every year to ensure this newsletter gets out - it is an incredible amount of work. Thank you to our sponsors who make this newsletter possible.

I am so thrilled for Steve Parkins to be nominated to be the next HOA President. I first met Steve in the days after Hurricane Irma when he was one of many residents who stepped up to help our community. From there we have worked closely on many issues, none the least incorporation. Steve brings incredible leadership skills and commands the respect of those privileged to interact with him. I wish Steve and the new Board the best of luck in continuing to advocate for our community, and I look forward to working with them in the Immediate Past President position on the Board. With a large and dedicated volunteer force, there's a lot that can be done. Please contact us at SkyLakeHighlandLakesHOA@gmail. com to get involved!

Wishing everyone a healthy and successful vear ahead!

Marc Hurwitz





COMMUNITY OUTREACH By Trudy Lechner

Last year, after Hurricane Maria destroyed Puerto Rico, our neighbors were so very generous with their support in collecting nonperishable foods, clothing, toys and toiletries. There were numerous collection sites at our schools, houses of worship, and Learning Express. We were grateful to have the assistance of Jose Aponte who repacked all the items and paid for the transport to Puerto Rico. A true angel.

Our collection lasted for three months. Your generosity made a difference to many, many Puerto Ricans.

This year, we partnered with the Miami Dade Police Dept. Intracoastal Station to collect toys for the children in our district that would otherwise not have gifts for the holidays. We want to thank the community for its generosity and delivering many smiling faces. Skylake-Highland Lakes neighbors have never let the community down when help was needed. Thank you, so very much!

Infrastructure and Beautification

Community Is Still Pounding The Rock - Or The Bricks – To Beautify Ives Dairy Walls By Bill Clayton & David Miller

Beautifying - or at least "de-uglifying" - the walls along the Ives Dairy Road corridor has been on the community's wish list for years. But it has been, literally, like talking to a brick wall. During the past year, however, community leaders and some of our elected representatives have offered at least a murmur of hope of supporting efforts led this year by resident and HOA board member, Rick Schermer.



Ives Dairy Road is owned by Miami-Dade County but is designated a state road controlled by the Florida Department of Transportation. This divided jurisdiction has been part of the difficulty the community has faced in getting anything done about it, be it traffic, safety for schoolchildren, or the blighted walls.

The busy road is a major artery in, out, and through the community. It is lined by walls on both sides most of the way from the intersection with Highland Lakes Boulevard to Northeast 26th Street. Those walls present 26,000 square feet of paintable surface viewed by thousands of drivers every day. Paintable, but, for the most part, unpainted or painted so long ago as to be the same thing.

The walls are not public property, but are owned, lot by lot and piece by piece, by the homeowners on whose property they are built. Each owner can say yea or nay, even to anyone who would offer to clean and paint for free.

County Commissioner Sally Heyman has offered to pay for materials - primer and paint - but not for labor, which could cost close to \$12,000. Her offer depends on getting a signed OK and release of liability from every owner of every fence. State Senator Barbara Watson has offered sympathy but can't promise state money. Her office has offered to help the community navigate seeking a grant if one could be found and the community chose to seek it.

Another possibility that has been floated is finding a business or other entity that would be willing to "adopt" the walls, perhaps in exchange for some public sign of appreciation. This idea is only in the lightbulb stage.

One project that did finally reach completion was the 2-yearold drive to persuade the county to designate a parking spot for the disabled on Northeast 207th Street near Virginia A. Boone-Highland Oaks Elementary School. The spot was put in place at the end of the street this year. The planned changes to the cul de sac at the end of that street and the widening and realignment of the intersection of Northeast 207th and Northeast 23rd Avenue remain on hold awaiting finalization and funding. Finally, the community did get dead royal palms replaced along Highland Lakes Boulevard using Federal Emergency Management Authority funds.

Welcome to the Neighborhood! By Madeline Langbaum

Skylake-Highland Lakes Welcome Committee wants to welcome all of our new neighbors to the community. If someone has purchased a new home recently and lives in the community, please contact Madeline Langbaum @305.720.0278, or email me at slhlboard@gmail.com, I



would like to let them know that they will receive a free 2019 membership as a new member of the association and learn more about the HOA and what we do for the community.

SIDEWALKS OVER THE CANALS

By David Miller

What seemed like a short, safe walk from home to school or services turned into what felt like the proverbial journey of a thousand miles - but is at last finished because that first steps were taken by residents Marvin Krutchik and Bill Clayton years ago.

Because of their efforts, last year sidewalks were completed on Northeast 209th Terrace and Northeast 214th Street where those roads pass over canals connected to the lake in the Sun Swept Isles neighborhood. Where, previously, pedestrians had to step into the street to cross, there are now continuous sidewalks for safe passage.

The canals feed into the headwaters of the Oleta River in the wetlands of Highland Oaks Park. As originally constructed, the streets crossed the canals over culverts. The culverts were just long enough to accommodate the narrow streets, but not sidewalks. Pedestrians had to walk into the streets at their narrowest points, creating a danger to themselves and traffic.

Mr. Clayton, a former police officer and longtime and energetic advocate for the neighborhood, saw the need and picked up the idea that had been originated by Mr. Krutchik. He called county officials and pointed out the problem. He suggested the solution: lengthen the culverts, widen the crossing, and put in sidewalks.

Nothing happened.

Frustrated, Mr. Clayton took legal action. On his own, he filed a charge under the Americans with Disabilities Act because, while there was a narrow dirt path that theoretically allowed the non-disabled to cross, there was no similar access for those with conditions affecting their ability to walk.

Now he had the county's attention. It still took more years to plan, design, and fund the projects - and months to complete them – but, by spring 2017, there were sidewalks across both canals.

The journey that ended up feeling like a thousand miles is complete. And those who can take those few steps safely on the new sidewalks across the canals have Mr. Krutchik's idea and Mr. Clayton's tenacity to thank.



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Virginia A. Boone Highland Oaks Elementary is an incredible elementary school where student achievement, success, safety and children's well-being are the focus of our premier school. Our faculty and staff work very hard to provide our students with the best possible education. Our teachers continuously meet to plan and share ideas on

the best strategies to teach all our students. We have an incredible PTA, who works with us hand in hand in all aspects of our school. They plan and carry out many fun activities for our students throughout the year. With the help of our PTA, we are able to provide our students a plethora of additional activities and educational support. Please be sure

Ojus Elementary School

Ojus Elementary School is a Kindergarten through Fifth grade school whose focus is on increased academic rigor and the social development of children. Ojus Elementary School enriches the community and is enriched by the community. As a result, students will understand the importance of becoming active citizens. Ojus Elementary School's vision is to work as a team to create a learning environment where students come first, where academics are valued, and where all children can reach their full potential.

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At Aventura Waterways K-8 Center, our driving force will be to provide students with the very best education coupled with broad and diverse experiences. We believe that a strong foundation accompanied with project based, hands-on learning is essential in producing adaptable, globally prepared, articulate students who will be successful as

they encounter future academic and social challenges. We hope to instill in each student the drive and passion to search for new academic opportunities that will optimize their educational experiences at our school.

For more information please visit our website at: aventurawaterwaysk8.dadeschools.net

Highland Oaks Middle School

By: Principal Chervl Kushi team is starting tryout the second week of November.

We have almost 30 clubs at HOM. We offer coding club, drone club, robotics club, art club, drama club, chess club, aikido club, music club, SECME club, and 5000 Role Models just to name a few. We also have over 300 students making the honor roll for the first nine weeks of school and over 250 students at HOM take one or more high school credit courses.

We have participated in many field trips and are looking forward to some upcoming trips to Tampa and Orlando in November and December. Our school has been selected as a Bronze Level STEAM school. So with the help of community partners and district support, we will strive to incorporate and infuse, Science, Technology, Engineering,



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The 2018-2019 school year is well under way and we are having a great time here at Highland Oaks Middle School. Our theme this year is Believe, Belong, and Become! We are hoping our students will believe in themselves and reach for the stars, belong to our community and get involved, and have a

passion to become an amazing student.

As we promote our District's campaign of Values Matter and our own Manners Matter campaign, we are promoting kindness, responsibility, and respect. Our clubs and sports programs were underway and quite successful. Our Soccer teams, both girls and boys, are competing at district finals, our cross country team came back with medals, and our volleyball teams are winning matches. Our swim team is holding their practices at the JCC as they prepare for upcoming meets and our Track and Field

to visit their website http://www.vabhoepta.org/ and support your local elementary school in any way you can, it takes a village!

If you would like to learn more about our stellar school please visit our website for a hint of the excellence at our school: http://www.vabhoe.org



Arts, and Music (STEAM) at HOM.

In addition to the numerous activities and events, our school has participated in giving back to those in need in our community. With the support of our PTSA, HOM has a food pantry that is stocked with canned goods, and dry goods for those who are in need in our community. We take donations daily to keep this initiative going. In addition, we are collecting gently used jackets and sweaters for the winter months and we partner with Lauren's Kids as we collect clothing for those children in great need in our community.

At Highland Oaks Middle School, we are diligently striving to not only reach and teach students in academics but also grow their hearts. We love to partner with our students, families, and community, so please stop by or write us an email so we can be the very BEST ever!

Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School

Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School (MKHS) a premier school in Miami-Dade County, is proud of its' Award-Winning student body. MKHS offers a world class education in a traditional high school setting right in our own back yard. Students have the opportunity to participate in 25 Advanced Placement courses, several dual enrollment classes and an award winning magnet schools for the arts.

The long awaited I-Prep School opened on the MKHS campus at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year (pictured). This

component will introduce students to the philosophy that individual investigation using technology could be an important component in the learning process.



We are proud of the academic successes that our students are achieving. In addition, our strong athletic program is recognized throughout North Dade and the County as being highly competitive. With all of the choices that are offered and our amazing teachers MKHS is considered one of the very best in the County. As a result MKHS graduates are represented at colleges and universities across the country and abroad. Please visit us at kropseniorhigh.org to learn more about us.

STAY INFORMED

- 1. Visit our website www.skyhighhomes.com
- 2. Email us at Freddimark@aol.com with your name and address for periodic e-bulletins.
- 3. Join the real-time community portal www.Nextdoor.com with nearly 1500 neighbors.

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Sky Lake - Highland Lakes Area Homeowners Association. Become a member or renew your membership for only \$30.00 per year. You can pay online via www.skyhighhomes.com



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BE IN THE KNOW

• If you really want to be in the know... join the HOA and or one of our many committees. There's no better way in meeting new neighbors or finding out the latest news and how it effects our neighborhood. SkyLakeHighlandLakesHOA@ gmail.com

• The police depend on each one of us to report anything that is suspicious in the area, and burglaries, robberies or any other crime that has occurred to your property. Call 911 for an emergency or 305-476-5423 (or 305-4-POLICE) to help keep all of our neighborhoods safe

• If you notice a specific problem in the community that needs attention (trash piles, abandoned property or cars, etc.) please report it to the county hot line at 311.

• Many of your neighbors have joined the Nextdoor social media platform to share or find out about things going on in their neighborhood. You are invited to join by going to www.nextdoor.com to sign up. Once you join, you will receive notifications based on the settings you designate in your profile. This has become a very important means of communicating to the community by the HOA President and Board. Please join to stay in the know!

• The HOA has a volunteer program with different committee projects throughout the year. If your son or daughter is in need of community service hours, the HOA works closely with the local schools to meet all requirements. Please contact us via the website.

• The HOA recognizes outstanding students in our neighborhood for their scholastic achievement, community service and extracurricular involvement. This past year's recipients of the HOA Outstanding Service Awards were presented to Marley Katz- Krop Senior High School and Zoe Reed & Emilie Steinberg-Highland Oaks Middle School.





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Staying Involved By: Sally Heyman Miami-Dade County Commissionioner

This election cycle was complex with candidates, state constitution, and local charter changes and causes on the ballot. I hope every eligible voter cast their vote and took the time to educate themselves on the choices.

Your vote, regardless of how you voted is significant. Beyond this election, hopefully you will remain informed and engaged with our government - at any or all levels, so that your needs and wants continue to be communicated.

Dear Fellow Residents.

The 2018-2019 school year is well underway, and a number of new initiatives have already been implemented throughout the school district. For further details visit www.dadeschools. net. On November 6th, Miami-Dade County voters approved a referendum to generate revenue for additional safety and security and increased compensation for instructional personnel through a proposed levy on residential property. A citizens' oversight committee has been established to monitor the use of proceeds generated by the passage of the referendum to safeguard taxpayers' investment. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office should you wish to speak about these issues or any other concerns related to the public schools in our community. My staff and I are available to assist you and can be reached at 305-995-1369 or at martinkarp@dadeschools.net.

Dr. Martin Karp, Miami-Dade School Board member

State Representative Barbara Watson

"Today's patience can transform yesterday's discouragements into tomorrow's discoveries. Today's purpose can turn yesterday's defeats into tomorrow's determination." -WillIam Authur Ward

As we prepare with anticipation for 2019, let us reflect on all that has transpired this year. Although we've faced many changes, causing many to encounter disappointments, my hopes are to stay encouraged with patience in the days to come. For with patience comes strength that will enable us to become better citizens for our state and nation.

Why Be a Member of the Sky Lake-Highland Lakes Area HOA?

By Freyda Hyman

HOA members form an integral part of the success of this area. This is a professional/educational and caring association available to all individuals living within the designated boundaries. Members receive the information they need to effectively make decisions concerning their home and community. As a member of the HOA, you want to ensure that the value of your home is protected, the neighborhood is safe and well maintained, and decisions are made within your best interests..

• You're in the Know

As a member, you're at the forefront of knowing what is happening in the community. You get to hear recommendations for changes and improvements, you know what updates or renovations are slated to occur, and you get to be a part of making those decisions. It can help you become more familiar with exactly how the HOA runs and where your money is going.

Voice Your Opinion

If there are changes that you would like to see happen in your neighborhood, you're in the right spot to make a difference. While there is no special preference or treatment for members, you can make sure your voice is heard by voting and being more proactive in bringing about positive change. Many people complain about the HOA, but how many actually take an active role in making changes?

Increase Your Knowledge

From communication, leadership, and decision making to budgeting, accounting, and negotiation, you can increase your knowledge in many areas by participating on a committee. The area faces a wide range of challenges and you can become more well-versed in finding solutions.

Build Connections

Get to know your neighbors and the members of the community better. Be a reassuring voice that their concerns and ideas are being heard and you're working in their best interest.

If you're ready to make a difference and serve as a leader, be sure to become a member, renew your membership and consider volunteering to serve on a committee as part of your HOA. Feel good about what you're doing and show how much you love your neighborhood.

State Senator Jason Pizzo

I am honored to have been sworn-in as your new state senator, and look forward to the upcoming session where we'll legislate on several issues of critical importance to our District. I was selected to serve on the following committees: Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, Finance & Tax, Community Affairs, Criminal Justice and Military & Veteran Affairs & Space. We will be splitting time between Tallahassee and our Miami-Dade offices, through January and February, and legislative session begins in March, ending early May of 2019, but we are always available to you and invite you to contact us at any time. Our District office is located at 5582 NE 4th Court, Miami, FL 33137, the number is 305-795-1205, and my email is pizzo.jason@flsenate.gov

The HOA food truck events continued to be a great success with the community. Special thanks goes to Marc Hurwitz and his team for their hard work in planning and coordinating multiple food truck events this past year. Free ice cream, and face painting were provided to children, thanks to sponsors in the community. We want to thank the following people for their donations and



support because without their funding these events would not be possible.

Thank you:

Judy Luck Jordan Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices **Realty** The Lucky Real Estate Team www. theluckyrealestateteam.com, 305-934-6373



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Miami Food Truck Events Vicky Goldman (Vicky arranged for all the food trucks to be there!) www. miamifoodtrucksevents.com



Look for our announcement of the next HOA Food Truck event on Nextdoor. If you would like to be a sponsor or help with the planning, please contact Marc Hurwitz at Marc@Xinvestigations.com.

See you at the next event!





A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words...



Miami Dade Police Department attends **HOA** meetings



HOA Food Truck Event



Board members supporting the Yes to City Campaign



HOA board collects toys for Toy Drive



The community attending HOA meetings



HOA invites city officials to meetings



Our HOA has an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) group and would like to increase the membership. CERT becomes active after a disaster to survey the area, render assistance where needed and report back to our Commissioner or first responders according to the problems that are identified.

After Hurricane Irma in 2017, we were very fortunate that the worst problems we faced in our community were downed trees and wires, no electricity and roof damage.

CERT has been energized at the County level by Jessica Sandoval, who has a Master's degree in Disaster Management, and who has initiated more training sessions in different areas of the county and plans to have retraining sessions in our area. At her first session (September) in Highland Lakes, five of our neighbors took the course and were very impressed with the scope and depth of the training and highly recommend it.

We will be publicizing future sessions as we become aware of them. As I mentioned to that first class- this is THE MOST IMPOR-TANT thing that you can do for your community. We need our residents to come forward and help after a disaster, but also to understand what to do and how to do it to assist our community back on its feet again.

For more information please contact Jessica Sandoval 305-468-5426.

Name (s) _____ Phone # (s)_____ Address _____ (Please include zip code) Email* _____ * Only used for HOA communications. Please print clearly.

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Special Interests: _____

Committees:

Beautification and Parks _____

Code Enforcement

Education Membership ____

Crime Watch/Security _____

Send \$30 check made payable to: Sky Lake-Highland Lakes PO Box 630721 Miami, FL Or pay on-line via credit ca

By Trudy Lechner

e a Member
CERT (Community Emergency Response Team)
Food Trucks
Infrastructure, Development & Traffic
Welcome Committee
Area HOA
33163-0721 ard: www.skyhighhomes.com

Sky Lake-Highland Lakes Area HOA P.O. Box 630721 Miami, FL 33163-0721

To:

K Y H | G H



The Sky Lake-Highland Lakes Area Homeowners Association



You can become a member today via: www.SkyHighHomes.com

GET INVOLVED!

Membership - The backbone of the HOA! Communicates the value of membership and develops programs/events to promote a strong membership base. Includes the Welcome and Newsletter committees.

Beautification and Parks - Work on projects to improve our common areas.

CERT - Community Emergency Response Team- Residents are trained in emergency communication.

Code Enforcement - Set up teams to deal with issues that impact our neighborhoods.

Crime Watch - Establishes networks of neighbors to promote safety in our neighborhood.

Security - Security concerns within the HOA community boundaries and special taxing districts.

Infrastructure, Development & Traffic - Monitors commercial development and suggests improvements for roadways, utilities and common areas.

Education - Communication liaison between schools and the HOA and the impact they have on the community as a whole.

Food Truck - Plans and coordinates food truck events