

## ***WHICH PRESIDENT DO YOU HAVE?***

I recently attended a board of directors meeting in a community of over 700 homes on Palmer Ranch with a value of \$300,000 to \$600,000. The association president, for the first 5 minutes of the meeting, explained to the only 18 members and neighbors in attendance the “rules of behavior” he expected from his neighbors during the meeting. Minutes into the meeting he quickly ruled several comments by the members “**out of order**” and on one occasion yelled at one neighbor to “**sit down and shut up**”. As the meeting progressed, the president stated that he is very disappointed in the low turnout of members at these meetings and complained about owner apathy and that the association is lacking in quality volunteers for serving on his committees. Wonder why, Mr. President?!

On the other side of the fence, there are many dedicated owners who serve their communities well in an open and respectful manner knowing full well when their term is over they again will continue as an owner and neighbor. Some of their comments follow:

“I, Betty Rack, am the President of The Village West Condo Association because I am interested in the overall well-being of our Association. At the time I was elected President, our Association was having some problems. With the help of the other officers and a new management company, we are seeing that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.”

*Betty Rack*  
*President, Village West Condo Association*

“I love my home on Siesta Key and I want to improve and maintain it. I have years of past experience in property maintenance and rental management. My friends and neighbors, the other owners, chose me to represent them on the board. I owe them my best efforts and my honest opinion. You only get out of something what you put into it. If you care enough you should roll up your sleeves and get to work on solutions instead of complaining about problems. Many people feel that board service is a thankless job. They are wrong. I know it is worth spending my time and effort working on something I care so much about. Even when I make a decision as a board member and one of my neighbors disagrees with me, they respect me for my integrity and appreciate the time I have spent working for them and the other owners.”

*Kathy L. Rettich*  
*President, Crescent Arms Condo Association*

“I am President of Casa del Sol of Sarasota Condominium Association because I want to put a smile on the face of every resident.”

*Ruth Hershman*  
*President, Casa del Sol of Sarasota Condominium Association*

“I am a full time resident and think that I should give back some time to the community. I’ve owned my own business for years and think that I relate well with people. Being President allows me some input for keeping the standards high here at Bayside.”

*Jim Rafter*  
*President, Gulf & Bay Club Bayside Condominium Association*

“The first time I became a condominium board member, I was asked to serve a one-year term as grounds chairman. The president and one other board member were in my golf group and it seemed a good time to take my turn. I stayed on the board for a full two-year term, serving a second year as grounds chairman and then was elected president. I accepted the nomination feeling after two years I was prepared for the responsibility.

Now ten years later our president had served three years and was ready to step down. As usual, board members were needed and so I volunteered. I understood that a continuing member was prepared to accept the president’s role. However, this was not his understanding and no one else would accept so I did. Now I have served two years as president and will go off the board at the end of my term.

I have accepted these responsibilities in part out of a sense of duty and in part because I enjoy much of the work of president as it gives me some meaningful work to do. The daily responsibility, however, can get heavy and I am ready to end my term this Year.”

*Ron Aronson President*  
*Bella Costa Condominium Association*

“In response to the question “why do you serve as president”, the short answer is I was urged to accept the job by the Board members, and other capable people on the Board who did not want the responsibility or the burden of senior management position.

A more introspective answer is that I want to participate in the decision-making processes that affect our community, and believe that I can make a meaningful and positive contribution. I never aspired to the role of President, but I don’t serve reluctantly. I am aware that in many communities the President’s job is the last thing any sane person would willingly consent to, but Stonecastle is blessed with a very capable group of people on its Board who share the workload, and this makes the difference for me.”

*Mic Donnelly President*  
*Stonecastle at Southwood*

“I have been in management positions for much of my business life. So I suppose that is was a natural transition for me to accept an active role in the management of my new community, to participate in the decision-making processes that would preserve its property values and to develop community spirit, the energizing force in every community.”

*Al Loeffler President*  
*Fountain View Condominium Association*

“I am the president of the Bahia Vista Gulf of Venice Condominium Association because I wanted to do something about problems and not just complain about them or ask others to take care of them. I have good skills in planning, communications, financial and organizational matters and I found other board members who are equally knowledgeable

about physical and engineering issues, so we complement each other very well. This is our home - we treat it that way - and 8 years as president have gone very quickly.”

*John Smolenski  
BVG of Venice*

Owner participation is a necessary and vital part of quality association living. It should encourage not discouraged.

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