



The Country Place Chronicle

JULY • AUGUST 2026

THE OFFICIAL *Newsletter* OF COUNTRY PLACE

A Deed Restricted Community

Country Place Maintenance District

Why the August 2026 Vote Matters for Country Place

In August 2026, Country Place homeowners will be asked to vote on a proposed \$25 increase in the annual Special Maintenance District fee. The current fee is \$50 per household, and the proposal would raise it to \$75 per household. That sounds like a big change when stated as a yearly number, but it equals about \$2.08 more per month. The important point is this: the fee has remained at \$50 since the Country Place Maintenance District was established on December 17, 1986. In other words, the fee has not increased since the district began 40 years ago.

The Country Place Special Maintenance District exists to maintain and improve the community's common ground areas. That work includes the upkeep and appearance of shared spaces that help shape how our neighborhood looks and feels.

The reason for the proposed increase is simple. The current fee no longer keeps up with the cost of maintaining the community. The FY 2026 budget shows \$77,000 in special assessments and \$1 in interest, for total gross revenues of \$77,001. After the 5% reduction required in the budget form, and after adding the estimated beginning fund balance of \$24,496, total available revenue is \$97,647. The same budget shows total operating expenses of \$87,567 and non-operating costs of \$10,080, which means the budget balances only because prior funds are being used. It also shows no reserve for future capital.

In plain language, that means the current \$50 fee is not enough to fully support today's costs and also save for tomorrow's major needs. Right now, the district is using old money to make the budget work. It is not building a meaningful reserve for the future.

Why is a \$100,000 reserve important? Because our community has faced that kind of expense before. In 2012, it took about \$100,000 to replace the community signs, and it took years to save that amount. Since then, the district has not been able to save funds for future sign replacement. Those signs are now about 14 years old. The board's consensus is that when they need to be replaced again, the cost will likely be more than \$100,000.

That is why this vote matters. The goal is not to collect extra money without a purpose. **The goal is to stop falling behind and start rebuilding reserves for known future needs.**

If the annual fee increases from \$50 to \$75, assessment revenue would rise by 50 percent. Using the same budget method, that would create about \$12,079 per year in funds that could be saved after covering the current FY 2026 budget. At that rate, it would take about 8.3 years to save \$100,000 starting from zero. If the district kept the currently estimated beginning fund balance of \$24,496 in place, it would take about 6.3 years to reach \$100,000.

Even this increase would not create a large surplus. It would simply put the district in a better position to cover current costs and begin saving again for future expenses. That matters because waiting until major repairs or sign replacement are urgent would leave the community with fewer options and higher financial pressure.

The August 2026 vote is about whether Country Place should continue operating with a fee set in 1986, or take a modest step toward catching up with today's costs and preparing for tomorrow's needs. A

\$25 increase would help protect the appearance of the community, support the district's ongoing work, and begin rebuilding the savings needed for future sign replacement and other major maintenance costs.

COUNTRY PLACE Maintenance District

The Country Place Maintenance District was created and purposed to manage and maintain the common areas and property of Country Place. This includes all areas of ingress and egress to our community. Signage, landscaping, mowing, mulching and other miscellaneous maintenance functions are overseen by this Board.

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[https://
www.countryplace.mydistrictwebsite.com](https://www.countryplace.mydistrictwebsite.com)

Country Place Maintenance District
3853 Northdale Blvd, P.O. Box 282
Tampa, FL 33624

Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month
Meeting time: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Meeting location:
15546 Hooting Owls Place
countryplacesmd@gmail.com

The 4th of July

This historic year commemorates the **250th anniversary** of the **Declaration of Independence**. Adopted on July 4, 1776, this foundational document formalized the separation of the 13 American colonies from British rule, marking the official birth of the United States as a sovereign nation.

-The Founders: The document was primarily drafted by Thomas Jefferson and edited by a committee that included Benjamin Franklin and John Adams.

-The Meaning: It established the colonies as united, free states and outlined the foundational American belief that all people have natural rights, including **"Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."**

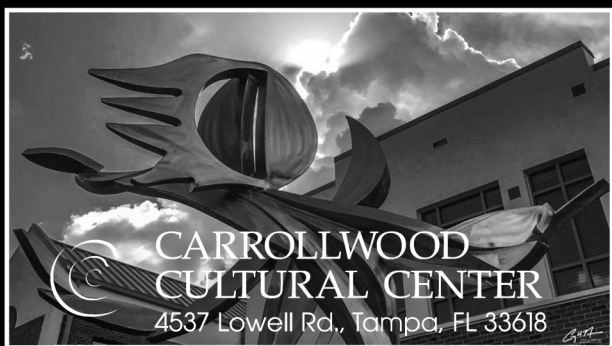
Because it is a landmark anniversary year, several major elements and events are taking place:

- **National Milestones:** On July 4, 2026, an official 250-year time capsule will be sealed and buried at Independence Hall in Philadelphia.
- **Federal Schedule:** Due to the Friday observance, federal offices, post offices, and many banks will be closed on July 3
- **Celebrations:** Expect large-scale civic celebrations across Hillsborough County and downtown Tampa including Parades, Barbecues, Picnics, Fireworks Displays, Concerts and Festivals.



PSA - Please remember to celebrate responsibly this holiday by safely monitoring any fireworks, placing grills at least 10 feet from structures, and keeping a water source nearby.





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FARMER'S MARKET

July 11 • 10 am - 2 pm

Presented by Tampa Bay Markets

**PETER AND THE
STARCATCHER**

YOUTH PERFORMANCE

July 31 • 6:30 pm

A Play by Rick Elice

Based on the Novel by

Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson

Music: Wayne Barker

Originally produced on Broadway by Nancy Nagel Gibbs, Greg Schaffert, Eva Price, Tom Smedes, & Disney Theatrical Productions (MTI)



SOUTH OF THE BORDER

September 12 • 7:30 pm

A tribute to Tijuana Brass

**PETER PAN
JR.**

YOUTH PERFORMANCE

July 31 • 5:30 pm

Based on the Play by Sir J.M. Barrie

Lyrics: Carolyn Leigh / Music: Morris Charlap

Add Lyrics: Betty Comden & Adolph Green

Add Music: Jule Styne

Original Production Directed &

Choreographed by Jerome Robbins (MTI)



**THE MUSIC OF DUKE ELLINGTON
& COUNT BASIE**

August 8 • 7:30 pm



**THE MUSIC OF
JOHN COLTRANE**

September 19 • 7:30 pm

**SCHOOLHOUSE
ROCK LIVE!**
JULY 17-26, 2026

SCHOOL IS IN SESSION!

Based on the 1970s cartoon,
this fast-paced musical
teaches lessons with clever,
catchy tunes.

Originally Adapted & Produced for
Stage by Theatre BAM

Book by

George Keating, Kyle Hall,
Scott Ferguson

Music & Lyrics by

Bob Dorough, Dave Frishberg,
George Newall, Kathy Mandry,
Lynn Aherns, Tom Yohe

Based on an idea by David McCall
and a television series created by
George Newall and Tom Yohe.

Schoolhouse Rock Live! is presented through special arrangement with
Music Theatre International (MTI).

IN THE GALLERY



This summer's main exhibit, *Inspired to Create: One Exhibition. 6 Artists.*, is a photography show featuring a group of local artists highlighting their collective effort while meeting the individual styles. (thru August 29)

DISCOVER



PETER PAN and
**PETER AND THE
STARCATCHER**
are proudly
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President's Message • Matthew Banas

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**COMMUNITY ASSOC.
MANAGER**

Greenacre Properties, Inc.

Melinda Spall

4131 Gunn Highway

Tampa, FL 33618

ph: 813-936-4154

MelindaS@greenacre.com

Portal:

<http://home.greenacre.com/login>

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of month
Time: 7:00 PM @ Greenacre

**WANT TO SUBMIT
CONTENT?!!**

Send potential submissions to:
CPTaniaF@gmail.com

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As we move into the second half of the year, I wanted to take a moment to share a few community updates and thank everyone who continues to stay engaged in making our neighborhood a great place to live.

One important item on the horizon is our upcoming Board of Directors election. I encourage anyone who is interested in serving the community to consider running, and I encourage all homeowners to participate in the voting process. Our community is strongest when residents are involved, and the Board benefits from a variety of perspectives and ideas. Whether you have lived here for twenty years or twenty days, your perspective matters. More information about the election process, candidate applications, and important deadlines will be sent via mail soon.

Remember that the Board recently amended a bylaw that allows residents in Sections 3A and 6 to serve on the Board, provided they are members in good standing. If you live in either of those areas, please consider getting involved and running for a position.

I also want to provide an update on our property management services. The Board has been working closely with Greenacre Properties as we transition to a new property manager. Our goal throughout this process is to improve service, communication, and responsiveness for residents while ensuring a smooth transition. We appreciate everyone's patience as this change takes place, and we will continue to keep the community informed as additional details become available.

Once again, our Events Committee did a fantastic job bringing neighbors together, and the recent Ice Cream Social was a wonderful success. I am disappointed that I could not attend due to a lingering cold, but I saw the pictures and posts and was encouraged to see so many neighbors come out, spend time together, and enjoy a relaxed

afternoon with friends and family. Events like these remind us that our neighborhood is more than just a collection of homes. It is a community of people who care about where they live and the relationships they build with one another.

Building on that momentum, we are already discussing more community events for the months ahead. We are excited about creating more opportunities for neighbors to connect, meet new residents, and strengthen the sense of community that makes our neighborhood special.

As always, your feedback is important. If you have ideas for future events, suggestions for community improvements, or thoughts you'd like to share with the Board, please don't hesitate to reach out. Hearing directly from residents helps us better understand the needs and priorities of our community, and we appreciate everyone who takes the time to get involved.

Thank you for your continued support, participation, and commitment to our neighborhood. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events and around the community.

Lastly, a quick reminder that HOA dues are due July 1st. Staying current helps us continue maintaining and improving the community we all share.



Note: To turn on payment text alerts and confirmation emails in the Vantaca portal: Begin on the Home Screen and click on your name (top right corner) > My Profile > Account Preferences > then select Payment Confirmation Emails and/or Payment Reminders via Text (halfway down page) and toggle to turn this option on. **See example below**

Thank you for being part of what makes this community special!

Example: turn on payment text alerts and confirmation emails

Profile Settings

Country Place Community Association...
Acct #:

My Profile
Help
Log Out

Contact Info Login Info **Account Preferences**

Viewing profile settings for: cptaniaf@gmail.com

Communications will be sent to primary contacts.

Communication Preferences ⓘ

General Communication Preferences ☒ Paper ☐ Email

Billing Communication Preferences ☒ Paper ☐ Email

Send Payment Confirmation Email ⓘ ☐

Receive Payment Reminders via Text ☒

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July 11: Country Place Man n' Cheese Throwdown

National Mac n Cheese Day is on the 14th and we will celebrate it on Saturday the 11th with some friendly competition.

Who thinks they can make the BEST Mac n Cheese in Country Place??? Bring your best Mac n Cheese and let your neighbors be the judge.

Details: July 11th from 3pm – 5pm at Central Park.

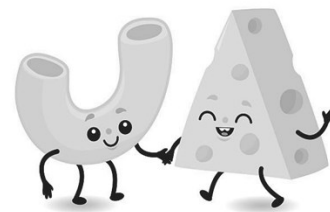
Entries should arrive promptly by 3pm, Mac n Cheese Tasting and Mingling till 4:45, and a Winner will be Chosen between 4:45pm – 5pm.

*We will need help from our fellow neighbors. Please join us and help us choose a winner!



-Please email Lisa Crespo at: CPLisaC929@gmail.com to register your Mac and Cheese entry.

-To stay updated on this and other neighborhood events, please check the neighborhood FB page periodically and make sure your email address is updated with Greenacre for email notifications.



July 7th - Global Forgiveness Day



This annual event encourages people worldwide to resolve conflicts, let go of past grudges, and foster healthier, more compassionate relationships.

This is a great opportunity to practice empathy and let go of negative thoughts.

-Reach Out: Send a message to someone you need to apologize to or reach out to reconcile with a friend or family member.

-Practice Self-Forgiveness: Take time to reflect on your own mistakes and offer yourself the same grace you would give to others.

-Read and Reflect: Explore resources on the healing power of forgiveness

August 18th - National Relaxation Day

Established in August 1985 by a nine-year-old Michigan boy that decided that people think too much about work.

This observance encourages people to intentionally step away from their daily routines, reduce stress, and prioritize self-care.

- **Unplug:** Stash away your phone and take a digital detox by stepping away from work emails and social media.
- **Unwind in Nature:** Pack a book and head to the shaded areas of one of our neighborhood parks or a nearby Conservation Park to enjoy the breeze.
- **Pampering:** Enjoy a spa day, sauna session, or a long bubble bath to decompress and reset
- **Relax at Home:** Put on comfortable clothes, dedicate the day to doing nothing but enjoying a cold beverage or binge-watching a favorite show, listen to your favorite relaxing album, order a meal to be delivered, and take a nap.



Hillsborough County Public School Free Meals

(HCPS) is proud to once again offer free meals to children and teens throughout the summer, ensuring students have access to nutritious food while school is out of session.

The district's Summer Feeding Program will begin at HOST sites on June 1, with additional locations opening as summer programs begin on June 8. In total, meals will be available at more than 150 sites across Hillsborough County.

-All meals are free and available to any child 18 years and younger, regardless of enrollment status.

-No registration is required.

Location: Country Place Rec
15728 Country Lake Drive
Tampa, FL 33624
Phone: (813) 394-4088

Lunch hours: (Not a breakfast location)
6/8/2026-7/23/2026
11:00 AM - 11:45 AM
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Note For This location:

- Children must be present to receive meals
- Meals must be consumed on-site during scheduled mealtimes

Lunch Menu	M	T	W	Th
	Crispy Chicken Sandwich Crispy Tater Tater Tots Assorted fresh Fruit Assorted Low-Fat Milk	Mini Cheesy Calzones w/ Marinara Cup Baby Carrots w/Ranch Assorted fresh Fruit Assorted Low-Fat Milk	Classic Cheeseburger Cool Tropics Fruit Slushie Assorted fresh Fruit Assorted Low-Fat Milk	French Bread Pizza Baby Carrots w/Ranch Assorted fresh Fruit Assorted Low-Fat Milk



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Please remember to keep your pet on a leash when you let them out or walk them. There have been some reported issues with pets running loose in the community. Please also remember to pick up after your pets.



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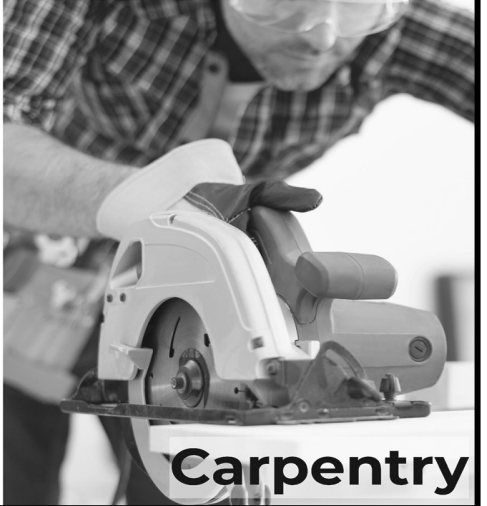
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Country Place Times



A digital hub for events and what's going
on around the neighborhood

www.countryplacetimes.com

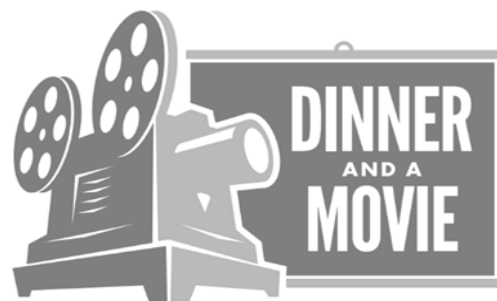
August 29th - Country Place Date Night

National Eat Outside Day is August 31, and we will help celebrate by having a Potluck style dinner and a movie on **Saturday the 29th at Central Park**. Join us and bring a meal of your liking to share with your neighbors from 6pm – 8pm, followed by a movie under the stars. **(Movie yet to be determined)**

- Please bring lawn chairs, or a blanket to enjoy the movie.



-To stay updated on this and other neighborhood events, please check the neighborhood FB page periodically and make sure your email address is updated with Greenacre for email notifications.



Weekend Project - Restore Old Wooden Fences

1. Prep the Area

- **Protect plants:** Soak nearby foliage with water and cover plants with plastic drops to protect them from cleaning chemicals.
- **Tighten hardware:** Ensure all nails and screws are hammered in flush so they don't snag your pressure washer hose or cause splintering.
- **Remove loose debris:** Sweep the fence with a stiff-bristled brush to knock away loose cobwebs, dirt, and leaves.

2. Apply a Wood Cleaner

- **Pre-wet:** Lightly wet the fence with a garden hose so the wood absorbs the cleaner evenly.
- **Apply chemicals:** Use a pump sprayer to apply a commercial deck and fence cleaner (like Krud Kutter Deck & Fence Cleaner or a diluted deck brightener) from the bottom up to prevent streaking.
- **Let it dwell:** Allow the cleaner to sit on the wood for 10 to 15 minutes to break down mildew, mold, and gray, weathered wood fibers. Do not let it dry out on the boards.

3. Pressure Wash Properly (Can also be used to clean PVC)

- **Select the right tip:** Use the 25-degree tip for general cleaning or the 40-degree tip for softer wood like cedar or pine. Never use a zero-degree or rotating tip directly on bare wood, as they could cause permanent damage.
- **Wash with the grain:** Maintain a consistent distance of 18 to 24 inches and move top-to-bottom along the vertical grain of each picket.
- **Avoid stopping:** Never stop in one spot while the trigger is pulled, as this will burn a line into the wood.

4. Brighten the Wood (Optional but Recommended)

- **Restore pH:** Pressure washing and harsh cleaners raise the pH of the wood, which can cause dark blotching when you stain. Apply an oxalic acid-based wood brightener after pressure washing to return the wood to its natural, bright state.
- **Rinse:** Let the brightener sit for 10–15 minutes, then rinse it off thoroughly with your pressure washer.

5. Sand and Stain (Protect)

- **Dry completely:** Allow the fence to dry for 48 hours completely before applying any stain or sealer.
- **Sand down fuzz:** If your pressure washing resulted in raised fibers (furring), give the fence a light sand with 80-grit sandpaper before sealing.



August 17th - National Thrift Shop Day



An annual celebration dedicated to the budget-friendly buying of secondhand treasures and promoting sustainable shopping while raising money for local charities and reducing landfill waste

Tips for Success:

Specials: Ask what color is on special for that day. Many locations have rotating weekly sales based on colored tags or specific senior or student discount days.

Test Electronics: Many stores have a designated testing station with outlets.

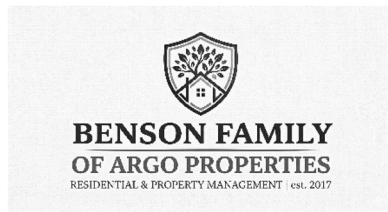
- Always plug in lamps, record players, or kitchen appliances to ensure motors run, switches flip, and bulbs turn on.
- Check cords and cables to ensure they aren't frayed, exposed, or missing grounding prongs. **If a cord looks unsafe, it can be a fire hazard!!!**
- Check that all parts are present, for example; make sure Wi-Fi dongles are included when purchasing a computer keyboard or mouse (if applicable).

Clothing: Wear close fitting clothing, like a tank top and exercise shorts, to skip dressing rooms to try on clothes with ease. -Bring a tape measure to help with sizing or use the “Neck-Rule” by wrapping the waistband around your neck; if the Left and Right sides meet perfectly at the back of your neck without overlapping, they should fit your waist.

-Sometimes clothes still have the original tags, still check for signs of staining, rips and tears, or broken zippers.

Google Lens App: When you spot unique mid-century decor, a weird kitchen gadget, or a set of vintage plates, use Google Lens to search the item. You can identify the item and even the cost, to decide if you have found a great deal!

Think outside of the Box: Look past original functions when an ordinary bowl can double as a stylish succulent planter. Repurpose textiles by utilizing vintage printed scarves, table runners, and patterned bed sheets as incredible, budget-friendly sources of fabric. You can turn them into throw pillows or tote bags. The possibilities are endless.



Happy Summer, Country Place! As a fellow resident and your local real estate expert, I don't just look at the MLS numbers—I track what they actually mean for our neighborhood's home values. If you're curious about how the summer market is shifting, here's a look at what's happening right outside our front doors.

What Stands Out

When we compare the last two months—and look back at where we were this time last year—we see some interesting trends. While the broader real estate market remains a bit slower and more deliberate, Country Place is holding strong.

Since April, closed sales eased back a bit (from 17 to 13), while our active inventory climbed to 11 available homes—the most choice buyers have had here in months. We also saw the average price per square foot tick up again, moving from \$280 in April to nearly \$285 today. What does this tell us? Even with more homes to choose from, properties are actually selling a touch faster than they were this spring (averaging 33 days on the market, down from 38), and well-updated homes in our neighborhood continue to command strong values. To put it in perspective: this time last year, our average sale price was just under \$477,000. Today, it's pushing \$494,000—knocking on the door of half a million dollars.

Country Place Market Stats

*(Data comprised from CP homes sold over the last 90 days ending on 6/11/2026. **Highlighted items** indicate a significant change since our last update).*

- **High Sale Price: \$590,000**
- **Low Sale Price: \$410,000**
- **🔥 Average Sale Price: \$494,415** (Up from \$478,429 in April)
- **Average Price per SqFt: \$284.63**
- **🔥 Average Days on Market: 33** (Down from 38 days in April)
- **🔥 Homes Sold: 13** (Down from 17 closed sales in April)
- **Pending: 7**
- **🔥 Currently on the Market: 11** (Up from 7 active listings in April)

BONUS: Storm Season Is Here—Is Your Home Ready?

Now that June is here, so is hurricane season—and here in Tampa Bay, a storm-ready home isn't just about safety, it's about *value*. More and more buyers ask about a roof's age, impact windows, and whether a home has a current wind mitigation inspection before they ever schedule a showing. Those upgrades don't just lower an owner's insurance premiums; they've become real selling points that help a listing stand out. A few simple steps now—keeping the paperwork for recent roof, window, or electrical work in one place, and scheduling a wind mitigation report—can pay off twice: peace of mind through the season, and a stronger position when it's time to sell. If you're ever unsure which improvements actually move the needle with today's buyers, I'm always glad to walk through your home and help you sort out which ones are worth it.

Joe Benson

Benson Family Realty | ARGO Group Properties
813-324-1384

joebenon@bensonfamilyrealty.com

www.bensonfamilyrealty.com



(All data is courtesy of Realtor Multiple Listing Service. The opinions included are not meant to be taken as facts but are the professional opinion of the below agent. Article was written with the assistance of AI. If you are working with a Realtor, please disregard any advertisements. All requests for business are meant solely for those not currently represented. Joe Benson is both a resident of Country Place and a licensed Real Estate agent.