

POLYNESIAN VILLAGE

ENGLEWOOD, FLORIDA

HISTORY SYNOPSIS

1977 – 1988

“Polynesian Village Mobile Home Park” construction began in 1977. At that time, you could buy a house, but you still had to rent the lot since the property was owned by the developer. Much of the area in and around the Park still looked like a “jungle or wildlife refuge” and it took years of clearing and building before it was complete.

In 1982, “Phase I” was “sold out” with three phases remaining with a total of 250 lots. (The final number of homes, including one installed in 2016, is 246 based on the map in our directory.)

New house prices started at \$27,500 and lot rents were \$70 to \$95 per month. Home interiors included “carpeting”, “appliances”, “drapes and sheers”, “central air and heat” AND “smoke alarms”. Mortgages were available up to 20 years at 13.5%. What a deal!

The Park was advertised to have “walking distance to the beach”, “boat access to the gulf”, “heated pool”, “cable TV”, “Recreation Hall”, “shuffleboard” and “recreational vehicles”.

The swimming pool and “Hall” (clubhouse) were originally constructed in 1979, but were remodeled and enlarged in 1984 and again in 2003.

The “boat access”, which was somewhat north of the extension of what is currently Overbrook Road, was not included when the residents purchased the Park because it was too costly to keep.

In 1977, Heasley Road was still basically a shell path. The shells were extremely sharp, which caused many flat tires. Heasley was first paved in 1977.

Polynesian Village originally had its own water and sewer treatment systems. The water treatment facility was located in the current flat area to the right of the main entry drive from Alamander / Heasley. The sewer plant was located near the current “Veteran’s Memorial Park” area. Ken Figgin’s, among others, played a large roll in getting city sewer and water brought in and the old system dismantled. The irrigation system for our lawn and landscaping in several of the common areas still utilizes part of the old water system. If you’re in the area at night when the irrigation is running, you’ll get a strong whiff of that good old Florida sulphur water.

When we had our own sewer and water systems, there were certain rules that had to be followed. Among them were specific days for washing your cars and clothes. In 1984, a major problem with the PV sewer system “smelled up the neighborhood”.

#27 South Easter Island Circle was “set in place” in 1979.

Fundraisers were a big necessity in the “olden days” – just as they are today. The “Jumbo Sale” was also known as the “Jumble Sale” depending on who you ask and how well they could hear.

Several current residents in the Park are descendants of original owners. Some may even own the original homes of their “ancestors”. In 2019, there were only five original owners remaining in PV.

There were 39 “members” in the Park in October, 1979 with \$339 in the treasury.

In December of 1979, there were 54 “members” with \$632 in the treasury.

May, 1980 recorded 75 members and it was decided that the Park should have 24/7 security patrols. The patrols consisted of member volunteers. Part of the patrol included sitting in a car out near the main Park entry and recording who came and went. There was a secret signal (flash your lights) in order to gain entry. If you didn’t, security followed whoever didn’t “flash them”.

In April of 1980 an alligator, affectionately named "Oscar", resided in the pond for a short while.

In summer of 1980, there were 15 members present in the park (presumably not snow birds).

September, 1980 recorded 97 members with "member dues" of \$5.00. Dues today include many things, such as cable TV and lawn care, which initially were part of the rent fee in the early days.

For the clubhouse in the fall of 1980, a new (used) organ and a pool table were purchased using donated money. Also, the library was established and shelving was bought or built and installed.

There were originally 8 shuffleboard courts (built in 1980), 4 of which were later covered over and are currently used for Bocce Ball. There were no "roofs" over any part of the courts.

#17 North Botany Bay was set in place in December, 1980.

In 1981, the "solar heated" pool was 75f.

Weather for January, 1982 included a frost warning.

In 1982, ceiling fans were installed in the clubhouse and street signs were installed around the park. A "shiny new kitchen range" (\$2,000) was installed in April, 1982. Prior to that, all food prep was done on a typical range that you would find in a home kitchen.

In June, 1982 a "no name" storm hit the area and caused damage to several homes in the park. In particular, there was damage to #16, #29 and #101.

September, 1982 recorded 198 members with \$1,255 in the treasury.

November, 1982 included 182 attendees for Thanksgiving dinner. Turkeys were again donated by one of the Park's residents.

#210 Bora Bora Lane was set in place in November, 1982.

1983 included a new piano (\$300) and PA system (\$847) for the clubhouse. "Round dancing" on Fridays at "7 PM sharp" was instructed by Edna White.

The paperwork was initiated to incorporate the park in 1983. The process of incorporation was completed the following year.

1984 brought clubhouse remodeling including enlarging the kitchen and adding a roll-up projection screen in the main hall area.

The 1984 "Board of Directors" included 9 members (currently there are 7) and the Social Committee was started.

There were officially 200 homes in the Park in 1984 and "Phase II" was nearly complete.

The "Jumble" sale was February 4, 1984 from 9AM to 2PM.

Hurricane Elana blew in on August 31, 1985. Residents spent the night at Englewood Elementary School.

The PV Arts and Crafts show occurred on December 7, 1985. Apparently there were quite a number of very talented folks in PV back then. (Maybe some are still around in 2016?)

"Yes sir, 1985 will not be forgotten in the years ahead."

1986 – No information was available at the time of this writing.

In 1987, the “Jumble Sale” profited \$1,326; two PA speakers were stolen from the clubhouse (after being unscrewed from the wall brackets they were mounted on); the New Year’s Eve Party included line dancing and the infamous “round” dancing to Sweet Caroline which still happens today. One party was attended by someone with balloons all around and another dressed in drag. “Rocky”, the stone dog arrived at #112 South Fiji in 1987. You can still see him there today. The “dog’s owner” was Fred Silvis. It’s rumored he had an intercom with speakers hidden near Rocky so he could talk to people as they walked by. He especially liked when visiting kids came by.

In 1988, the “homecoming party” was held in February. (Maybe that’s what we now know as the “Snow Bird” party?) The “Jumble Sale” was once again held in March.

*An important date in Polynesian Village history is May, 1988. That’s when the Park officially became resident owned. The entire process had started 5 years earlier and included (I’m sure), quite a bit of frustration.

“Costs” for some early events:

- New Year’s Eve Party - \$5.00. (Compare to \$10.00 in 2015/2016)
- First pancake breakfast cost \$1.50. (Compare to \$3.00 in 2015/2016)

Polynesian Village “Firsts”

South Fiji Circle – the first street to be paved in 1978

Cliff and Edna Watts – the first residents who arrived in 1978 to S. Easter Island Circle

Resident meeting – in 1979 with 29 residents in attendance

“Pot Luck” dinner – June, 1979

“Coffee Hour” – July, 1979

Bowling team – October, 1979

Christmas Dinner – December, 1979

New Year’s Eve Party – December, 1979

Spaghetti Dinner – February, 1980

Dance – February, 1980

First phone directory – 1980. (Was typed and hand written by LaDonna Graytopp Rolfes.)

Bingo – May, 1980

Pool Party – July, 1980

Bazaar – September, 1980 (may also be known as “arts and crafts fair”) – netted \$1,030

Shuffleboard courts – 1980

Christmas Luminaries – December, 1981

St. Patrick’s Party – March 15, 1983

Pancake Breakfast – March 26, 1983

Beach Party – July, 1985

PV Cookbook – 1985

Arts and Crafts Show – December 7, 1985

Luau – 1987 (?) (may have been the pre-cursor to our current “Tiki Party”)