



Greetings from Grenelefe!

NEWSLETTER 4th Qtr. 2015

As I sit and write this newsletter, it is a balmy 94 degrees out and the air is thick with moisture. We have had a hotter than normal summer and lots of rain. We have already reached our yearly rainfall average! I really feel for the staff as they have had to endure the elements this year. It is the worst time of year to have to work outdoors and the work demands are at their highest due to the rapid growth of the vegetation. There are positives that come from the Florida summers such as establishing new plant installs. Also, the savings we have had from our reduced irrigation water use has been a windfall. The landscaping is lush and green and all of the crepe myrtles are in bloom. At this point, I must warn you that this newsletter is going to read like an episode from the nature channel as I try to illustrate the interaction with our natural surroundings.

Our condominiums are located on over 200 acres of land that is home to many species of plants and animals. Along with the rain, summer also brings a lot of bugs. I can hear the cicadas buzzing through the glass doors of my office. The increase of the bug population triggers the activity of our bat population. Although bats are beneficial in controlling the mosquitoes (a bat will consume 6,000 to 8,000 insects a night), they are a little creepy, especially if they decide to set up a colony in one of our condos. We will occasionally find them when we are removing siding from the buildings during maintenance. We have built many bat houses around property for them to populate, but every once in a while, they will find their way into the walls of one of the condos. Extracting them once they are in takes a little time and ingenuity. Because bats are a protected species, we are limited in how we get them out of the condos. It is important to understand that with bats, you can't poison them like a bug or trap them like a mouse. If you can find them and can access them, they can be removed during the day while they sleep, but once they are active at night, forget about it. You have to find their outside entry hole, usually detected by dirty smudges around the hole. The next step is to put a type of curtain or veil in front of the entrance. Since bats are nocturnal, they start waking up at dark and leave the colony to feed. They fly out of the hole, run into the veil, drop down and fly out to feed. When they are done, since they fly by radar and not sight, they are unable to drop down and fly up to gain access to their entrance. They fly into the netting a few times and they find another place to spend the day. After a few days, all of the bats clear out, and then we seal off the hole. If you seal off the hole before the bats are out, they crawl around in the walls and die and decompose. Sometimes they find a way into the unit as a means of escaping. We have had some bats get into occupied units and it can be traumatic if you

are afraid of bats. If this happens, you will need to find out where they are getting in, and all points of entrance to the unit will need to be sealed off. Contact the Association so that we can begin the process of getting the bats to move. The process takes a little time, so the sooner we are aware of it, the quicker we can get the process started

The reason we have pest control is mostly to prevent insect infestation to the condominiums interiors. Rodents, however are something that can be kept out and controlled by the occupants of the condominiums through good housekeeping practices. We had one of our buildings get out of control this year with a mouse problem. We finally got it under control, but it was long process. The biggest contributor to the issue was that several of the occupants in the building were not keeping their condos clean and there was an ample food supply for the rodent population. Once they get into a building, it is a lot of work to eradicate them. We installed extra traps on the exterior of the building to see if we could draw them out, and owners of the units had to seal off the entry points on the inside to keep the rodents out as well as setting interior traps. Cleaning up the offending units also helped the issue. We have seen more rodent issues on the west side this year than in the past. We think that this is a direct result of the decrease in the cat population. It seems that coyotes have moved into the abandoned golf course on the west side and have been preying on the feral cat population, thus allowing the rodent population to thrive. I also found out that if you kill off some of the coyotes, the females will have more pups in their litters in the spring to replace the pack's lost numbers. Maybe the coyotes will develop a taste for field rats. One can only hope.

These are just a few of the battles we wage against nature that will always exist here at Grenelefe. It is the cost of being out here and balancing comfortable living and enjoyment of the beauty that surrounds us. There are few condominium projects that provide this much land for its owners to enjoy.

I want to remind everyone that the Association's annual meeting will be held Saturday, November 7th, in the main lobby of the resort. As always it is a pleasure for us to continue to serve you and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

Chris Gourdie
General Manager