

Garden Variety

Newsletter of the Palm Gardens Activity Association

March 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Joe Vitiritto, President

Hello Everyone,

As I write this message February is about over and March will be coming upon us. February was a very busy month with the Luau, Valentine's Dinner and Dance and the Ladies Luncheon plus all of our regular weekly activities. Then there were all the outside-the-park activities that Pat Mettee and Gloria Wetzel lined up for us. Thank you, Pat and Gloria, for giving us great entertainment.

March is just as busy with the Patio Sale, St Patty's Day and the Farewell Luncheon. Thank you Mona Jones, Linda Kuchenmeister and Jim and Pat Serio and all the helpers who work the extra parties.

Did I say Farewell? A lot of our residents will be heading back to their homes in the north. We will be missing them but, please, enjoy the time we have left with our Winter Residents.

I want to thank the Stewarts for the great Luau they put on for us. Thank you also for all the great things you are doing in the Park. This is the best and most beautiful Park in the Valley!

Regards, Joe



If you are a new resident or just coming back from a long stay away, contact Ronnie Vitiritto, 515-238-9075, or Jan Opp 480-494-7231, who represent our Welcome Committee. They are here to extend a warm greeting, provide information about community events and activities and encourage you to participate and connect with other residents. You can even find out about volunteer opportunities. Contact the knowledgeable Welcome Committee members here once you get established.



RECYCLING THURSDAY AM

Your volunteer recycling team picks up aluminum cans and PET1 or PETE **clear** plastic bottles (without caps) from your container or bag at the curb by **6:30 AM Thursday mornings or preferably the night before**. Help us to help you by following our simple rules. **PLEASE REMOVE THE TABS FROM YOUR CANS!** You can put them in the box at the SH for donation to the **Ronald McDonald House**. **Please no milk cartons or opaque plastic bottles.**

**PALM GARDENS
ACTIVITIES ASSN. BOARD
OF DIRECTORS 2025-26**

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jvitiritto@jkwinc.com

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715-222-6841
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SPECIAL REMINDER



PLEASE take down your tattered flags. Leaving them up when damaged is disrespectful. You can dispose of them at most Home Depot stores. Thank you. Bob Foley



Norm Hobbs
Curley Spurrier
Jimmy Stewart
Carl Wilkinson
Steve White

"True friends are the ones who never leave your heart, even if they leave your life for a while."

NOMINEES FOR BOARD VACANCIES

Current President - Joe Vitiritto

I'm Joe Vitiritto and I've lived in the park since 2010. We were in the RV for six years then we bought a home on Lot #145 in 2016. This is now our permanent residence in September of 2020. I turned 77 years old last November. I am from Clive, Iowa, a suburb of Des Moines. I have been married to my wife Ronnie for 26 years and we have 4 children, Jeff and Joe, who live

in the Phoenix area. Tia and Kim live in the Des Moines area. We have six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. I was the owner of a construction company for 37 years before retiring in 2010. My wife and I love Palm Gardens, and we have friends there who feel like family.

Current Vice President and Nominee - Sonja Martin

I am Sonja Martin. I came to Palm Gardens in 2014 as a snowbird. I have been very active in various functions here in the park. Social Hour, Pancakes Saturdays, Mexican Train, and volunteering to help in almost all luncheons or other functions where help is needed. I would very much like to serve as your Vice President again for I feel I bring a trove of experience necessary for this position. I have been the current Vice President since November 1, 2025, because the elected VP had to resign and I was the next in line to fill the position.

Vice President Nominee - Jerry Noel

I am Jerry Noel. I have lived in Palm Gardens for the past year and have been part of the local community for six years, calling in home year-round. I believe a strong community is built through service, involvement, and looking out for one another. I have had a long career in management, bringing experience in organization, communication, and teamwork. I have scheduled and supervised teams of several people, managed production schedules, coordinated purchasing for multiple locations, and worked in public relations, marketing, and sales while helping grow business operations across the United States. As Vice President, I look forward to using my

experience and skills by organizing the events calendar, Christmas lights contest, Gospel Jams, 50/50 drawings, sound system operations, and by serving as a respectful, dependable liaison with park management.

Current Treasurer - Pat Baker

My name is Pat Baker. I have served as your treasurer for two years and am looking forward to working for you for another two years.

Current Secretary and Nominee - Laurie Sullivan

My name is Laurie Sullivan. My husband Dave and I live at 117A and are full-timers. I am originally from PA, where I lived for the first nineteen years of my life. I relocated to NJ for four years, then to Syracuse, NY. From there I moved my family to Rockford, IL where we spent the next thirty years. Dave and I relocated to Fort Worth TX for seven years before we landed here in Mesa, AZ, where we will stay! I retired from a career in HR at UPS in the Rockford/Chicago area. I also served as both Secretary and President for our neighborhood HOA in TX. I am currently a Consultant for Pampered Chef. I love to read, paint, craft, and play with our Fur Kids. I have 3 adult children, one in Rockford, IL and one in Tempe, AZ. Our son is in the USAF. I have 4 grandchildren. Dave has 6 adult children who all live in Post Falls, ID and 14 grandchildren.

Secretary Nominee - Don Albrecht Lot#65

I am from Michigan, where I spent my entire career as a Manufacturing Engineer and Operations Manager in the automotive industry. I finished my career as Director of Manufacturing Engineering,

leading 550+ engineers in 28 locations around the world. As an engineer, I tend to be very organized and detailed. I've been at Palm Gardens for 4 years, and I'm involved in golf and poker. I led the layout committee for the new gym, poker room, and the library. I enjoy using the computer and think being the Secretary for our organization is a position that can best utilize my talents.

Secretary Nominee – Karen Thienel

Don and I love living in this community and want to do our part in keeping it a fun, thriving and safe place to live. I worked as a department manager, then an account manager for the same manufacturing company for 40 years. Both positions required management, organizational and communication skills. I served on our neighborhood association board for 4 years.

Trustee Nominee – Judy Kraus

I'm Judy Kraus. I have lived in Palm Gardens for 6 years. I'm from Fargo, ND. I'm a retired psychologist. I love being a part of this community that is caring and kind to one another. I have good organizational and communication skills.

Trustee Nominee – Carla Miller

I am a full-time resident of Palm Gardens. I retired from Fox Hills Resort in WI as an accountant. I appreciate and support the values of volunteer opportunities and would be honored to serve as a Trustee for our community.

Trustee Nominee – Woody Borg

I am running for Trustee. I was Vice President for 2 years and want to try something different.

**PALM GARDENS
ACTIVITY
ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING**

The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Mar 10th at 11:00am in the South Hall. Everyone is welcome.

**DIRECTORY
CHANGES**

Wilkinson, Hope: Lot 20, ph 480-703-3699

Bishop, Dee: Lot 27, ph 623-229-0732

Adrian, Ivan & Bonnie: Lot 164, ph I/587-784-7093, B/780-977-8760

Porter, Roscoe & Becky: Lot 454, ph R/313-608-9909, B/734-845-1671

Bjornstad, Jim & Joy: Lot 646, ph Jj/253-691-6513, Jo/253-691-6512

**ANNUAL CLEAN-UP
MAR 8TH – 13TH**



It's time to clean up your yards of weeds, bushes and trash during Our Annual Clean-Up week. Put your "trash" out on the curb and maintenance will pick it up. **NO PAINT OR REFRIGERATORS.** Any questions, contact Floyd Cheyne, 231-740-2321.

Also, Thurs, Mar 12 at 4:30pm the Stewarts will be providing hotdogs, brats, chips and pop or water. This is in

appreciation of everyone helping to keep Palm Gardens clean and looking good. A sign-up sheet will be posted for hotdogs and brats.

PATIO SALE



Our Spring Patio Sale will be held on Saturday, Mar 7th from 8am-1pm. Time to sell off your old treasures and go shopping for some new ones. This year we will be unable to have anyone come pick up our leftovers so you will need to make your own arrangements. For questions see Mona Jones, sp 690, ph 480-265-5277

FOOD TRUCK



Food trucks will be here on Friday, Mar 6th and 20th. March 6th we'll see Tzikii's – a Mediterranean Cuisine. March 20th will feature The Spaghetti Shack which, of course, is Italian.

LUCK OF THE IRISH



Palm Gardens will be celebrating St Patrick's Day on Tuesday, March 17th. 5:15 pm Parade lineup across from lot 128. 5:30pm Parade travels down Main Street and makes a lucky horse shoe loop east of South Hall then crosses the

street and makes another lucky horse shoe loop through the Village and back to South Hall. 6:00pm Baked Potato bar- American or Irish style, coleslaw salad, dinner roll and cupcakes. BYOB. Luck of the draw & Leprechaun games will follow dinner. The night concludes with Woody DJ'ing a Shamrock & Roll Dance from 7:00 - 10:00pm. Remember everyone's Irish on St Patrick's Day, so hope to see you there! Questions call Linda 715-410-7922

MAH JONGG



Please join the Mah Jongg group in the North Hall on Wednesdays from 1-3pm. New players are always welcome. Teaching is always provided. For questions, contact Carla Miller, sp 486, 480-760-3462

SHUFFLEBOARD



Palm Gardens 1 Shuffleboard team won their league division and advanced to the district playoffs with a chance to advance to the state finals in Tucson.



The Farewell Luncheon will be March 26 at 1:00. Tickets are free but you must have a ticket to eat. We will have baked chicken, BBQ beans, potato salad and ice cream for dessert. Tickets will be given out at Saturday morning coffee and Wednesday grill nights during the month of March. You can get your tickets from Pat or Carmen Serio. Please BYOB and your own place setting. We do not decorate for this so you may claim your table at any time. There will be a sign-up sheet for shut-ins ONLY. Everyone else needs a ticket. See you there. Pat Serio

ICE CREAM SOCIAL



We will only have one Ice Cream Social this month, Mar 3rd in the South Hall at 5:45pm. All you can eat with many wonderful toppings.

"Unfortunately, many people do not consider fun an important item on their daily agenda. For me, that was always a high priority in whatever I was doing." Chuck Yeager

BINGO!!



We gave away some big money last month! Not to worry – the hot ball starts at \$100 and continues to climb. Come play and see if you can win! We play on Wednesdays at the South Hall. Sales begin at 6:00pm.

GRILL NIGHT WEDNESDAY'S at 4PM



Come join us for a juicy burger at Grill Night **every** Wednesday night from 4PM to 5:15PM. Your meal includes chips and dessert. Pop is sold separately. If you'd like, you can order your burger with cheese or without a bun! Condiments are included (catsup, mustard, mayo, relish, pickles).

IT'S TIME FOR PANCAKES



Come join us on March 28th for ALL YOU CAN EAT PANCAKES WITH A SIDE OF SAUSAGE & COFFEE FOR \$3.00! SUCH A DEAL!! Contact Sonja Martin, SP 447, 805-657-5598



ZUMBA GOLD

Join us for some fun, music, and dancing at Zumba Gold from 8:15-9am Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the South Hall. No prior experience is necessary! Come laugh, sing and make new friends! Contact Mary-Alice Muraski, sp 163, 715-222-6841.

GOLF!!



The 2026 Dinty More tournament will happen on March 11. The tournament will be held at Little Oasis (formally known as Royal Palms) GC. The tournament will be under Callaway handicap system. Players with the lowest net score will be awarded the Simonson trophy for lowest scoring male player and lowest scoring female player. There will be a putting contest prior to the start of the tournament. Sign up for tee times will be posted about March 4th either at the golf course during league play or at the South Hall.

The awards banquet will be held on Saturday March 21 at Rudy's Country Store and Bar-B-Q, 1733 N Higley Rd., Gilbert. It will start at 12:30 to 2:00. There will be a putting contest prior to the meeting, followed by the annual meeting of the golf league and voting

for officers of the league. Sign up sheet posted at the South hall to determine how many will attend the banquet.

Mark your calendars for the tournament and banquet. Bob Gruchalla, Lot #451, 503-559-6925

Me: How long does someone have to be dead before it's considered archeology instead of grave robbing?

Archeologist: As an archaeologist I find this a VERY awkward question.

Me: Answer the question, grave robber!

MOVIE NIGHT



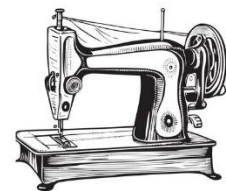
Movie Night is Sunday, March 15 at 6:30 p.m. in South Hall. Our film choices will head in a different direction starting this month. We'll lean on the romance and musical genres for the remainder of the season. Let's start with the 1999 film Notting Hill, starring Julia Roberts and Hugh Grant - how can you go wrong! Popcorn and other snacks will be served, BYO drinks. Contact Stan Schraufnagel at 715.821.0436 with movie suggestions.

BIRTHDAY - ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



The final birthday/anniversary celebration is Thursday, March 5th, and we're ending with a BIG FINALE starring **world renown comedian, Eric O'Shea**. He is celebrated for his unique blend of clean stand up comedy and family friendly humor. He's won numerous awards and appeared on America's Got Talent and Comedy Central. **Don't miss this one!** Celebrating March, July, and November birthdays and anniversaries.

RIP, TEAR, BUTTON OFF, OR ZIPPER BROKEN? WE CAN HELP!



Have you been putting off some mending? The Sewing Group will be accepting light mending on the first Tuesday of every month through April. See us at South Hall Craft Room 9 am to noon on February 3. We can fix missing buttons, ripped seams or hems, holes, etc. Contact Mary-Alice Muraski 715-222-6841 Lot 163.

PICKLEBALL



Our Pickleball group is still scheduled for 9am M-F. Our numbers are down but those of you who still have the drive to enjoy fun competition and the occasional good shot, please join us. Call Dennis Chapman at 805-796-2110 for more information.

GOSPEL JAM



Our regular once a month Gospel Jam is set for March 1, Sunday at 6 pm. Everyone is invited to come and hear some great Gospel music and you are welcome to sing-along with your favorites. As always, we're looking for hidden talent. If you play an instrument, you're invited to keep your skills sharp with a bunch of other amateurs.

SATURDAY MORNING COFFEE & NEWS



Come on down to the South Hall every Saturday around 7:00am for a nice hot cup of coffee and a yummy donut! Stay for the Park updates and

info. Announcements begin at 8am then, what you really came for, the donuts. Cost is \$1.00 for coffee and \$2 for a donut. Sign up weekly at the South Hall bulletin board. AND, on Mar 21st we will have a special speaker here to give us important information on Medicare. They will be providing the donuts!

WURLITZER WONDERS AND PIZZA GALORE



Ticket Deadline: March 4th

Thrill to the great big sounds of the mighty Wurlitzer Theatre pipe organ and enjoy lots of pizza at the Palm Gardens annual pizza party & concert held at **Organ Stop Pizza on Monday, March 9 at 1:15 PM** located at Southern and Stapley. Ticket sales (\$10.75 per person) see Gloria Wetzel (Lot #413) at upcoming scheduled activities.

SCOOP THE LOOP



We'll be having our next Scoop the Loop on Sunday Mar 29th. Meet up in your golf cart, bike or whatever at 4:00pm at the North Hall.

SOCIAL HOUR



Get your friends and neighbors together for fun and casual conversation at **Social Hour and Potluck at the South Hall Mar 10th and 24th**. Social setting starts at 4:15 PM with potluck food served at 5 PM. Bring a dish to share such as salad, casserole, appetizer, meat or dessert. Bring your own drink. Place settings will be provided. All residents are welcome at this free event. The food is always top notch. Contact Sonja Martin, Sp 447, 805-657-5598.

TRIVIA NIGHT



The fun just keeps on getting better with more and more information being shared at the monthly Trivia Night. We're back to the second Sunday, March 8 at 6 o'clock. If you haven't played yet, watch for the sign-up sheet and we'll get you hooked up with other fun folks. All it costs is \$2 and snacks to share. The winners of each of the 3 rounds split the pot.

I CAN'T REMEMBER YOUR NAME

Save people here at Palm Gardens from having to ask again and again. It's hard to remember so many new acquaintances, so help them out. **State name tags for \$10.50** are available from Gloria Wetzel, 734-771-7185.

REMINDER TO ALL: Wear your name tags to all activities. Others will appreciate you.

CALENDAR UPDATES? KNOW THE PROCEDURE

If you would like to add an event to the calendar or revise one you currently host, please contact **Association Vice President Sonja Martin, Sp. 447, 805-657-5598**. She coordinates the calendar and use of facilities for Association programs and for those who wish to reserve a hall for a private party.

RESIDENTS HELPING RESIDENTS

HANDYMAN

Available to help with pet sitting, general maintenance and repairs on your home. This can include a wide range of jobs, such as fixing leaky faucets, assembling furniture and minor electrical work like installing light fixtures **and more**. Handyman and pet sitting references available. Call or text Jeff Polette 206-679-0888.

JERRY'S ERRAND & DELIVERY SERVICES

Helping Palm Gardens residents with fast, friendly service - within 10 miles!

Services Offered:

- Local Errands (Post Office, Pharmacy, etc)
- Delivery Pickups (Prescriptions, Takeout, Packages)
- Grocery Shopping
- Laundry Drop-off & Pick-Up

Easy, Transparent Pricing:

- Local Errand (within 5 miles): \$10 flat fee, 6-10 miles: \$15
- Extra Stops (on same trip): +\$3 per stop
- Grocery Shopping & Delivery: \$15 (list provided)

Call to Schedule: 307-267-6097

KNIFE SHARPENING

Carmen Serio Sp. 260

LENDING CLOSET

Our volunteer-based lending closet allows residents of Palm Gardens to borrow durable equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, shower chairs, canes or other items. If you need something short-term, **contact Dave Sullivan 815-985-2524, Laurie Sullivan 815-621-3413 or Diane Wehr 317-431-4437** for immediate assistance.



JOIN OUR COMMUNITY ON FACEBOOK

You can get current information about events happening in and around the Park by checking out the **FACEBOOK COMMUNITY PAGE** which connects over 370 residents through this exclusive group.

HOW TO CONNECT:

1. Log into your FB account.
2. Click on the magnifying glass/search at the top of the page and type in "OUR COMMUNITY" and run the search.
3. Look for the banner featuring cactus and a mountain.
4. Click the JOIN button. ANSWER a few questions and you should be accepted within 48 hours.

PALM GARDENS 2026



Saturday, March 14, 2026 South Hall

Food ~ Fun ~ Games ~ Prizes ~ Grand Prizes

Food: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Games: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Baked Goods Silent Auction 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

MENU

Sloppy Joe Sandwich with Chips -\$5 5:00 pm -6:00 pm
Soda, Bottled Water or Ice Cream - \$1 sold all evening

GAMES

Blackjack, Texas Hold'em, Fortune Wheel, Bingo, Chuck-a-luck, Horse Racing, and Human Slot Machine \$3 gets you a bag of chips and a DOOR PRIZE ticket.

Door prizes will be drawn throughout the evening,

RAFFLES

\$1 EACH, 6 FOR \$5, 12 FOR \$10, OR 25 FOR \$20
Available: 5:30 - 8:00 pm Drawing held at 8:15 pm

AWESOME PRIZES!!!

(NO NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN THESE RAFFLE PRIZES)

GRAND PRIZES

\$5 EACH Drawing held at 8:30 pm (after the raffle)

(MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN)

First prize = One month base rent Second prize = % month base rent

All proceeds go to the Palm Gardens Activities Association to help fund activities throughout the year.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

MAR 1	GOSPEL JAM	SH	6:00PM
MAR 3	ICE CREAM SOCIAL	SH	5:45PM
MAR 5	BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY	SH	6:00PM
MAR 6	FOOD TRUCK	SH LOT	11AM-2PM
MAR 7	PATIO SALE		8AM-1PM
MAR 9-13	ANNUAL CLEAN-UP WEEK		
MAR 8	TRIVIA NIGHT	SH	6:00PM
MAR 10	BOARD MEETING	SH	11AM
MAR 10	SOCIAL HR/POTLUCK	SH	4:15PM
MAR 12	JAMMERS	SH	2PM-4PM
MAR 12	CLEAN-UP WEEK DINNER	SH	4:30PM
MAR 14	CASINO NIGHT	SH	5PM (FOOD), 6PM (GAMES)
MAR 15	MOVIE NIGHT	SH	6:30PM
MAR 17	ST PATRICK'S DAY PARTY	SH	5:30PM
MAR 20	FOOD TRUCK	SH LOT	11AM-2PM
MAR 21	SPEAKER AT SAT COFFEE	SH	7AM-8:30AM
MAR 24	SOCIAL HOUR/POTLUCK	SH	4:15PM
MAR 26	FAREWELL LUNCH	SH	1:00PM
MAR 28	PANCAKE BREAKFAST	SH	7:00AM
MAR 29	SCOOP THE LOOP	NH LOT	4:00PM

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PALM GARDENS ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE-MARCH 2026

MONDAY

CHAIR EXERCISE	SH	7:30 AM
ZUMBA	SH	8:15 AM
SHUFFLEBOARD	NH	9:00 AM
BUNCO	NH	9:30 AM
PASS PINOCHLE	NH	1:00 PM
SWEDISH WEAVING	SHCR	1:00 PM
NO PASS PINOCHLE	NH	6:30 PM

TUESDAY

EXERCISE	SH	7:30 AM
3 MILE WALK PROGRAM	SH	8:15 AM
SEWING/QUILTING	SHCR	9:00 AM
SHUFFLEBOARD	NH	9:00 AM
CORNHOLE	SH	9:30 AM
PASS PINOCHLE	NH	1:00 PM
SWOOP	NH	6:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

CHAIR EXERCISE	SH	7:30 AM
ZUMBA	SH	8:15 AM
POOL	PR	9:00 AM
SHUFFLEBOARD	NH	9:00 AM
DIME POKER	SHPR	NOON
MAHJONG	NH	1:00 PM
GRILL NIGHT	SH	4:00 PM
TEXAS HOLD EM	SHPR	6:00 PM
BINGO	SH	6:00 PM

THURSDAY

RECYCLING PICKUP	PG	6:30 AM
EXERCISE	SH	7:30 AM
3 MILE WALK PROGRAM	SH	8:15 AM
SEWING	SHCR	9:00 AM
SHUFFLEBOARD	NH	9:00 AM
LINE DANCING	SH	9:30 AM
BIBLE STUDY	NH	10:30 AM
.25 POKER	SHPR	NOON
BRIDGE	NH	1:00 PM
CRAFT GROUP	NH CR	1:00 PM
HAND & FOOT	NH	6:30 PM

FRIDAY.

EXERCISE	SH	7:30 AM
ZUMBA	SH	8:15 AM
MATTER OF BALANCE	NH	8:30 AM (1/16 TO 3/6)
SHUFFLEBOARD	NH	9:00 AM
CORNHOLE	SH	10:00 AM
OMAHA POKER	SH	NOON
EUCHER	NH	1:00 PM
CRIBBAGE	NH	6:00 PM

SATURDAY

COFFEE & ROLLS	SH	7:00 AM
BEANBAG BASEBALL	SH	8:30 AM
POOL/8 BALL	PR	9:00 AM
FIDDLER/JAM PRACTICE	NH	10:00 AM
DOMINO MEXICAN TRAIN	NH	6:00 PM

SUNDAY

DARTS	PR	2:30 PM
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