



Greetings from Grenelefe!

NEWSLETTER 4th Qtr. 2017

Usually I start off the newsletters with some comment about the weather here in Florida being warm and humid. Well, it is that and a whole lot more this year! So far it has been a very active hurricane season and we still have another month to go.

I would like to thank you all for your patience during this recovery process after Florida was hit by Hurricane Irma. I was not at Grenelefe for the last major hurricane but in speaking with those who were, the damage here at Grenelefe from Irma was way less in comparison, even though Hurricane Irma was more widespread and covered more of the county. One notable difference between the two was that Charlie came in fast and left just as fast. Also, Charlie, a category 3 hurricane, spawned many destructive tornados whereas, Irma, downgraded from a category 5 to a 2 by the time it hit Polk County, had no reported tornados. Irma took 6 hours to pass over Polk County and caused a lot of damage to the Hwy 27 corridor. The hurricane left more than 300,000 residents without power in Polk County, and if you were following the notices on the website, it took about a week for power to start to be restored to the property. In some areas of the property it took even longer. (If you didn't clean out your freezer at your unit before you left, you probably don't want to trust that frozen lasagna in there!)

Although we did not check out refrigerators, we did have our HVAC staff walk all of the units to check for water damage and leaks. We did not find any major leaks or water damage to the units. We walked all of the rooftops and found small groups of shingles that were blown off in certain areas but no major roof damage with the exception of two of our lake loft units that needed to have their roofs replaced. (One of them was already scheduled and the other had a tree branch fall through a section and cause damage.) We are still cleaning up debris, and will be for at least another month. We lost somewhere between 20 and 30 trees and there are many broken branches that are hanging in the trees that will eventually need to be removed if they do not come down on their own. We were able to run the mowers for the first time since the hurricane this past week. We have finally gotten the big branches off the lawns enough to get the mowers through.

The buildings held up extremely well considering the wind speeds and the length of time that they were blowing. One of the things that we did when we were renovating the buildings was to install hurricane anchors on all of the support beams on the back patios. I believe this greatly reduced the damage to the buildings. These anchors are designed to hold down the upstairs patios from wind lift which can damage the roof structures like we saw during Hurricane Charlie and the tornado that came through here in 2010. We still have a long way to go with the clean up, and I am sure there will be "invisible" damages that we will find over

time. I was extremely proud of the Association staff. They were all here on Tuesday as soon as it was safe to come back to the property. Several of our employees had damage to their own homes and most were without power, but they put their personal issues on hold and worked long shifts those first few days to make sure that the roads and parking lots were cleared so that the residents here at Grenelefe had clear ingress and egress to their units. Those first few days were crazy busy with making sure that the property was safe. We took down dangerous trees and made minor repairs to handrails and steps that were damaged due to falling trees. Overall, we came out much better than expected given the magnitude of the storm as it came into Florida.

We have noticed that many of our new owners are purchasing units as real estate investments and renting them out. Most of these owners are using property managers to relieve themselves from the burdens and hassles that can come with renting property. The Association supports the use of property managers because they are accessible to the residents and the Association alike. For those of you who rent your units or are looking to rent your units, the Association requires that all tenants that occupy the unit for more than 31 consecutive days must go through a background check. (See the rental policy on the website under the "New Owner Information" tab and click on Rental Policy.) The rental policy was updated this year, so you will want to view it and understand the changes. The language has been simplified, with the main change being that background checks need to go through an approved vendor. We have learned that not all background checks are as thorough as others and there are certain criteria that must be followed when conducting the background check. We have a list of vendors that are approved. However, if you have a vendor that you want to use, have them contact the Association and agree (in writing) to the criteria for the background check that we require and we can add them to the list. You will want to get your vendor approved before you need to have background checks run because it takes a little time to get them approved. Long-term renting can be a great experience for both the owner and tenant if you get a responsible renter. We have seen the flip side of that where owners end up losing money with costly renovations to units due to damage and the loss of time by having to oversee their tenants' behavior. Having a good property manager helps to eliminate these situations. A clean background check does not guarantee a good renter, but it is a good foundation to start with and a safeguard to the community as a whole.

I want to remind everyone that the Association's annual meeting will be held Saturday, November 4th, in the main lobby of the conference center. 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