



Mr. Mike's Neighborhood

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JULY NEWSLETTER

HI NEIGHBORS,

"It only takes one person to mobilize a Community and inspire change. Even if you don't feel like you have it in you, it's in you. You have to believe in yourself. People will see your vision and passion and follow you." ...Teyonah Parris

1ST ANNUAL LAFAYETTE PLACE PICNIC & MEETING

You'll soon be receiving a letter in the mail, since Sun won't allow me to pass them out to each home, regarding our first picnic and meeting which will be held at Shaw Park the middle of July. You'll find more information on the website, but basically we'll need you to let us know if you'll be there. We don't want to go any further with reserving the site if the Community doesn't want to participate. We will of course be inviting Park Management and Sun Communities to attend so you can voice your concerns directly to them. If you believe in Mr. Mike's Neighborhood and the good we do for our Community, please be there to support us. It will be on a Saturday from 5-7. If you don't attend, Sun Communities will win. Keep checking the website available on your cell phone, laptop and tablet. More information to come.

NO DISPENSATION FOR MR. MIKE'S NEIGHBORHOOD AGAIN

Mr. Mike's Neighborhood has been trying for years to get Sun Communities to provide a Dispensation for us to do what we love to do, help our Neighbors. Sun Communities is not flexible on their policies. If Mother Theresa came here to help the Neighbors, Sun would still say NO, because She would be accused of Solicitation. By asking for a Dispensation to the policies, it would allow us to contact our Neighbors directly which we're banned from doing. We have Neighbors who have huge weeds growing from their patio sidewalks. I asked Sun for permission to knock on my Neighbors doors and ask if I could cut and spray their weeds for FREE. They said no, which tells me that they would rather have a forest growing by their homes then to allow us to help them keep our Community beautiful. Do you have this same feeling? But there is no rule for our Neighbors coming to us for help. So if you'd like me to take care of your patio weeds, or anything else, text me at the number above.

NO TRASH PICKUP OR TRASH CAN MOVING

Miss Linda and I have stopped picking up trash every day and putting your trash cans next to your homes on Monday's. We loved keeping our Community spotless and moving the trash cans back was a Courtesy for our Neighbors. But with no Dispensation, we're not allowed to come on your property because of Privacy and Resident Annoyance concerns. It must be only Sun and Management who feel this way because our Neighbors loved it. You'll start to see more trash accumulating and unfortunately you'll have to get your own trash cans. So if you see trash, pick it up.

NO TIPPING FOR GRASS CUTTING PLEASE.

Mr. Mike's Neighborhood charges \$20 for grass cutting, no matter how large the lot or high the grass (but I

have turned down cuts when the grass is way too high.) I've actually been criticized for not charging more when others will charge \$40 to \$50 for large lots. Here's the way I look at it. First of all, it takes me no more than 1hr to cut a large lawn and less for the normal lots. So that's \$20 an hour cash. When did we think that \$20 an hour wasn't a good wage for doing what I consider non-skilled labor? After all, the self-propelled lawn mower is doing all the work, I'm just walking behind it. Second, nobody wants to spend money for grass cutting when they'd rather spend it on something else. When a Neighbor offers me a \$5 to \$10 tip, that's money that can be spent on food. Burger King and others offer a \$5 meal with a Whopper Junior, Fries and drink. \$10 gets you two. That's what that tip money should be going for. Mr. Mike's Neighborhood was never in the business to make money. But don't get me wrong, I love the fact that my Neighbors appreciate the work we do. But when it comes to money, spend it on your family. I'll do just fine without the extra bucks.

NEIGHBORS WHO PUT THEMSELVES OUT THERE

I read a story recently that brought home the type of Culture Mr. Mike's Neighborhood is trying to create. See if you agree.

"I am not an introvert by any means, but I shy away from people. I will skip aisles in stores to avoid contact with someone I know. I will take longer routes to avoid seeing my neighbors. Then one day I read the book "Do Unto Others" to my son which is based on this quote, 'Do not do to others that which would anger you if others did it to you.' That quote struck me like a lightning bolt. If I am not friendly to others why would they be friendly to me? Selfishly I wanted to change myself. I stopped avoiding people and started smiling. I said hello and waved to strangers.

Yesterday I waved hello to a neighbor for the very first time six months after they moved into our Community. A hello turned into five minutes of conversation. We exchanged stories and shared our experiences.

What was stopping me earlier from being friendly? Was I afraid of people judging me? Or lack of confidence to face others? Whatever it was, I am glad I came out of it. Only by sharing our experiences, can we learn about others and their experiences."

We experience this in our Community every day. The "Smile & Wave" Program along with the "Hi Neighbor" Program are two of the most Culture Changing events that our Neighbors experience. Think about it. I have not met many of our Neighbors that pass my home. But yet, because of Smile & Wave and Hi Neighbor, don't you feel like we really do know each other? Since starting our Association, I have made more friends in this Community that would never have happened unless Miss Linda and I put ourselves out there. And you can do the same thing with your Neighbors. Put yourselves out there and meet people.

NEIGHBORS SHOWING THEIR CONCERN

I received two texts this week from Neighbors that had the same sentiment: "I haven't seen you out on the bench lately and just wanted to make sure you're ok." The fact is, it was so hot and humid that I stayed inside in air conditioned comfort. Plus we were busy getting together the mail piece we were sending out. But more importantly, it showed that changing a Community Culture takes consistency. These Neighbors wanted to see us on that bench, smiling and waving at them every time they pass by. And when we weren't there, they missed it. No one can tell me that what Miss Linda and I are doing for this Community isn't working, because it is.

FINAL THOUGHT:

Please come to the 1st Annual Picnic & Meeting. We are spending our own time and money to bring our Community together. Do your part by participating. It's two hours out of your life to show you care.
