




Turtle Talk

September 2022

President's Message



Deirdre Cronin

INSIDE this ISSUE... Page

President's Message	1
Management: CAM Corner	2
Treasurer's Report	2
Natural Assets Cttee	3
Palmer Ranch Nat. Assets	4
Traffic Safety TF	5
Book of the Month	5
Communications Cttee	6
ARC	7
Landscape & Grounds	8
Families' Club	9
TR Women's Club	10
TR Men's Club	10
From the West Corner of...	11
Welcome New Neighbor	11
TR Lending Library	12
Classifieds—Wanted	12
Information	12

TURTLE TALK proof readers check articles for errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure.

The author of each article is responsible for the factual accuracy.

To everything there is a season. As we move into the Fall season, we are seeing many changes here in Turtle Rock. For our students who have returned to classes, there is settling in to new routines. For the Board of Governors, there is a new focus on data-driven management, based on the recent homeowner survey results, as well as a restructuring.

The Board accepted Bob Oram's resignation in August. We would like to thank Bob for his years of service on the Board as Governor, President, and most recently, as Treasurer. With his departure from the Board, Kathrin Harris stepped into the Treasurer role, and Curtis Gilroy was appointed to fulfill Bob's term of office. Curt also has served on the Board in the past. Most recently he has chaired the ARC, co-chaired Landscape and Grounds, and served on the Natural Assets Committee and the FIRM. Curt will serve as Assistant Treasurer to the Board and as liaison to the above committees. Board actions at the August meeting:

- ♦ Speed camera violation notices: delayed until additional study of data is conducted and verified;
- ♦ TROM wording regarding speeding violations: put on hold;
- ♦ Butterfly garden: approved funds to develop a design for this area;
- ♦ Holiday décor: approved vendor bid to wrap palms with lights;
- ♦ Preserve replanting: approved funding for county-mandated installation of native species behind homes on Canary Palm Ct.;
- ♦ Trailhead map: approved purchase of sign to replace broken one.

The Board continues to work on and refine the tasks facing it. The largest item on our agenda for the coming weeks is the development of the community's 2023 budget. Bids from existing vendors have been obtained, our reserve study updated, and a Board Budget Workshop open to owners for observation is being planned for this month. An email will go to owners once a date/time is set.

This edition of Turtle Talk comes out just before we celebrate Labor Day. Labor Day in the U.S. is rooted in the late nineteenth century, when labor activists pushed for a federal holiday to recognize the many contributions workers had made to America's strength, prosperity, and well-being. I wish each of you a safe and happy Labor Day, and thank those who contribute in so many ways to the strength, beauty and well-being of Turtle Rock.

CAM CORNER

A message from your Management Company

Introducing—

Alvina Richardson Decker,

Assistant to TR's Manager

Alvina comes to Turtle Rock through Sunstate Management Group, Inc. with a background in Business Administration. She is a native born Sarasotan whose family migrated to Norwalk, Connecticut in the 1940s. There she became an administrator and instructor in both Norwalk Community College and the University of Connecticut, Stamford Campus. Upon moving back to Florida with her (now) late husband, she retired from teaching Eng-

lish in winter of 2020. Currently, she spends a portion of her time as an assistant to our manager, Lisa Vignola. Her administrative skills, combined with her English teaching background, have been invaluable throughout her career.

You can find Alvina in the Community Center from 8:30 to 12:30 M-F.



Treasurer's Report

By: Kathrin Harris



Year-To-Date Ending:

July 31, 2022

	Actual	Budget
Assessments and other income	\$ 902,012	\$ 893,280
Operating Expenses:		
General and Administrative	\$ 235,046	\$ 235,358
Common Grounds	104,660	123,599 *
Access Control/Gatehouse	188,692	183,625 **
Facilities Maintenance	75,420	85,983 ***
Utilities	50,040	49,397

* Several expenses in process

** Access, Repair & Maintenance over by \$6182

*** Waterway Maintenance over by \$10278, rest under by \$20843

Reserves:

	Actual	Budget
Contribution	\$ 215,318	\$ 215,318
Expense: Site Improvements CREDIT*	(\$13,470)	

* reversal of payment for south entrance fountain that is still not running

Assessments:

Outstanding HOA Fees	
(to 30 days)	\$ 23,034
(31+ days)	5,213
Total	\$ 28,572



Natural Assets Committee

Low Maintenance Zone (LMZ) Basics



It appears that Turtle Rock residents are trendsetters. Pond-side residents with low maintenance zones (LMZs) behind their yards are in the forefront of a practice actively being promoted throughout Palmer Ranch and Sarasota County.



At Turtle Rock, the LMZs are two-foot wide, 8-to-12-inch-tall grass borders along retention pond edges. Also called “buffers” or “no-mow zones,” these LMZs are in fact clipped to their typical minimum height of 8” on a periodic basis.

Turtle Rock LMZs serve several purposes:

- Reducing erosion, thus delaying (or protecting) shoreline remediation.
- Enhancing water quality by filtering runoff to reduce the nutrients (mostly from fertilizer), chemicals, and bacteria that can end up in ponds.
- Augmenting habitats for birds and wildlife.
- Strengthening Turtle Rock property values.

For homeowners, maintaining an LMZ should not be complex. Currently, a vendor clips the LMZs behind homes.

Homeowners and their landscape professionals should mow TO but not INTO the two-foot LMZ. The accompanying photos show well-maintained LMZs versus one where the landscaper gave it too wide a berth when mowing. Reminding your mowing crew that the LMZ is two feet wide may help them to do their best work. This ["Quick Guide for Lawn Care Companies"](#) from the Turtle Rock website is written for mowing contractors.

When pond water gets especially high during the rainy season, parts of the LMZ may appear to be pond grass, but it's just ordinary grass that's been partially covered by the high water level, which does not create a problem.

Turtle Rock pond vendors strive to strike a balance between keeping invasives and overgrowth out of ponds without causing vegetation on pond edges to brown. This means that, at times, pond treatments yield slower results because of less intensive or harsh chemical use than might have been the norm in the past. Despite these efforts, a pondside edge of a specific LMZ may occasionally get singed and become brown for a brief interval.

If you have questions or concerns about your LMZ, please contact any member of the Natural Assets Committee.

Article by Michelle van Schouwen, Secretary, Natural Assets Committee



Well-maintained LMZ



A “too-wide” LMZ

*Images by
Melody
Barack-
man*

*Logo cre-
ated by
Barry
Domenick,
Turtle
Rock
Resident*



Palmer Ranch Watershed & Natural Assets

Pond buffer zones add value, beauty, life



Buffer zone with deep-rooted grasses and native Florida plants around the pond

What are stormwater ponds?

- Man-made systems designed to imitate the role of natural Florida ponds and wetlands
- Engineered to prevent flooding
- Capture runoff from rain and irrigation – including pollutants
- Connect and empty into our bays
- Enhance property values, when well-maintained

What are buffer zones (aka no-mow zones)?

- Protected borders of vegetation around stormwater pond shorelines
- Should be at least 3 feet wide and 8 to 12 inches tall, accommodating native Florida plants
- Trimmed, not mowed

Without buffer zones

Ponds erode, costs rise, values decline:

- Daily wind and wave action erode pond banks
- Fluctuations in pond levels wash away exposed banks
- Lack of deep-rooted plants leads to faster bank erosion
- Costly remediation required: \$150 to \$200 per foot of shoreline, or \$100Ks per pond



Pond with badly eroded banks

Ponds become unhealthy:

- More nutrients, chemicals, and bacteria enter ponds
- Excessive algae blooms may form – releasing foul-smelling, sometimes toxic chemicals
- Algae blooms deplete pond oxygen, killing fish and driving away birds and other wildlife
- Algaecides do not treat the causes of algae and can accumulate in a pond, causing harm to its ecosystem



Excessive algae bloom in pond

For more information on Natural Assets and buffer zones:

- VISIT: www.PalmerRanch.net
(Home> Resources> Natural Assets)
- CONTACT: Palmer Ranch Master Property Owners Association, Inc.
5589 Marquesas Circle, Suite 201, Sarasota, FL 34233
(941) 922-3866

Palmer Ranch Watershed & Natural Assets Committee



Traffic Safety Task Force

The Traffic Safety Task Force continues to move forward with the traffic camera initiative. We are working with the Board to complete the final implementation of the activation of the cameras. The cameras remain in monitoring mode and will be activated as soon as the Board gives final approval.

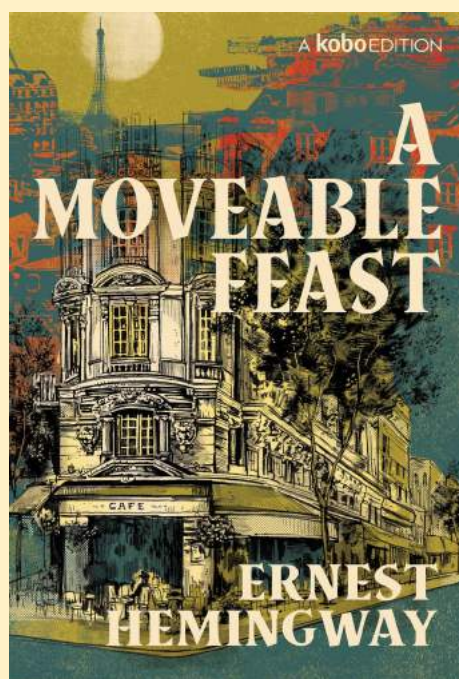
School is back in session, and the Traffic Safety Task Force would like to remind all drivers in the community to be aware of the school buses picking up and dropping off students along Turtle Rock Boulevard. Please remember to stop when you see the flashing lights and the stop signal on the side of the bus. Do not continue driving until the bus lights are turned off and the signal is closed.



Florida state law requires that *“any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle on or over the roads or highways of this state shall, upon approaching any school bus which displays a stop signal, bring such vehicle to a full stop while the bus is stopped, and the vehicle shall not pass the school bus until the signal has been withdrawn.”* The best practice is to wait until the bus begins moving again. Always remain vigilant, and remember that a child’s behavior is unpredictable. They may run across the street from anywhere along the road where the bus has dropped them off.

Thank you for helping to keep Turtle Rock a safe community!

Turtle Rock Library Feature Book of the Month



A Moveable Feast

By Ernest Hemingway (1964, memoir) 256 pp

On the heels of Ken Burns’ documentary and the revelation of the new information about Hemingway himself, the reading of this highly regarded work, published posthumously, might be due. The new edition hews closer to the original manuscript found in Hemingway’s collection of unpublished writings. The book recounts his early years as a struggling expatriate journalist and writer living in Paris at the height of the post-WWI recovery era with his first wife and son, along with Hemingway’s accounts of relationships with other famous writers. Considered to be one of his best works and a powerful reflection of his genius, his memories of his life as an unknown writer living in Paris in the twenties are deeply personal, warmly affectionate, and full of wit. Looking back at his own much younger self, he recalls the time when, poor, happy, and writing in cafes, he discovered his vocation.

Communications Committee

By: Dodie Neuhauser, Secretary, and Diane Geramanis & Kim Weiser, Co-Chairs

Thank you to all the residents who responded to the recent survey generated by the Board of Governors (BOG). Residents overwhelmingly rated Turtle Rock as a desirable community in which to live, with 53% of respondents giving it five stars and 40% giving a four star rating. However, the Board has acknowledged that there is always room for improvement. Cutting across all areas of concern was inadequate communication and misunderstandings. Members of our committee attended the Board of Governors workshop on July 12, at which time results of the survey were reviewed and a commitment was made to improve communication across committees, task forces, management, and the Board. Those who had concerns and left contact information have been contacted by one of the Board of Governors, and those who volunteered for a committee have been contacted by the chairs of the respective committees. As a committee, we believe that communication is a shared responsibility among all of us, including all residents.

Our primary focus has been on welcoming new residents, the newsletter, and reviewing the website for relevancy. We serve in a facilitative capacity, and anytime someone wants assistance in finding information, being heard, or determining who to contact, please reach out to one of us— we are listed on the back page and found in the Turtle Rock Directory. Additionally, feel free to email the following address, which is monitored by our newsletter editor: letstalkturtlerock@gmail.com

While the Board is in the process of examining your comments and finding solutions to your

questions/constructive suggestions, our committee is the "vehicle" (so to speak) to help the Board communicate better with our community as a whole. Some members on our Communications Committee are new this spring, including both chairs of the committee. Bear with us as we navigate, along with BOG members, through the survey results.

Some preliminary suggestions that were discussed at our August Communications Committee meeting were:

- ~Perhaps holding a welcome reception for newcomers with reps from our Board of Governors, as well as committee and task force members to answer questions.

- ~All committee minutes should be posted to our website in the "Residents Only" section soon after the BOG accepts them at their monthly meeting.

- ~As a way to enhance BOG transparency, resident participation in our community is always encouraged. This includes residents attending BOG monthly meetings, either in person or on zoom, and all committee monthly meetings. The Communications Committee reached out to all who showed interest in attending our monthly meetings, and we actually had one resident attend our August meeting. Anyone and everyone is welcome at the BOG as well as all committee meetings.

- ~Improvement of our Turtle Rock website, including purging of dated material and adding more current and pertinent information.

As our Board of Governors' President, Deirdre Cronin, appropriately says, "Onward and Upward!"



Architectural Review Committee

By Curt Gilroy, Chair



The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) continues to be very busy assisting homeowners with their applications for exterior improvements to their residences – both landscaping and their homes. Over the past year, we have visited between 25 and 35 homes each month. This is a testament to how homeowners feel about not only their homes, but about the community at large.

In the recent June homeowner survey, “homeowner compliance” was rated number 3 of what should be the Board’s top priorities. The ARC does not engage in the compliance process, of course, but the survey results show how important homeowners and residents feel about the “look” of individual properties. The ARC plays an important role in ensuring that homeowners’ proposed plans for improvements to the home and landscaping are architecturally appropriate and in accord with the rules and regulations in the Turtle Rock Owners’ Manual.

The ARC is the only committee mandated by our “Founders” as they wrote the Declaration of Protective Covenants in 1994. This demonstrates how important the developers of Turtle Rock felt about the “look” of homes and property within our deed-restricted community governed by specific rules and regulations.

The ARC always stands ready to assist home-

owners with their projects – whether they be exterior painting; new pavers for the walkway and driveway; new roofs; hurricane windows and doors; expanding flower beds, removing/planting trees, or other landscape enhancements; and installing generators or solar panels.

Sometimes, the ARC faces challenges if what a homeowner wants to do conflicts with what is possible given the restrictions in the TROM or even the Protective Covenants. In one case, the ARC worked with a homeowner who wanted to expand a lanai, but was too close to the lot line on one side. Working together, a solution was found by changing the configuration of the lanai. In another case, a homeowner needed to repair deteriorated concrete sections to the driveway. The ARC suggested installing pavers instead and, for a relatively small price differential, the driveway is now a beautiful paved surface.

The ARC feels that there is always a solution to what homeowners want to do – to achieve their “vision” of a home improvement while adhering to the standards and rules of the Turtle Rock community.

Information Guide

The Turtle Rock web site is hands down the number one source of any and all information and documents you could ever need.

WWW.MYTURTLE ROCK.COM



***slender reed sways –
balanced at the tip
a dragonfly***

Landscape & Grounds

By Curt Gilroy and Jodi Cunnison

The Turtle Rock Homeowner Survey fielded in June of this year yielded some very interesting results. Over 500 responses to the survey were recorded – a very significant response rate. Questions were asked about a number of aspects of Turtle Rock – the most important features of the community, interactions with Management, communications, and what should be the Board's top priorities. There was also a section asking residents for their comments.

Data were presented in raw numbers and percentages. In addition, an "importance index" was developed – calculated by taking the most positive and the most negative responses of a specific item into account.

Perhaps the paramount question centered around what residents think are the most important features of Turtle Rock. Thirteen aspects were listed, and the overall upkeep of the community – what the community looks like—was dominant. The number of respondents (the most that answered this question -- 416) reported "very important" at 81 percent. Only 5 respondents said it was "least important." The index (416/5) weighed in at 83.2. The next highest index for a feature was 19.9.

Homeowners recognize that how Turtle Rock "looks" is by far the foremost feature – not only for the enjoyment of residents and for visitors to see, but also for the property values of their homes.

As one enters the community through either the south or north gates, one is greeted with the attractive entrance of shrubs and flowers. One is also struck by the attractiveness of homes. Homeowner compliance is rated third in the answer to the question "what should be the Board's top priorities?" Clearly, residents are concerned not only with the attractiveness of the common grounds, but also with how individual homes look.

Next, homeowners are concerned about the ponds and shorelines. Turtle Rock has the most ponds – 31 – of any community within Palmer Ranch. We are so fortunate to have this natural asset, and we strive to protect it – together with the wildlife that thrives within it.

The Landscape, Buildings and Grounds Committee has the mandate to ensure the attractiveness of the community. To this end, the Committee has constructed new landscape beds, replaced tired and dying shrubs in existing beds, enhanced the shrubbery at all intersections, replaced trees throughout the community, and sought to make our buildings more attractive. Our top priorities are to continue with the beautification of the common grounds, and to work with other committees jointly to make Turtle Rock an even more attractive community in which to live.

The Committee meets monthly with Shane Battle, the on-site manager of our landscape maintenance company, Bloomings.

August entailed continuing weekly weed control and trimming along Turtle Rock Blvd. In addition, installation of a new hedge of arboricola shrubs along the faux bridge was completed. Shane offered a bid for the installation of new plantings in the median located at Turtle Rock Blvd and Sabal Lake Circle, around both the north and south lift stations, and in the southeast circular bed on Far Oak Circle. Bloomings has treated and trimmed ailing Magnolia trees north of Hanging Moss Lane. Finally, Shane provided a quote for the replacement of the old and tired hedge located along the east side of Turtle Rock Blvd between Benchmark and Sweetmeadow Circle.

The Committee also discussed the sidewalk repair project, which is in the hands of the Association Manager, and discussed the best way to approach the striping of the road at the location of the newly installed stop signs.

Young Families' Group

By: Jennifer Wick



SAVE THE DATES

9•5•22 Labor Day Cookout 12-2 pm

10•29•22 Trunk or Treat 4-6 pm

11•19•22 Friendsgiving 4-6 pm

12•4•22 Holiday Craft Sale 2-4 pm

12•17•22 Holiday Trolley 6-10 pm

We hope to conduct a raffle soon to raise money for the group, and are asking for donations/sponsors for some items to raffle off, possibly during the Holiday Crafts creations & sale!

Please email me at jenwick0303@gmail.com



Turtle Rock Women's Club



The TR Women's Club luncheons are a great opportunity to socialize and experience a variety of Sarasota eateries. Many luncheons offer guest speakers that help us expand our knowledge and creativity. On September 7, we will learn how to make the classic Strawberries Romanoff dessert from Chef Gabe at **Miguel's** restaurant on Siesta Key. On October 5, at **Grillsmith** restaurant, Dr. Debra Gill, a clinical psychologist who has coached clients for nearly 30 years in long-term weight management, will speak to us about a non-diet approach that combines mindfulness, self-care, joy, and self-compassion.

We hope you can join us! For more information on lunches or the TR Women's club contact us at turtlerockwomensclub@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATES !

Women's & Men's CLUB COMBINED events:



**** A Food Truck Extravaganza ****

September 28th, 11 – 3pm, Featuring
SMOKIN' MOMMA LORA's BBQ & More
CAROUSEL's Soft Serve Icery



**** An Oktoberfest Celebration ****

October 15th, evening



Turtle Rock Men's Club



SERENOA
GOLF CLUB

Weekly Golf Outing— If you are a golfer, consider joining your neighbors for a round at Serenoa Golf Club each **Thursday** morning. Send an email to: TRMCGolf@gmail.com for more information.



September Birthdays — We wish the following a **Happy Birthday!** If I have missed anyone, email me and I will update the TRMC website.

**Bob Arnet, Ron Contillo, Ron Knox, Bill Ludwig,
Doug Smith, James Vaughan**

If you are a new neighbor or know of someone who may be interested in joining the Men's Club, please have them contact me, Ken Roseman (kenrosemann1231@gmail.com), and I will be glad to assist them in the process of joining.

From the WEST Corner of...

By: Steve West



	Average Air Temp.		Average Humidity by percent		Average Water Temp. Gulf vs. Pacific		Average rainfall in mm. / days	
	SRQ	HNL	SRQ	HNL	SRQ	HNL	SRQ	HNL
JAN	53-72	68-79	75	72	64	77	57/7	78/14
FEB	55-75	68-79	73	71	64	75	73/7	90/11
MAR	58-77	70-79	72	73	67	74	82/6	88/13
APR	62-81	70-79	69	74	73	77	41/4	52/12
MAY	68-86	72-81	71	73	78	77	80/7	38/11
JUNE	73-89	73-82	75	72	82	79	156/12	43/12
JULY	73-88	75-82	78	74	85	79	193/15	57/14
AUG	75-90	75-84	79	74	87	81	193/16	34/13
SEP	74-89	75-84	78	73	85	81	167/13	61/13
OCT	68-85	75-84	75	74	81	81	75/7	80/13
NOV	61-79	73-81	75	76	74	79	45/6	124/13
DEC	55-74	70-79	75	74	68	77	57/6	87/15

Arguably, either Mark Twain or maybe Charles Dudley Warner said, "Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."

We full time Floridians are always under the gun for our hot, humid summers. All we hear from snowbirds and their like is "Ewww, but

it's soooo hot and humid in the summer!" Ever been in southern Ohio mid summer where the humidity hovers around the 90% mark and there is no breeze?

We moved here after thirty years in California. When you live in CA, the vacation spot of choice is often Hawaii. Been there countless times. For those living much farther away, it is a dream destination for honeymooners, and often considered the once-in-a-lifetime vacation. Yep, an absolutely beautiful state with it's lush landscape and perfect weather. Never, ever will you hear from the mass of tourists, "Ewww, it's soooo hot and humid here!"

So let's take a closer look at our beloved hot and humid Sarasota. Above is a comparison of our town and Honolulu. The averages for both temperatures and humidity are surprisingly similar! We certainly get more rain in the summer (although the last few years that hasn't been the case), but those afternoon showers often serve to cool the air. Next time you hear complaints about our summers, ask them, "Yea, but have you ever been to Hawaii!?"



Welcome Committee

By: Steve West

Are YOU our new neighbor?

Did you recently move to Turtle Rock? Our Welcome Team tries its darndest to personally acknowledge all of our new residents, but, sometimes, our efforts fall short. If you are a relatively new arrival, we want to say,

"Welcome to Turtle Rock!"

Our team is ready to meet and greet you whenever your busy schedule finds the time. Questions or curiosities about anything your new neighborhood brings? We have answers! There's even a little gift for you just to say we're so glad you chose us to be your neighbors and friends.

Our schedule is flexible! You can contact us at: letstalkturtlerock@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW? We have a Lending Library in the Community Center!



The Turtle Rock lending library has been going strong for **sixteen years!** It began with a few hundred donated books and was so well received that when the Community Center was renovated in 2013, a specific room was designed for the expanding library. Now we wish it were bigger, since every shelf is full of books of mystery, romance, historical fiction, contemporary fiction, and a limited number of biographies. The library also contains DVD movies and books on CD. It is organized, kept up-to-date, and maintained by the Turtle Rock Women's Club. The *Book of the Month* featured in Turtle Talk comes from this collection and, unless being read by a resident, is available here.

The library is free to use by *all* residents, and checkouts and returns are strictly on the honor system. All holdings are culled regularly to make room for new donations. The library welcomes your gently read books, especially the ones you have enjoyed, so that we always have a steady stream of new reading materials. Donations should be limited to fiction, biography, movies, and audio books. After you borrow an enjoyable book, feel free to write your opinion on a post-it-note inside the front cover. Let's keep a good thing going!

CLASSIFIEDS and LOST & FOUND WANT—SELL—BORROW—LEND— RECYCLE

Residents: this section of Turtle Talk is available for YOU to place a notice free of charge!
PLEASE email letstalkturtlerock@gmail.com to place a classified announcement.

The Newsletter Team

The committee is always interested in input from the community. If you have a knack for writing, have ideas for a monthly column, or are willing to take photos of interest to the community, please contact us.

Also, if you have a gripe or a word of praise, let's hear it.

Send comments, suggestions and articles for consideration to:

letstalkturtlerock@gmail.com

(Text must be in Word, Photos as JPEG.)

THANKS for getting involved!

Committee Members and Newsletter Staff

Diane Geramanis & Kim Weiser, Co-Chairs

Dodie Neuhauser, Secretary

Kathrin Harris, Newsletter Editor

Patty Fleming, Help Desk Lead

Steve West, Welcome Team Lead

Donna McCarthy, committee member

Sunstate liaison: Lisa Vignola, Community Manager

Board Liaison: Deirdre Cronin

Proofreader: Charlotte Jones