

Laurel Park News



October 2009

Bus Rapid Transit A Route Through Laurel Park?



An additional 150 buses per day on Osprey Avenue

A new north-south bus mass transit system would send some 150 additional buses a day down Osprey Avenue, according to a proposal by Sarasota County, which is applying for a Federal Transit Administration grant to fund the project. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) would be in addition to the current SCAT service, with the goal of providing reliable and frequent service

connecting the airport area in the north to the Westfield Southgate Mall in the south. Stops would be limited, generally about half a mile apart.

The LPNA board has requested that the County move the downtown portion of the route to either Orange Avenue or US 301, citing concerns about safety, noise, development pressure, and the impact on our national historic

district. In President Jude Levy's August 6 letter to Anthony Beckford, SCAT's general manager, she made the case for Orange Avenue:

"By shifting the route to Orange (the mileage is the same on either route), we believe you gain the following strengths:

1) Faster running times both north and south.
2) Direct service to the Burns Square commercial district. It is our understanding that the Burns Square merchants had requested that the BRT come down Orange.

3) Placement of the route through an area that is zoned for 50 units per acre and is suitable for transit oriented development (unlike Laurel Park, which is zoned for 9 units per acre). Historically, BRT routes bring development.

4) Eliminate the concerns that Laurel Park residents have expressed regarding noise (twelve 50' buses coming through a residential neighborhood every hour), safety for walkers especially children (there is a school and school bus stops on Osprey).

See BRT, page 6

Laurel Park Birding Report

"Look! There he goes!" said Alice Hafner as the small grayish bird flew from the slash pine in her yard to a magnolia tree across Madison Court. Then eight years old, now ten, Alice could not only spot the screech owls but could also guide another birder to find the perching owl invisible in the tree. She guided my gaze from horizontal branch to brown leaf to vertical branch until I could see the owl for myself.

As they had dinner together on their screened porch, Paul and Martha Hafner, Alice and her sister, Lillian, often heard the wail of screech owls at dusk. So a few years ago Paul built nesting boxes and mounted them high in the pines; his efforts soon paid off when screech owls took up residence. The Hafners and many of their neighbors watched as the owls and their fledglings used the corner of Oak Street and Madison Court for flight training and critter hunting lessons.

Today, Martha reports, the screech owls are still around but they now nest in the shag of dead fronds of Washingtonia palms near their home. "They eat cockroaches," says Martha, so she hopes they stick around.

See Birding, page 7

Dates to Remember

November 7, 5:00 - 9:00 PM
Tunes in the Park

November 3, 6:00 PM
General Meeting
Senior Friendship Center
1888 Brother Geenen Way

November ?:
N'hood Brick Laying
Watch for announcement

December 6, 5:00 - 8:00 PM
Holiday Tree Trimming

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Summer was long and hot, but now we are into autumn and activities are picking up. The September Clean Up Day was a success. I arrived a few minutes before 9:00 AM and ten residents had already signed up. Thanks to all who pitched in to make the streets and sidewalks better looking. Keeping the neighborhood beautiful is an ongoing communal effort.

We definitely have the neighborhood spirit! Your responses and concern about the proposed Bus Rapid Transit route coming through Laurel Park on Osprey have gotten the officials' attention. Thank you for attending meetings and sending letters and emails. We will have more opportunities for input. Updates will be provided through our neighborhood email alerts.

To receive alerts about this issue and other current news, please send your email address to Suzy Hagglund at:

Suzy.Hagglund@verizon.net

Also, for information about our activities, check our website at:
www.historiclaurelpark.org

All residents – homeowners and renters – are cordially invited to all Laurel Park social events. Coming up: **Tunes in the Park**, Saturday, November 7, and the **Holiday Party**, Sunday, December 6.

As a follow up to our Eco Fair, a guest speaker will discuss Florida Friendly Yards at our **General Meeting** on Tuesday, November 3. The talk will be followed by our business meeting. Hope you will attend: from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at Senior Friendship Center on Brother Geenen Way.

As the weather cools, we are still working with the City on a neighborhood brick laying event to repair Rawls Avenue from Oak to Devonshire. We will let you know as soon as we have a firm date.

With your interest, volunteerism and membership contributions, along with grants from the City, Laurel Park remains informed, involved and socially vibrant.

Thanks to each and every one of you for making Laurel Park a most friendly, beautiful and safe place to live! What a pleasure it's been to be your president for almost two years.

Wishing you heart warming holidays!

Jude Levy

Clean Streets

Thank you to the 32 neighbors who participated in the September 19, 2009 cleanup. In addition to beautifying Laurel Park, volunteers gathered trash from the streets, cleaned storm drains and removed invasive plants. About 9 yards of yard waste was deposited on the curb in front of Laurel Park.

Gift certificates to Miguel's Restaurant were awarded to Susan Harris and Katherine Orenic.



*Suzy Hagglund, Carol Butera, and
Manuela and Jacqueline Ocana*

Volunteers included Susan Tannenbaum, Cecily Deex, Carol Christie, Jeffrey Harris, Marla Hollander, Carol Bolt, Katherine Orenic, Karim Ghazli, Paul Hagglund, Sheila Zachowski, Bob Stone, Ed Midler, Teresa Stone, Trevor Stone, Alan Tannenbaum, Tess Tannenbaum, Abby Tannenbaum, Roimel Gonzalez, Manuela Ocana, Jolie McInnis, Susan Harris, Thomas Carter, Carol Butera, Pam Diamond, Ed Zachowski, Jude Levy, Patricia Garza, Tricia Shields, Stephanie Peters, Raven Peters, Donaldo Garza and Humberto Garza.

Fancy Plants
INSPIRED GARDEN MAINTENANCE

Michele Mancini

941.330.2070

Improve your health

with Taoist Tai Chi Society® internal arts & methods.
Beginner taijiquan (tai chi) class start regularly

Taoist Tai Chi Society of the USA
A CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION
Sarasota Branch
2888-B Ringling Blvd. • Sarasota FL 34237
941-365-0999
www.sarasota.florida.usa.taoist.org

Sock Hop November 7

Start channeling the Pink Ladies, Marilyn Monroe, James Dean and Elvis Presley. The next *Tunes in the Park* will be a 1950s sock hop.

Although costumes are optional, we hope many of you will dress in your best poodle skirt, put your hair in a beehive and practice your dance moves for a chance to win some great prizes at the sock hop.

This is a fun way to meet some new neighbors, enjoy our beautiful park and share your favorite recipe. Bring your family, friends and a dish to share. Potluck starts at 5, costume/dance/bubble gum blowing contests start 6:30ish, party till 9.

Thanks to our supporters:

LPNA, La Barge Sunset Cruises, O'Learys Tiki Bar and Grill, and Ringling Publix.

Special thanks to the City of Sarasota which is supporting Tunes with a significant grant.

If you would like to help set up, clean up or make a donation, please call Jolie @ 951-2468. We need lots of volunteers for a successful event.



Look for our new sign toppers.

Suggested Attire

For those wondering what the well dressed socialite wears to a sock hop, a Google search will yield rich results. Here are a few suggestions:

- * Saddle Shoes
- * Chiffon Scarves
- * Bobby Socks
- * Cuffed Blue Jeans
- * Leather Jackets
- * Pink Beehive Wigs
- * Poodle Skirts
- * 50's Flip Wigs
- * Black Sunglasses
- * Cat Glasses
- * Elvis Wigs / Elvis Costume
- * Car Hop Uniforms
- * Pink Lady Jackets

Fifties Sock Hop

Tunes in the Park

November 7
Laurel Park
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.



Potluck Dinner
Bring a dish
to share
water, utensils, & dessert provided

50's costume & dance contests!
PRIZES!!!

Thanks to the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association & the City of Sarasota

Laurel Park Porches



A usable front porch: good for the occupant and the neighborhood.

The LPNA board is taking steps to clarify the rules requiring a front porch on new construction, with the goal that new houses have usable front porches. Laurel Park's RSM-9 zoning has only a few rules about how houses should look, including a requirement for front porches.

These criteria were first drawn up and included in the neighborhood's overlay district which ultimately became our unique RSM-9 zoning. Residents were trying to preserve the historic character of the neighbor-

hood. They were also responding to studies which demonstrated the value of "eyes on the street" for keeping neighborhoods safe and building a sense of community.

The overlay language stated that porch design "should encourage leisurely use and interaction with the street. Open and screened porches are both desirable."

Residents have observed that some of the new homes built in the neighborhood, while meeting all technical requirements required by the City, have not resulted in usable porches. The current language can result in a long narrow entry which has no room for any porch furniture.

LPNA requested that the City Planning Department process a zoning text amendment to correct this situation. The board agreed to the following language, with italics being an addition to the current requirement.

"Front porch. The main entrance on principal buildings shall include a porch, deck or similar

open-air covered main entry feature. The porch, deck or similar feature shall have a minimum ~~area of 60 square feet~~ *depth of 6 feet and comprise a minimum of 30% of the width of the principal building's front facade (not including the garage) or 8 feet whichever is larger.*"

The Planning Department is reviewing this language and has suggested that we consider simply using the term porch – removing "deck or similar feature." They point out that these terms are confusing whereas "porch" is well defined. (On the other hand, using only porch would eliminate the possibility of a deck with a pergola.) Please bring your thoughts on this topic to our November general meeting, and check our website for updates on this issue:

- www.historiclaurelpark.org

You can also send comments to :

- Deb Dart:
artist@dagdart.com
- Kate Lowman:
lowmancarter@verizon.net.

The Pineapple Avenue



Panini Press

301 Pineapple Avenue S
(at the corner of Ringling and Pineapple)
Sarasota, Florida 34236

941 955-9505

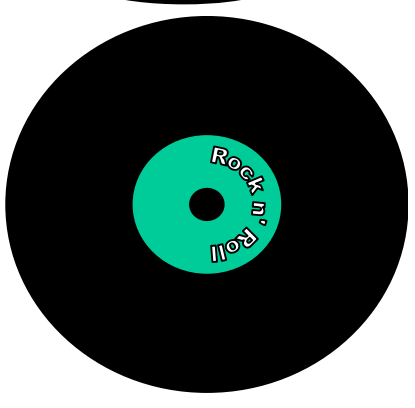
Hours: Monday — Friday
7 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Serving Panini, Salads, Homemade Desserts,
Italian Sodas and Gourmet Coffees

Panini Press
Laurel Park's newest
neighborhood
restaurant, featuring
wholesome fresh food,
purchased whenever
possible from local
growers and dairies.



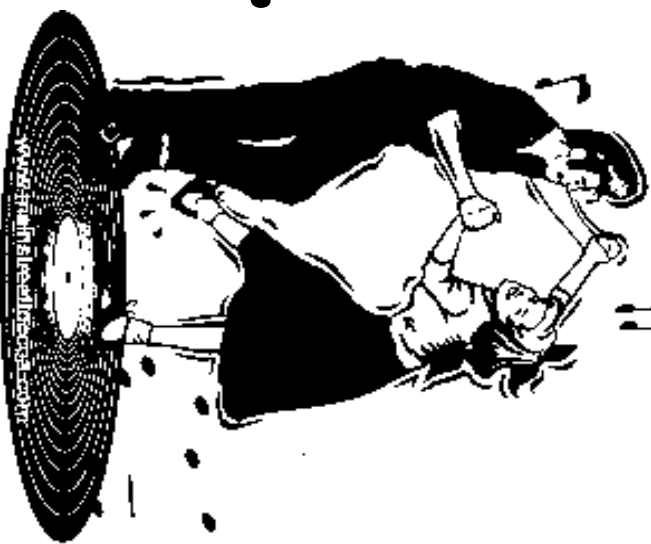
Fifties Sock Hop



November 7

Laurel Park

5 p.m. to 9 p.m.



Potluck Dinner
Bring a dish
to share

water, utensils, & dessert provided

50's costume & dance contests!
PRIZES!!!



Thanks to the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association & the City of Sarasota

New Restaurants Open on Laurel Park's Borders

Tired of cooking or just looking for a good local place to meet friends? Laurel Park has a wealth of restaurants within easy walking distance. Joining our existing stalwarts, **Word of Mouth**, **Citrus**, **Bellagio**, **Lavanda**, and the **Waffle Stop**, several brave souls have opened new establishments. Panini Press is in the Burns Square area and the other two are in Towles Court.

Supporting local businesses has never been more important. Running a restaurant is hard work and high risk. Build community and support our local entrepreneurs by meeting a neighbor for lunch or dinner at one of these nearby spots.

The Panini Press

301 Pineapple Ave. S. (955-9505)

Monday - Friday, 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Specializes in panini with an emphasis on local high quality supplies.

Recently opened by Barbara Farrell, Steve DiNicolantonio and Jim Farrell, The Panini Press is located at the site of the former Bungalow (Mickey's for those with longer memories.) Recognizing that the restaurant has long been a hangout for locals, Barbara wants to maintain that positive relationship.

"My goal is to have a neighborhood restaurant with the intention of meeting the needs of the neighborhood both in high quality food and pleasant ambiance."

Barbara is committed to purchasing locally whenever possible from area growers and dairies. Bread for the Panini is baked fresh daily by Il Panificio and arrives warm from the oven. Both the interior and exterior of the restaurant have been spruced up by partner Steve, who owns West Florida Contractors. The interior is lighter and brighter with a pleasant green decor and the outside boasts a new patio with tables that will be quickly occupied with the arrival of cooler temperatures.

Panini, with a range of fillings, are the specialty of the house, and

several egg-based panini can be chosen for breakfast. A variety of salads are also on the menu: a substantial chicken salad studded with raisins and pecans was very attractively served. Specialty coffees, Italian sodas, beer and wine are all available.

Daawat

239 Links Avenue (366-4433)

Lunch and dinner, every day

Specializes in Indian cuisine

A new restaurant has opened in the Canvas Cafe location. Gone are the days of drag queen bingo, as Daawat (which means "invite") offers Indian specialties seven days a week. Owners Raj and Amisha Desai are new to Sarasota but have spent many years in the restaurant business.

There will be a bar in the back room where the gallery used to be and the many patio tables remain. Numerous vegetarian, fish and meat specials are on the lunch menu, all of which include soup, rice, bread and a vegetable. The many tandoori specialties, nine different breads and biryani dishes are offered only on the main menu, but can be ordered for lunch as well as dinner.

The restaurant specializes in kormas and currys. Both styles of cooking use a rich meld of spices.

The decor is mellow and the whole atmosphere is "daawat" - inviting.

Deja Brew

1968 Adams Lane (952-1968)

Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Specializes in coffee and tea, wraps, and salads.

Deja Brew is a charming coffee/tea shop located in Towles Court. In partnership with Davi Kuhn, Rilla Fleming recently established this fanciful venue that offers wraps (such as turkey and albacore tuna), salads, and various types of teas and coffee. The decor itself is a feast for the eyes. As is fitting for an artists' colony, Towles Court artists are represented

on the walls, and small tables seat four comfortably in parsons chairs. Davi's dichroic glass is displayed in a shop at the rear of the coffee house.

The building, like so much of both Towles Court and Laurel Park, dates back to the 1920s and benefits from Rilla's knowledge and experience in restoration. It is worth a visit just to share her knowledge. She participated in the restoration of the Sarasota Opera House, the Ca' da Zan, and the historic Asolo Theater. Her eyes sparkle as she describes her endeavors in helping to bring these beauties back to life. She has also worked on sets for the Golden Apple.

The shop was last known as the Equinox Gallery under the ownership of Davi Kuhn. Rilla remembers well when it was Fred Murphy's gallery and says she can sometime still feel his aura.

*Nancy Richardson
and Kate Lowman*

Holiday Party

December 6: 5:00-8:00 PM

Trim the Tree

Sing Carols

Enjoy Your Neighbors

Bring a dessert or fruit dish to the park. LPNA will provide sandwiches and drinks.



BRT, continued from page 1

Furthermore, we want to keep the local SCAT bus which actually stops in Laurel Park and already serves our residents successfully. As we stated before, we are supportive of mass transit coming to Sarasota, but want to see it placed where it is needed and appropriate."

Impact on Neighbors

On August 26-27, SCAT held "Scoping" meetings to take public comment. Kasy Kane, who lives on the corner of Osprey and Morrill, was one of many Laurel Park residents who submitted comments to SCAT officials regarding the Osprey route. Kasy worries about a negative impact on the quality of life and says "over the years, the neighborhood and the City have worked together to lessen Osprey's traffic impact on residents. We've installed landscaped medians and textured crosswalks. Recently the City agreed to lower the speed limit to 25 mph."

If you missed these meetings and wish to submit comments regarding the BRT route, please see the contact data at the end of the article.

Why Choose Laurel Park?

SCAT has worked on this proposal for several years, with special focus on the northern half of the route. Four northern alternatives were developed, and SCAT determined that one route was preferable – the "LPA" or "locally preferred alternative." Last fall this preferred route was endorsed by the County Commission, the City Commission and the MPO (a regional transportation group).

However, when these bodies endorsed the "locally preferred alternative," they chose not just the much discussed northern route, but also a little discussed central and southern route. SCAT presented these governmental bodies with only a single route for the central and southern portions and there was no analysis of the pros and cons of alternate routes, as there was for the northern portion.

Independent Testing

In meeting with SCAT officials, LPNA repeatedly requested the studies or other data that led SCAT to choose a route through Laurel Park. The only response has been verbal statements that the Osprey route was faster and that Orange presented turning radius problems for the buses.

Several Laurel Park residents banded together and ran time tests on Osprey and Orange and found that the Orange route was slightly faster. These results were submitted to SCAT, but there was no response to the information. According to LPNA President, Jude Levy, consistent pressure on SCAT to provide information has been met with much paper, but little material relevant to the Laurel Park portion of the route.

Where Are We Now?

At the urging of Laurel Park residents and others, the County Commission instructed SCAT to take another

look at the route to the south of 10th Street. In an email dated October 8, Rob Lewis, the County's Executive Director of Planning and Development, said that the County has committed to work "in partnership with the City and with additional, comprehensive community engagement ... so that we can submit additional or revised information" concerning the federal grant application.

SCAT officials have told our elected leaders that change is possible. At two different public hearings over the past year, Vice Mayor Kelly Kirschner asked about the impact on Laurel Park and questioned whether Orange might not be a better choice. Both times he was told that the route was not fixed in stone and that the appropriate time to address the issue was in the future, during the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) phase of the project. We are now in that NEPA phase.

On September 29, the board of the Avondale Residents' Association voted to oppose the use of Osprey for the southern portion of the route (south of Mound). On October 2, The Citizens' Advisory Committee to the MPO (a regional transportation group) voted to recommend that an alternate path be chosen. This recommendation will be presented at the full MPO meeting at the end of October.

Both the City and County Commissions are scheduled to discuss the BRT route in the near future, but after the printing deadline for this newsletter. Ultimately, it is the County Commission that will make this decision.

The LPNA board will continue to push for an alternative route and will keep neighbors informed of any meetings or events of significance.

For more information on the project, see the SCAT website: www.scgov.net/brt/default.asp

There is a place on this website to leave comments, but those comments should also be sent to our County Commissioners. Their email addresses are:

Joe Barbeta	jbarbett@scgov.net
Carolyn Mason	cmason@scgov.net
Nora Patterson	npatterson@scgov.net
Shannon Staub	sstaub@scgov.net
Jon Thaxton	jthaxton@scgov.net

If you have questions on this issue for the LPNA board, please contact Kate Lowman at 362-9303 or lowmancarter@verizon.net.

Kate Lowman

MOTOR TUNE-UP • BRAKE SERVICE • TIRES • BATTERIES
AUTO AIR CONDITIONING SERVICE

REESE'S SERVICE STATION




1802 MAIN AT OSPREY
SARASOTA FLORIDA 34236
PHONE 953-2575

Birding Report, continued from page 1



Lillian and Alice Hafner

At last we have cooler days and nights, we can open windows and hear the screech owls, not only Hafner's but the pairs that nest under the tiles of the Spanish Oaks apartment buildings at Rawls Avenue and the screech owl family that lives in and around the Devonshire Lane nature preserve maintained by Jerry Callaio and Tom Witmer. Bird guides describe the screech owl voice as a "mournful whinny or wail, tremulous, descending in pitch. Sometimes a series of notes on one pitch." Another guide, "Long, monotonous, rolled whistle; also a quavering, dropping whinny." Screech owls are strictly nocturnal; listen for them at dusk or in early morning darkness. And if you are lucky enough to see one, you will be surprised that they are not much bigger than a robin.

Nearly three times the size of a screech owl, the great horned owl is one of the largest owls in North America. Have you seen the pair that nests near the Central Park condos on Hudson Bayou and hunts in Laurel Park? One recent evening Martha Hafner heard the frantic warning call of blue jays. We've all heard that noisy cackling when a flock of jays warns everyone that a predator is near. When she looked up into the pines one of Laurel Park's red-shouldered hawks was visible. But he too was squawking. Then Martha saw the cause for all the fuss. "He was huge, football shaped, sitting on a limb." Well, yes, 22 inches or more of great horned owl. And according to an Audubon handbook, they "Can take prey as large as a porcupine." To the great horned owl, the Laurel Park palm rats must be an hors d'oeuvre.

In the last edition of this newsletter, I described the masses of migrating robins that visited my deck two years ago. That phenomenon has happened before but what made this visit extraordinary was the single cedar waxwing among the hundreds of robins. I soon heard from my neighbors Jerry and Tom, of the above mentioned screech owls, who had an entire flock of cedar waxwings visit their bird-friendly yard. It was February, Northern migration season, 100 to 200 cedar waxwings visited for three days. Jerry emailed, "The bird baths, at least seven, had to be filled up every hour or so. We use birdseed and bread to feed our friends and I think we went through three loaves of bread and at least one 20-pound bag of bird food! (It) was the most beautiful sight I have ever seen here; like a hundred little flying rainbows."

Some of you may be wondering what is so swell about cedar waxwings. Go to Google Images and see for yourself.

So what other extraordinary birding events, sightings or identifications have happened in Laurel Park? Keep this dialogue going. Email Newsletter Editor Kate Lowman at: lowmancarter@verizon.net and she will get the information to me.

October is the beginning of annual fall migration. Watch and listen for unusual birdy visitors in your corner of Laurel Park.

Ellen McKeefe

Many thanks to our new and renewed members and a few that were missed before! Annual dues cover the calendar year.

- Brittany Arnett
- Chuck Burks
- Tenille Dixon
- Jeffrey Harris
- Chris and Rebeca Jaensch
- Cynthia Licata

- Carol and Barry Babsin
- Rosemary and Ed Chase
- Bob and Stacey Fletcher
- Susan Harris and Karim Ghazli
- Laura Keidel
- Senior Friendship Center



Support Your Neighborhood

Become a Member
or Friend of the LPNA!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

OWN _____ RENT _____

Contribution

\$25 _____ \$35 _____ \$50 _____

Other _____

PLEASE MAIL FORM AND CONTRIBUTION TO:
LPNA
P.O. BOX 1485
SARASOTA, FL 34230

The State of Real Estate

by Betsy Sublette

One property has sold since the most recent newsletter:

1638 Oak Street List Price \$299,000
 Sold Price \$285,000

There are currently 5 sales pending:

635 Ohio Place List Price \$199,900
 518 Columbia Ct. List Price \$279,000
 524 Columbia Ct. List Price \$299,000
 1828 Hawkins Ct. List Price \$399,900
 1841 Oak Street List Price \$649,000

Below are properties that have seen a price adjustment since the most recent issue of the LPNA Newsletter:

1842 Hawkins Ct. \$199,000 to \$175,000
 1919 Laurel Street \$279,000 to \$259,900
 1630 Dolphin Street \$449,000 to \$409,000
 1631 Laurel Street \$599,000 to \$499,000
 1860 Laurel Street \$550,000 to \$499,000
 1718 Cherry Lane \$785,000 to \$749,000
 1709 Devonshire \$795,000 to \$759,000
 1705 Devonshire \$795,000 to \$775,000
 329 S. Osprey Ave. \$839,900 to \$790,000
 1871 Laurel Street \$1,495,000 to \$1,395,000

Currently 14 residences are listed for sale in Laurel Park.

Information Provided by Betsy Sublette, Realtor, Signature Sotheby's International Realty

Source: Sarasota Multiple Listing Service

Special thanks to Laurel Park residents Bob and Teresa Stone, who own Minuteman Press on the corner of Fruitville Road and Lime Avenue. They are registered with the City as an authorized Neighborhood Association Newsletter printer and they always do a great job with printing our newsletters.



President: Jude Levy
Vice President: Chris Jaensch
Treasurer: Betsy Sublette
Secretary: Suzy Hagglund

**Newsletter Editor
 and
 Advertising Coordinator**

Kate Lowman
 P.O. Box 2162
 Sarasota, FL 34230
 (941) 362-9303
 lowmancarter@verizon.net
 www.HistoricLaurelPark.org

www.HistoricLaurelPark.org

Family Thais

Ed Zachowski
 Certified Thai Yoga Energy Work Practitioner
 Sarasota FL
 ejzachowski@comcast.net
 941-735-4667

Your High Energy Neighborhood Realtor

BETSY SUBLETTE

Signature | **Sotheby's**
 INTERNATIONAL REALTY

50 Central Avenue ~ Sarasota, FL 34236
 t 941.308.6554 ~ c 941.284.8483
 betsy.sublette@sothebysrealty.com

The Shamrock

2257 Ringling Blvd.

Sarasota, FL 34237

941.952.1730

For events & specials go to:
 myspace.com/theshamrock Sarasota



**Balance Health
 And Fitness**

Rebeca Jaensch

Holistic Personal Training
 and Massage Therapy in
 Downtown Sarasota

Tel. 320-3652

Lic.# MA40706

