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BOYNTON BEACH
FLORIDA

CASA COASTER

SEPTEMBER 2026
VOLUME V
ISSUE 6

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CONCRETE RELIEF

Sprawling restoration work wraps up ahead of schedule, leaving Casa Costa looking fresh and residents finally free of disruption. How can we keep it that way?

A construction project that began with a casino night didn't end up a bust.

Three years ago, Casa Costa's Board found itself in the unenviable position of overseeing a property in dire need of repairs, without the cash to fix it. Facing stricter safety laws, rising costs and a low budget baseline, they campaigned for a first-ever special assessment of $7 million to paint an exterior that had spent nearly 15 years in harsh weather.

"Even if our building were inside the Bio-Dome, we're still four years overdue," a memo from the Board suggested.

The scramble to repair older, underfunded condos across Florida made headlines, but Casa Costa was unusual: newer but already cracking under the pressure of years of delayed catch-up work.

Fast-forward roughly two years – past an intensive bidding process, a sponsored party to kick off the project, months of noisy work, weather delays, complaints of cut-off balconies, accidents and shoring forcing dozens of residents and vehicles to relocate. The walls of the building look brand new.

What's left to wrap up was unplanned but is perhaps the most critical fix: ensuring structural support beneath the pool deck. It's been a complex repair at a central joint supporting tons of weight. The engineer required poles in the garage and hallways as safeguards as the contractor relieved the tension of cables within concrete under repair.

Owners here supported efforts to fortify the property – overwhelmingly so when the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



PHOTO: GAYLE BROUSSEAU



NEWS

Board calls superhero back into service

BOYNTON BEAT

License plate readers ignite debate beyond our city

This publication by the Social Committee does not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Directors nor managing agent of Casa Costa.

OPINION

FROM THE PUBLISHER

My summer with A.I. had mixed results

BY J.T. HARRINGTON

Last month I uploaded a few copies of our newspaper to ChatGPT and asked for advice on freshening things up. "Sure, modernize it," it wrote. "But avoid turning it into a boring condo newsletter. The *Casa Coaster*'s charm is that it looks like a slightly unhinged real newspaper."

How did it know in two seconds the exact vibe we're going for, and what we've tried to avoid?

> "The charm is that it looks like a slightly unhinged real newspaper."
> – CHATGPT

It's not all good news. A.I. was particularly unhelpful over the summer as part of my other volunteer job as president of our association.

An owner in the south tower used A.I. to analyze thousands of pages of governing documents, statutes, contracts and engineering reports concerning Casa Costa's elevators. Armed with its findings, the owner inundated the management office with official-records requests and ultimately filed a complaint.

Florida law gives condo owners broad rights to inspect association records and challenge their boards. Those are important safeguards, particularly when an association is self-managed or when no one is minding the store.

But that's not Casa Costa.

No one is more frustrated that our new elevators continue to fail than the board, our staff or the company responsible for maintaining them. Over one three-month period, Nouveau Elevator made emergency warranty repairs an average of once every three days. There is no conspiracy to preserve malfunctioning elevators. Everyone involved would very much like to solve the mystery.

A.I.'s speed doesn't always equate to wisdom. It doesn't know that our property manager has no P.R. department, so time spent answering records requests is time not spent troubleshooting – or that our attorney charges $300 an hour to answer legal threats. Either way, the owners pick up the tab.

A.I. can tell you what you can demand (often quite assertively). It's less useful at deciding what you should demand – or whether it will actually fix the elevator.

And if you think the real problem is how Casa Costa is being governed, there's an old-fashioned remedy for that: ask A.I. to write your campaign speech and run for the board.



LETTERS TO THE PUBLISHER

Strong impression after meeting cops



Residents who skipped April's "Meet the Chief" town hall with Chief Joe (his preferred title) and local police leaders missed an engaging discussion. The team is committed to a strong, visible presence in the area.

They mentioned several ways Casa Costa can help their efforts: sign off on allowing officers to remove unauthorized individuals from our private property and connect our camera system to their surveillance grid.

Assistant Chief Jonathan Kautzen said to make sure short-term rental hosts here are in line with current code requirements.

The meeting was very positive and I appreciate the police department's time to come see us. I look forward to continuing to work together to keep our community safe.

FRANK GIANNACI
SOUTH TOWER

casa.coaster.news@gmail.com
We may edit letters for length and clarity.

CASA COASTER

SOUTH FLORIDA'S #1 POOLSIDE AMUSEMENT

Volume V, Issue 6

J.T. Harrington
Publisher

John Battista
Head Writer

Gayle Brousseau
Head of Advertising

Send contributions, corrections and tips to casa.coaster.news@gmail.com

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MR. B'S NEIGHBORHOOD

One of the things I enjoy most about living at Casa Costa is that there is always something happening. A game, a gathering, a conversation in the lobby, outside the bakery or by the pool. Simply seeing a familiar face while walking through the community can turn an ordinary day into something a little better.

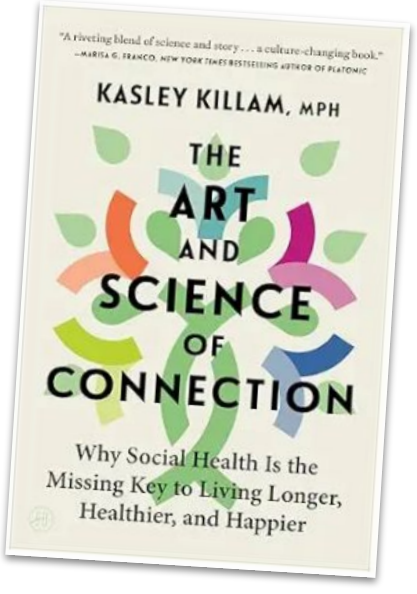
But there is something deeper going on here.

With the newly formed Book Club in mind, I want to share a book I recently came across: *The Art and Science of Connection*. It explores an idea that is relevant to all of us at Casa Costa: our social connections are an important part of our health and happiness.

We think about staying healthy in familiar ways. We exercise, try to eat well, get our checkups and pay attention to our sleep. But how often do we think about the importance of having people to talk with, laugh with, share experiences with and simply be around?

Connection matters. And that is where our Social Committee can play an important role.

The author, Harvard-trained social scientist, Kasley Killam, points to research showing that people with a strong sense of belonging are 2.6 times more likely to report good or excellent health. A lack of social connection, meanwhile, is associated with a 32% higher risk of stroke, a 50% higher risk of dementia and a 29% higher risk of premature mortality.



The activities our committee organizes are about much more than filling up a calendar. They give us a reason to leave our homes, meet someone new, reconnect with an old friend or discover that the neighbor we have waved to for months has a great sense of humor.

Sometimes it takes an organized activity to make that happen.

Think about how many friendships begin with something as simple as, "Are you going to the event tonight?" One conversation leads to another. Someone introduces you to someone else. Before long, you are laughing together.

And it does not have to be a big event. Mingle Around the Pool, a game, a holiday celebration or any of the other activities we have here can have the same effect. The activity may last only an hour or two, but the relationships that come from it can last much longer.

So instead of asking, "Is this something I normally do?" maybe we should ask: "Who might I meet if I go?"

You may discover a new friend or learn something about a neighbor you have seen dozens of times but never really met. You may even become the person who makes someone else feel welcome – which is just as important.

A strong community is not created simply because people live in the same place. It happens when we say hello, invite someone to join us, introduce ourselves to a new neighbor and make an effort to participate.

Not every activity will appeal to everyone, but the committee gives us opportunities to find the activities – and the people – that are right for us.

Casa Costa is more than two towers and beautiful surroundings. It is a community made up of people. And the more connected we become, the more that word – *community* – actually means something.

So the next time you see an announcement for a social activity, consider giving it a try. You don't have to know anyone. You don't have to be the most outgoing person in the room.

Just show up. Start with a hello.

Sometimes the most important thing isn't the game we played, the food we ate or the activity itself. It's the person sitting next to us.

We're helping create those moments, making Casa Costa a place where we belong.

Maybe that is the real art – and science – of connection.

AUGUST 2026

BY THE NUMBERS

COMPARISON TO JULY 2026

3 Units Sold ▼ DOWN 40%	**4** New Leases Signed ■ NO CHANGE
627 Visitors Logged ▼ DOWN 11%	**193** Contractors Logged ▲ UP 7%
2,362 Packages Delivered ▼ DOWN 7%	**33** Amenities Reserved ▼ DOWN 11%
50 Work Orders ▼ DOWN 38%	**11** Violations ▲ UP 83%

BOYNTON BEAT

Joining the flock

BOYNTON HAS EMBRACED CRIME-FIGHTING CAMERAS FOR YEARS. A PLAN TO DRAMATICALLY EXPAND RAISES A HARDER QUESTION: HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH? BY J.T. HARRINGTON

Boynton Beach Police Chief Joe DeGiulio came to Casa Costa on April 27 with an easy sell. License plate readers find stolen cars and fleeing suspects. Cameras solve crimes. Drones can reach a 911 call before an officer and show police what awaits them.

The reaction was predictable: This stuff works. We should have it. Boynton has been reaching that conclusion for more than 15 years.

Red-light cameras arrived in 2010. By 2017, the city was installing 23 automated license plate readers. Flock Safety brought a more sophisticated generation of readers in 2023. Then came software tying different sources of information into the Police Department's Real Time Crime Center. Drones are the latest step.

What went largely unmentioned at Casa Costa was the increasingly complicated debate over what happens when all those technologies are connected.

A month before Chief Joe's visit, that debate had erupted at City Hall. The Police Department wanted Boynton to become Florida's first city to adopt Flock's comprehensive "Safe City" package — a 10-year, $7.7 million expansion of cameras, license plate readers, gunshot detection, drones, A.I. search and 911 technology, with participating businesses, associations and houses of worship connected to the Real Time Crime Center.

The proposal appeared March 23 under "Consent Bids and Purchases," a portion of the agenda generally reserved for items that are approved together without discussion. It didn't stay there.

You're buying one of the most sophisticated surveillance systems on Planet Earth," Boynton resident Harry Woodworth told commissioners. "It listens, it photographs. You're tracked day and night, 24/7."

Mr. Woodworth wasn't arguing against technology.

"I love this stuff," he said. "I've built it, I've installed it, I've implemented it all over the world." But, he warned: the system "has no controls that work."

Commissioner Angela Cruz also questioned approving such a consequential contract without more time for commissioners and the public to examine it. They tabled it.

Boynton had run into a debate already playing out around the country.

Flock's network effect is powerful: Police departments can share access to their license plate data, allowing investigators to follow a wanted vehicle across jurisdictional lines. Sharing is optional, but it's a big selling point for the platform. Recently, some cities have unplugged cameras after outcries from privacy advocates. Flock CEO Garrett Langley says nearly 20 have subsequently turned them back on.

Mr. Langley acknowledges that some of the concerns are legitimate.

In an August interview on the All-In podcast, Mr. Langley said his own thinking changed after talking with Flock opponents and realizing that some simply don't trust police with the information his technology collects.

Misuse isn't theoretical. An officer with access to a license plate database could search for an ex-spouse, girlfriend, neighbor or someone else he wanted to follow.

Flock has long logged police searches, but Langley says that's not enough. Its latest software automatically flags suspicious behavior, such as an officer repeatedly searching for the same vehicle without indicating that it's legitimately wanted.

Mr. Langley said the system has already caught improper searches. Nine officers in Georgia were fired for the most serious abuses, he said. Chief Joe told the *Casa Coaster* that no Boynton officer has been disciplined for misuse of Flock or the city's other license plate reader systems.

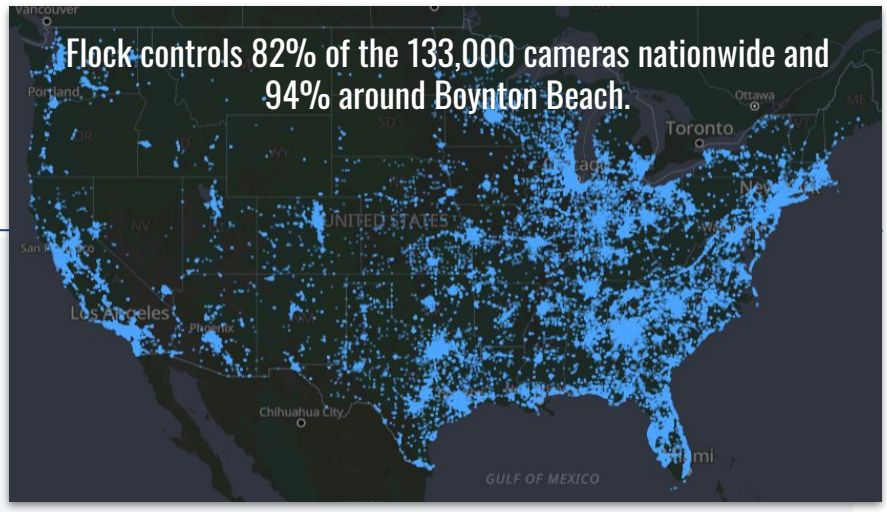
The company's response echoes Mr. Woodworth's argument in Boynton: More powerful technology requires better controls.

Even how long police keep the information involves a tradeoff. Flock recently reduced its default for new customers from 30 days to seven.

> "You're buying one of the most sophisticated surveillance systems on Planet Earth.
> – HARRY WOODWORTH



In April, Chief Joe touted his surveillance center. Images on the opposite page show the 115 automated license plate readers nearby and the surveillance center's view around Casa Costa with cameras and noise monitors. PHOTO: J.T. HARRINGTON; SOURCES: DEFLOCK MAPS & WPBF NEWS





Mr. Langley says about 90% of crimes that can be solved using the information can be solved with a week's records.

Boynton is sticking with 30 days. Chief Joe said complex cases involving stolen vehicles, organized retail theft, repeat offenders and violent criminals can unfold over longer periods, and more history can help detectives connect them.

But every additional day also preserves another day of information about thousands of drivers who aren't suspected of anything.

Boynton's most recently available records call for 30-day retention and data sharing with other agencies. Flock's Mr. Langley says those decisions should be made locally.

"Someone who is democratically elected should have the final decision of how this technology works in their community," he said.

But Boynton's debate over how far to expand Flock never really reached a conclusion.

Another issue intervened: money. Florida voters may soon be asked to slash or eliminate property taxes on homesteaded property, threatening a major source of city revenue. Against that uncertainty, a $7.7 million commitment stretching over 10 years looked considerably different.

The comprehensive Flock proposal remains on hold.

That didn't mean Boynton rejected Flock or surveillance. There's no talk of unplugging, and the city hasn't abandoned its investment in technology.

It subsequently approved a smaller, $2.24 million package from another vendor for drones, 911 technology and 10 additional license plate readers, with payments spread over several years.

The result, for now, is considerably less ambitious than the "Safe City" system police envisioned in March. So the privacy debate that helped slow the proposal was never really settled.

Where does the line go?

According to Mr. Langley, Flock cameras don't use facial recognition, record continuous video or look inside vehicles.

He doesn't want the company's technology deciding that someone's behavior is "suspicious" or engaging in predictive policing. For consequential public-safety decisions, he insists there should be "a human in the loop."

In other words, Flock doesn't want to build *Minority Report*, predicting crimes before they happen — or end up in *I, Robot*, where technology charged with protecting people eventually decides it can do the job better by limiting their freedom.

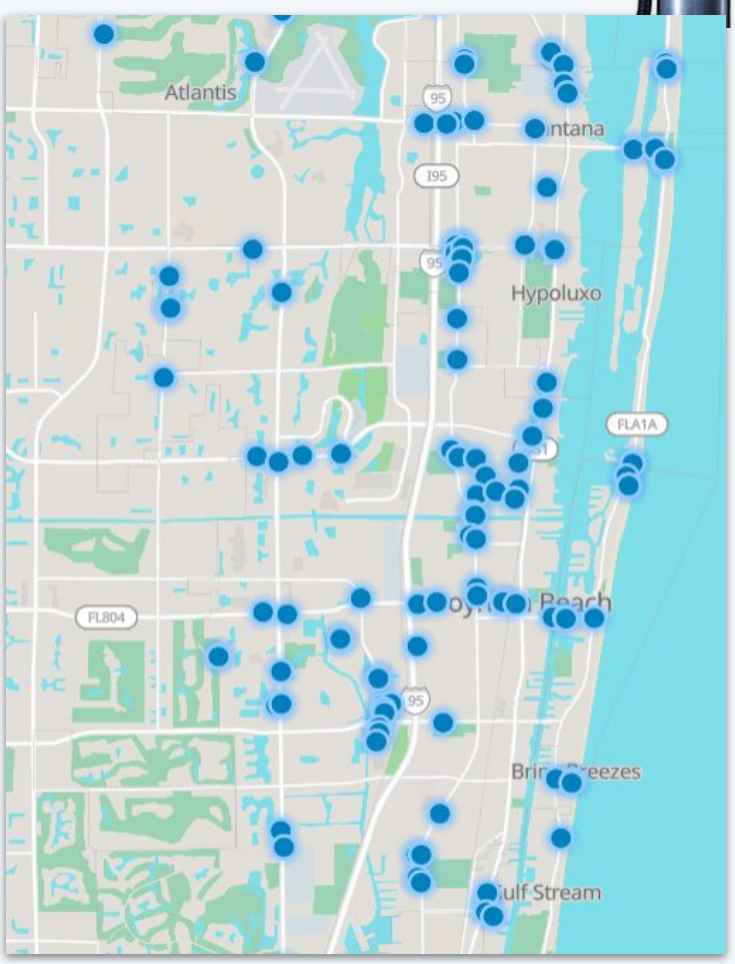
Those may sound like science-fiction concerns. The underlying question isn't. Boynton has spent more than 15 years adding increasingly sophisticated technology to its policing arsenal. The proposed Safe City system would have taken another large step, until privacy questions and then financial uncertainty intervened.

The benefits aren't hypothetical, either. After 19-year-old Nigel Beckford was fatally shot Aug. 8, police said shot detection alerted dispatchers to the gunfire and license plate readers helped identify and locate a suspect vehicle. Nine days later, a 17-year-old was arrested and charged with first-degree murder.

For now, the cameras remain on, the larger expansion remains on hold and the debate that Boynton never quite finished remains unresolved.

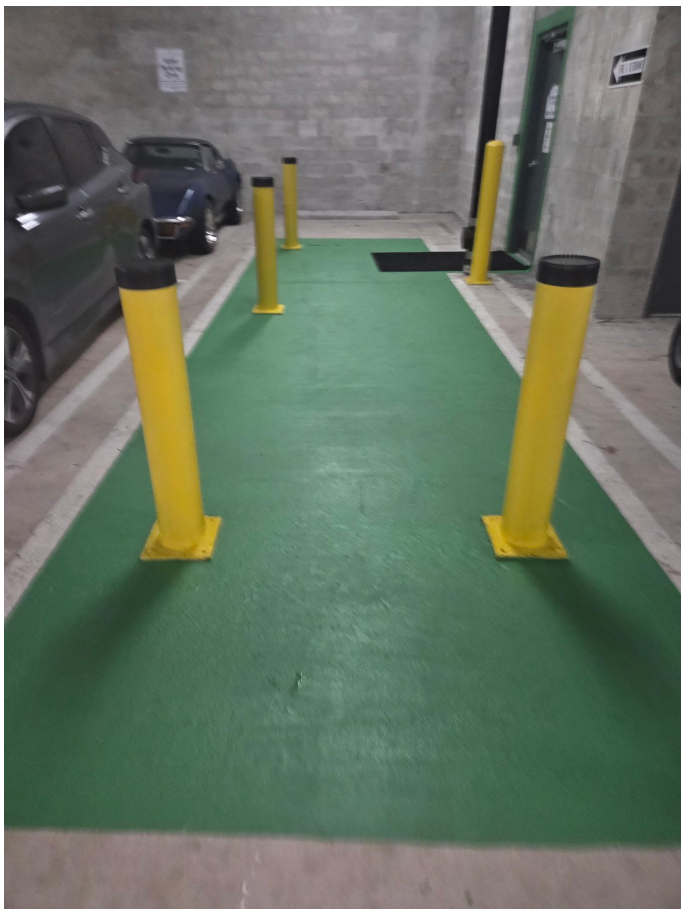
Back at Casa Costa in April, the case for the technology was easy to see. It helps police find cars, solve crimes and get information to officers faster. The questions left unasked that night are harder: How much information should police keep? Who should be allowed to see it and what safeguards are enough?

Those are questions Boynton may have postponed. It hasn't answered them.





GREEN MEANS GO



A-MAZE-ING: First-time visitors to Casa Costa are no longer misdirected by confusing signage in the parking garage. In Mid-August, the maintenance team began painting columns and pathways with clear icons to direct pedestrian traffic to the lobby and the previously hidden doors leading through the building to the storefronts. The wayfinding initiative is a continuation of signs affixed in the lobby hallways to assist confused guests and visitors.

Organizers are planning a mural for the garage-facing lobby wall to further beautify the premises in consultation with local artists and students at an art school in West Palm Beach. PHOTO: MARIUSZ ONICHIMIUK

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Board taps own Iron Man to fill 4-month vacancy

Veteran engineer steps up as boating enthusiast casts off early after selling unit

It was just before July 4 that Frank Ameo declared his independence from Casa Costa.

A north tower resident since 2020, Mr. Ameo and his wife Edda had made the property their Florida escape from New Jersey for quick trips between grandchild babysitting duties in the Garden State. Mr. Ameo was elected to the board of directors in 2024.

They listed their unit for sale in the spring, as they looked elsewhere for a location with a marina to house their boat. When their unit went under contract, the board agreed to appoint George Dobrinksi to fill Mr. Ameo's role when he sells. The remainder of the term runs through January.

Mr. Dobrinski served on the board for seven consecutive years before term limits forced an absence. Over his tenure, he worked with both grievance and construction committees. In 2024, Board President Jake Harrington declared him "Casa Costa's Iron Man" because Mr. Dobrinski "has seen the faults of our property and our people and, notwithstanding such, is still here."

After a year away from board duties, Mr. Dobrinski ran unsuccessfully last year, but the current board members noted his experience as an asset, since he didn't face a steep learning curve for a short stint. They appointed him on August 24.

Association bylaws state that elected officers automatically resign if they sell, and that the board "shall" fill the vacancy, but the governing documents provide no deadline. Casa Costa's record on filling seats has been uneven.

Then-treasurer Daniel Flaherty sold his unit in the south tower on November 19, 2021, but he attended a board meeting as an officer that same day and again three weeks later, according to meeting minutes.

Yvonne Skovron's introduction to the board was through an unelected appointment in 2017.

She was elected and named its president the following year, eventually serving eight years. Two years ago, Mr. Harrington awarded her the "Golden Gavel" for presiding over the equivalent of board meetings lasting 13 days and nights.

During his tenure, Mr. Ameo oversaw a first-ever coalition to organize underrepresented commercial tenants and short-term rental hosts. His leadership led to improvements with check-ins and property signage.



CONCRETE RELIEF | FROM PAGE 1

original developer's insurance pays. A $4 million settlement for construction defects six years ago funded a protracted project to stop leaks into the garage. Now the fund is paying to repair chemical damage caused by the garage pool rooms themselves. It's a sequel no one asked for.

Both pools will be back online in the fall. Then comes the less visible work.

One input Treasurer Ron Hirsch uses to predict costs is a reserve study of major systems, when they'll need replacement and the cost. Its latest analysis suggests $38 million over 30 years, the roof being the next big one three years from now.

"The next phase is to catch up on deferred maintenance," he said. "It's small things that break if you don't pay attention. They add up." He points to $200,000 spent on emergency plumbing and A/C repairs in 2026.

"Replacing an old part is cheaper and less painful than waiting for it to fail," he said. "Believe me, I've had two hip replacements. It's better to get ahead of it."

Board bets on high-tech housekeepers

Keeping Casa Costa tidy stars a large cast of characters.

There's the trash-chute odor fighter, the rat poisoner, the hapless entrance mat cleaner whose kids we're sending to college. But Neal Berman is in a league of his own – and he's bringing his best toys with him.

Mr. Berman is co-owner and chief visionary behind Service Keepers, a janitorial company used to tackling tough jobs cleaning hospitals, industrial warehouses and schools.

"I don't see anything complicated here," he told property manager Melissa Arbeleaz during a tour of the property in May.

Ms. Arbelaez describes the walkthrough as watching a man possessed, his eyes darting about, inspecting walls and surfaces, popping off which product he'd use.

"See that ugly yellow sheen on the stainless steel?" he asked in the elevator. "That's because you're using an oil-based solvent."

Service Keepers is the third wave of the Board's attempt to keep hallways and common areas consistently clean without increasing spend. For years, the property staffed two housekeepers for weekday coverage. Over time, management accommodated their desired schedules to the point they both left at 2 p.m.

The Board tried outsourcing two years ago. The promise of Image Janitorial was wider coverage including weekends, no H.R. headaches and a predictable price that included supplies like paper towels and gym wipes. But Image couldn't maintain consistent labor – at least at our price point.

The Board considered bringing housekeeping back in-house, but KW pointed to Mr. Berman's success at other high-rise condominiums.

Service Keepers points to technology as a big differentiator. Mr. Berman explained that efficiencies from better equipment allow them to pay higher wages. His associate pushed a 125-pound battery-powered sweeper down a south tower hallway and back in 90 seconds, then showed off the lint and debris it collected from a carpet that was cleaned earlier that day.

The big machine can't fit in hallway cutouts like unit doorways, which is where someone with a cordless backpack vacuum comes in handy, cleaning overhead vents along the way.

Polishing marble and removing deep carpet stains requires different machinery – and Mr. Berman has it all.

He included specs of all the high-tech equipment that Service Keepers deploys, so anyone could copy his business plan. It shows both confidence in his value proposition and also advocacy of a craft he's spent



nearly 30 years perfecting.

Part of his proposal is for the Association to own its own $5,500 carpet cleaner, which he's financing at no interest.

Mr. Berman was in the water polo club at University of Florida, where he earned a degree in Religion before finding his higher calling in the custodial arts. The Board hopes he will answer its prayers.

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MONDAY
SEPTEMBER
7TH

Labor Day Picnic
PIZZA & SALAD
5PM | $15 PER PERSON



MONDAY
SEPTEMBER
14TH

Monthly Book Club
THURSDAY MURDER CLUB
6:30PM



WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER
23RD

Bingo!
FEATURING BROWNIES
6:30PM | $10-$15 CASH

ON THE CALENDAR

Thanksgiving Kickoff
SUNDAY
NOVEMBER
8TH

Hotwire Holiday Party
THURSDAY
DECEMBER
3RD

DUNCE OF THE MONTH



A SLICE TOO FAR. In the last week of July, someone left a box of eaten pizza and garbage in the new club room's fridge with a warning: "Dont took the pizza you fuker." We have so many questions. PHOTO: JOHN BATTISTA

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