



February 2006 Newsletter

It Is An election Year. What Is Important To You?:

Lady's Island has 6,390 registered voters and in the last general election 66% of those voters went to the polls and let their voices be heard. The numbers speak for themselves. Lady's Island is a very strong political voice in any election. Even though LIBPA, as a matter of policy, does not take sides in individual political races it is often questioned as to how the residents of Lady's Island feel regarding a specific subject, especially in election years.

To better determine how you, as the individual Lady's Island voter, feel in regard to the questions (other than election of individual office holders) you may encounter in the voting booth in 2006, LIBPA will conduct monthly surveys on the LIBPA web site (www.libpa.org). Most of the potential questions, which voters may be asked, have to do with taxes and their money. Some of the most likely are:

- Would you be more likely to vote for a 1% sales tax in which the funds would be utilized for which of the following?
- A. Strictly transportation projects.
 - B. Transportation projects and public parks
 - C. County and municipality general infrastructure needs.
 - D. A rebate for property taxes with the rest divided between the county and cities.

-Would you vote to approve or disapprove an increase in your property taxes to provide funding for construction of additional public schools in the Bluffton area?

LIBPA will pose these types of questions, in the form of a survey on the LIBPA web site, over the course of the next few months. In view of the fact that County Council has voted to include, in the November election, the referendum question of a \$50 million bond to provide continued support to the Rural and Critical Land's program, the February survey question is:

Would you vote for or against increasing property taxes to provide \$50 million to allow continuation of the Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Program which buys critical property or development rights to prevent future development?

Please consider taking the time to read the article in this month's newsletter about the Rural and Critical Land Preservation Program and then complete the monthly survey and let us hear your opinion on this very important subject. This will also provide elected officials a better idea of how you personally feel regarding the subject. The results of each survey will be reported to our members in the following month's newsletter.

Island Notes:

Business License Compliance – A LIBPA member took the time to do an informal survey of 66 businesses operating on Lady's Island and found only 25 were listed as having Beaufort County Business licenses. Certainly a survey of this type has a margin of error but it does indicate a serious need for improved enforcement of the ordinance. While LIBPA does not support increasing the business license fee for the simple purpose of increasing revenue, it does support adequate enforcement of the existing ordinance to insure all businesses register and pay the required fee.

Correction - If you bought a house on Lady's Island last January and sold it in December and did not receive the 24% increase in price reported in the December issue of the LIBPA newsletter as being the median price increase experienced in 2005, don't think something is wrong with your house or realtor. Jerry Marlow, who provides our real estate data, provided accurate data and your editor, did the poor math. As you can see from Jerry's article this month a 2005 increase in the value of your house in the area of 10% would be realistic. Thanks to those of you who caught the error and brought it to our attention.

Street Light Status Report. Tommy Bennett, local manager of the Southern District of SCE&G and also a Lady's Island resident, has joined forces with LIBPA to install a street light at the intersection of Holly Hall and Sams Point Road. Tommy indicates the project is "on track" and it will become a reality in the near future.

Final approval is scheduled this month (February) for the 82 unit, single family residential development, Tradewinds Plantation scheduled for construction on 13 acres adjacent to Dow Road.

The Lady's Island South Carolina Bank and Trust reports that LIBPA member Doug Jacobs has joined their Mortgage Department.

Crystal Lake. Land Plan Partnership, the consultant hired to design the Crystal Lake Park, has conducted an initial survey of the area. Mr. John Miller, the Director of Beaufort County Parks and Leisure Services indicates that once preliminary designs are completed the Lady's Island Community Preservation Committee will be provided an opportunity to review the design. If possible, LIBPA will post the proposed design on its web site for comment by the members of the community.

Sidewalk construction delayed. Bob Stoothoff, President of Pathways Connect reports that the construction of the sidewalk outlined by the stakes along Sunset Boulevard has been delayed for a while due to a higher priority project arising. The good news is the County Engineering Department is overseeing the project which significantly reduces the cost. The bad news is the project must take its place behind higher priority projects. It will happen – in time.

Going The Extra Step To Provide Services:

Recently representatives of the new Lady's Island Methodist Church attempted to become more knowledgeable of the zoning and permitting requirements necessary to transform their recently purchased property and facilities on Sams Point Road, from residential property into a church. After reaching a point of technical saturation from the many departments involved in such an action they requested help to simplify the matter. In response to their request the Deputy Directors of two County Departments (Planning and Codes) personally took the time to provide assistance. Ms. Delores Frasier, Deputy Director of the Planning Department collected the necessary zoning information from the various departments, translated the information into layman's terms, made what decisions needed to be made and personally provided the information to the church's representative. Mr. Ed Nelson, Deputy Director of the Codes Department, personally went to the site of the new church, evaluated the existing facilities with a representative of the church and explained exactly what they would need in the way of permits. It is fully understood that with the volume of business which the Planning and Codes Departments are faced with, this type of personalized service by the top managers is neither possible nor practical on a regular basis. However, it is a pleasure to know that those who manage some of the key departments in County government are willing to pause in their busy days and personally demonstrate the meaning of "public service". A special thanks to Ms. Frasier and Mr. Nelson for going that extra step to help solve a problem.

Winds Of Change:

The new year is starting out with a change of ownership in some of the key pieces of property in the Village Center. Some of these real estate transactions reportedly include:

The property adjacent to the Video Store at the corner of Lady's Island Parkway and Lady's Island Drive which was recently purchased and although the new owner queried LIBPA regarding possible uses for the site, no specific plans presently exist for its use.

The Winn Dixie Shopping Center which has been bought by Mr. Richard Gray and will be the future home of a new and improved Grayco True Value store which is scheduled to open in the May time frame. No decision has been made regarding the next occupants of the present Grayco store.

The property adjacent to Lady's Landing and the adjoining property (former site of a trailer park) was recently purchased and reportedly the new owner is seriously considering condominiums along Battery Creek and commercial buildings along Highway 21.

The Lady's Island marina property was purchased by a developer from Savannah who has indicated an intention to develop the property with a combination of small residential units along the water, some condominiums and commercial buildings along Highway 21.

Also, Tim Keane of Keane & Company, the owners of the Whitehall Plantation Property, reports a great deal of interest in the property but no portion of the property has been sold and that his company will only sell land to those parties who will agree to comply with their basic master plan. Mr. Keane has very graciously offered to update LIBPA on the status of their plans for the property.

With the exception of the shopping center, the indicated properties contain a great deal of undeveloped land. The question that remains is will the new owners actually invest in the development of the property or simply hold it until the right buyer comes along. It would be nice to see some actual development occur in the Village Center in 2006 versus land speculation.

Editor's Note: It should be noted that the information contained in this article is based on information rated above the rumor level and below going to the county government building and checking individual deeds.

Lady's Island 2005 Growth Remains Steady:

Based on an initial evaluation of the 2005 report of permits for construction of single family residential units on Lady's Island we may be reaching a plateau of approximately 200 units per year. For the last decade the island has averaged 181 new homes each year or stated another way, a new family moved to the island every 2 days. Following are the number of building permits issued in the unincorporated portion of Lady's Island for the last 10 years.

BUILDING PERMITS										
Year	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05
# Permits	136	189	163	223	179	169	163	185	204	203

With the addition of these new homes there will be 5289 houses on the island. Based on a combination of the 2000 census and the number of building permits issued, the present population of Lady's Island is 12,234. With 203 new homes the island will grow by 528 new residents, 122 additional students in our schools, and approximately 2000 additional trips per day on our roads.

Editor's Note: A very special thank you to Ms. Teri Norris of the Beaufort County Planning Department for providing the data contained in this article and for working with LIBPA in our efforts to guide the growth on Lady's Island. Ms. Norris collects, collates and analyzes data in an effort to determine the present and future effect of growth on our county.

Berry Island Restaurant Changes Ownership: by Bob Stoothof

The Berry Island restaurant, a popular lunch spot at Newpoint Corners, will begin 2006 with new management. The former owners, Byron Holcomb and Alice Phillips, decided to retire to North Carolina and enjoy a slower lifestyle, which does not involve operating a restaurant. The new Berry Island owner and manager is Charlie Nolette who is a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a degree in Hotel Restaurant Management. Charlie indicates that he fully intends to continue to offer the same choices of high quality food combined with first rate service that has made Berry Island a success for these last five years. This includes the homemade soups, sandwiches and of course the ice cream which are menu favorites. Also continuing to be available will be the special "takeout" orders and in time will come the introduction of new seasonal specials. We welcome Charlie and his wife Sarah to Lady's Island both as residents and business owners and managers. We, in LIBPA, wish them every success in their business.

Byron Holcomb and Alice Phillips, as the original owners of Berry Island, were strong LIBPA supporters and made a significant contribution to the island. Part of their advice to the new owners was to become an active member of LIBPA. We thank them both for their contribution to our community and to LIBPA and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors in North Carolina.

The End of An Era:

During February the House and Garden Gift Shop, located at 120 Sea Island Parkway next to the Winn Dixie shopping center in the Village Center, will close its doors for a final time and go out of business after 38 years of serving the residents of Lady's Island. In 1968, to open a store on Lady's Island that offered both paint for the house and nursery products for the garden was the idea of Mrs. Evelyn Mitchell, who was the original owner and operator. Later, she would be joined by her daughter in law, Marjorie Mitchell and for the next 20 years the two of them worked together to modify their inventory to better meet the needs of a changing Lady's Island. Over the years, other businesses arrived on the island to provide items such as paint or nursery products and although the words house and garden remained in their name the business evolved into a gift shop.

When the doors first opened, there was only one bridge to Lady's Island, less than 30 businesses, fewer than 3000 residents, most of the roads were still unpaved and less than 1000 homes. At that time Lt. Colonel and Mrs. Rodgers were considering developing a large tract of pine forest they would call Royal Pines. Over the years the two Mitchell ladies faced a wide variety of challenges to include hurricanes, a major fire in 2000 and the widening of Highway 21 which took a good bit of their available parking. After facing all of these, why close the doors on the business? When

asked that question, Marjorie indicated that after so many continuous years of operating the store that together, she and Ms. Evelyn decided it was time to slow down and enjoy life. They do want their loyal and faithful staff and customers to know how very much they appreciate their support and friendship over the years. Also a special thanks to the members of their families for their support, for without them it would not have been possible.

There are many variations of stories about how Lady's Island got its name. Regardless of how the name was originally acquired, today it is the place that more and more ladies choose as the location for their business. To Mrs. Evelyn Mitchell, who has set an example of how to be a successful business woman for the last 4 decades and to Mrs. Marjorie Mitchell who formed the other half of the team, thank you both for your contribution to the Ladys Island community. We wish each of you a well deserved rest and best of luck in your future endeavors.

The next occupants of the building, in which the Gift Shop has operated over the years, will be Russ and Debbie Mitchell Fielden and Southern Coast Realty. Please note that even though two Mitchell ladies are leaving, the Mitchell family will still be represented at 120 Sea Island Parkway by Debbie.

Student Mobility At Coosa Elementary: by Cindy Keener, Principal, Coosa Elementary School

For the past five years, student growth at Coosa Elementary School has been well documented and discussed at length. In August 2000, we reached the 525 student capacity target, and in August 2005, 640 precious children called Coosa their elementary school. Yes, numbers have increased; but there is also some movement within those numbers that tells a different story about how the population on Lady's Island is changing. At Coosa the data indicates that the two constants are: 1) growth, and 2) the percent of children qualifying for free or reduced meals. For eight years, approximately 24% of our children have received breakfast and lunch at a reduced cost or free. This "stable" percentage indicates that the socio-economic status of our student body has not changed significantly. Over the years, we have become a more diverse population. Our minority student enrollment at Coosa has grown from 23% in 2000 to 29% in 2005. However, the Hispanic population, which is increasing in most areas of Beaufort County, has been and remains low at 4% in 2005, up from only 2% in 2000.

The most amazing growth statistic has come from our mobile military dependent population... not a surprise for most of us. However, the extent of this present-day mobility is even greater than I would have expected. In the "not-so-distant" past, if a child entered kindergarten or first grade at Coosa Elementary, that child would finish fifth grade at Coosa... this is no longer the norm. In August 2000, approximately 80 students were military dependents; in August 2005, 200 of the 640 students were children from military families. During the 2003-2004 school year, 90 students enrolled after the first day of school; 100 withdrew during that same year. This is a combined student turnover of 190 children. Last year those numbers increased; 110 enrolled after the first day of school, 120 withdrew. Again, 230 children moved "in and out" of classrooms during the year. Approximately 60% of the children in this turnover count were military dependents.

We at Coosa Elementary School fully understand that frequent relocation is a part of the military life. We also understand that when new families arrive in the Beaufort area they attempt to settle their family in the attendance area of what is perceived to be the "best" school for their children. With that in mind, we take it as a great complement that the number of military families selecting Coosa for their children has almost tripled in the last few years.

Has curriculum and instruction changed significantly at Coosa because of the turnover? No. We teach nationally-based content area standards and use the best research based instructional strategies available. Our staff assesses students regularly and plans instruction according to those assessment results. In my experience, the parents in our military families are very involved and participate in the educational lives of their children. These parents volunteer and, for the most part, communicate regularly with the school. We have, however, made some additions to our Guidance Program. Coosa has a very effective Newcomers Club for the 100+ new students each year, as well as a Deployment Club for children who may have a parent away from home. Our guidance counselor has received positive feedback about her programs and constantly strives to meet the needs of the mobile population and those of us who have lived in this community "forever".

Beaufort County School District and Coosa Elementary School are both moving through a period of transition and change. Change is always a challenge to be met, embraced, and "moved forward through". The only constant is that we know change is inevitable. This "change journey" adds to our infinite list of life-long learning experiences. These experiences are "who we are" and what we become in the future. We have a responsibility to make this journey as productive and positive as possible for the children in this community whether they are here for only a few years or many.

Editor's Note: A special thanks to Ms. Keener for not only this article but for the contribution she and the teachers and staff of Coosa Elementary School make to our community.

Beaufort Academy Today: by Tim Johnson, Headmaster, Beaufort Academy

Midway through my second year as headmaster at Beaufort Academy, it gives me great pleasure to express my gratitude to the many Lady's Island residents and businesses who have shown their hospitality and enthusiasm in countless interactions with my family and with Beaufort Academy. At BA, we are proud to have so many Lady's Island and Beaufort area families deeply involved in the quality independent education available to our children. I invite you to stop by or call at any time. Beaufort Academy is a community asset, and I would enjoy sharing the important mission and vision for independence in education which makes all of us at BA so eager to get to work each day.

Beaufort Academy's enrollment has grown considerably in the past two years, due to academic excellence, small class sizes, dedicated and talented teachers in all divisions from Pre-K through high school, and a total commitment to balanced offerings and opportunities throughout the tripod of academics, arts and athletics. In the past year, BA has added a major annual spring theatrical production (last year Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream packed the house for both performances at USC-B, to standing ovations), football and lacrosse for boys, fast pitch softball for girls, and new electives like Mandarin Chinese and Religious Studies. Such additions to our offerings, combined with our already strong programs throughout the school, have attracted not only families who already lived in Beaufort, but also families who were interested in re-locating from other parts of the country. These families could choose Charleston or Hilton Head in moving to the Lowcountry, but many have identified the existence of Beaufort Academy as one of the "tie-breaking" factors in deciding to live in our wonderful community. It makes me proud, as a Lady's Island resident, to say with confidence that there is not a better school in South Carolina than BA, nor is there a better place to live in the entire southeast than the Beaufort area.

During the many walks my wife and I enjoy in Royal Pines with our twin daughters, I am amazed, having moved here from Atlanta, at how many people here wave back to us when we offer a wave and a smile. It is that sense of community and family that attracted me professionally to Beaufort Academy, and which gives me such a warm feeling when I consider my own children's futures growing up here as young citizens and BA students. As your neighbor and colleague in LIPBA, I hope you will all accept my invitation to visit me here at BA, whether as a parent or as a friend with a common interest in what is good for all of us who live here. Thank you for making Lady's Island such a great place for Beaufort Academy, and I pledge that BA will continue to contribute to the specialness of this community by offering children the best education in the Lowcountry.

Editor's Note: A special thanks to Mr. Johnston for not only this article and his support of LIBPA but his contribution to the community both as a resident and Headmaster of Beaufort Academy.

WELCOME TO CAROLINA JASMINE FLOWERS & MORE

Ms. Kelly Lesesne has opened a new florist business in the Oakwood Plaza on Sams Point Road and named it Carolina Jasmine Flowers & More. Kelly, who is a hometown Beaufort girl, indicates that starting this business is the result of encouragement from her husband as well as former clients.

Located in the same site as formerly occupied by Flowers by Mona she has done a complete renovation of the store from floor to ceiling. To assist customers in being able to visualize how various types of floral arrangements can enhance different areas of their homes, she offers furniture displays for a living room, dining room and children's room. In addition to offering both artificial and live flowers she also offers various types of special accessories for the home.

Each Wednesday, Kelly will offer the community an opportunity to participate in "Lady's Island Fresh Flower Market Day" at which time a wide variety of fresh flowers will be made available for customers to select their favorites and design their own arrangements.

Prior to opening the doors of her own business Kelly was a dance instructor with Beaufort Dance Works. She also worked at Preservation Tree Care for which she received from the owner, LIBPA member Michael Murphy, a complimentary membership to LIBPA as his way of saying "Good luck with the new business". What a great way to wish a new business success.

Kelly invites everyone to stop by and see her new store. If you have floral needs she can be reached at 522-8686 and delivery service is available. We in LIBPA, welcome Kelly and her husband John to Lady's Island, look forward to working with them and wish them the best of luck in their new business.

Visit Kelly's web site for your Valentine's Day needs: www.lowcountrycarolinajasmine.com.

LADY'S ISLAND – ST. HELENA FIRE DISTRICT 2005 REPORT: By Chief Bruce Kline

During the 12 months of 2005 your fire district responded to 2,020 calls for service with an average of over 5 calls per day. It is with pride that I report the average response time for all calls was 5 minutes and 19 seconds. Of these calls, 47 were structure fires, 1037 were medical calls answered in conjunction with EMS, 210 were vehicle accidents, 63 were brush fires, and 23 were vehicle fires. Miscellaneous calls ranging from false alarms to smoke detector installation accounted for 640 calls. Property values involved in fire (structures/vehicles) was \$ 7,326,500 with a loss of \$1,744,000 and a "saved value" of \$5,582,500 or 76% saved.

In addition, we opened the new fire station on Sam's Point Road and put into service a new pumper type fire truck. We have been aggressively training on emergency vehicle re- sponse, area familiarization and firefighter safety. We have conducted three driver's safety programs at Beaufort High School (driver's education class) and initiated a mentor program at Lady's Island Elementary with ten firefighters participating and assisting twenty students. We continue to teach and certify over 100 citizens each year in CPR. Rest assured the firefighters of the Lady's Island-St. Helena Fire District strive each and everyday to improve our level of service to you - the residents, visitors and businesses of this fire district. We sincerely appreciate the support we enjoy in the Lady's Island and St. Helena communities.

New Health and Fitness Club On The Island:

Ms. Lois Newberry recently became the new owner and manager of the former Revolutions fitness center located in the Oakwood Plaza Center on Sams Point Road. She is in the process of instituting big changes to include a new name (FIT which stands for functionally integrated training), a new location at 37 Sams Point Road (building behind Video Warehouse) and a new concept of operation (a full service health and fitness club). To provide both the type and quality of atmosphere Lois desired for the club has involved purchasing and renovating the new building behind Video Warehouse specifically to support a health and fitness club.

The club, which is open to both men and women, offers "top of line" fitness equipment, childcare, private locker rooms with showers, personal training, nutritional counseling and physician assisted weight loss consultation. Open Monday through Friday (8 AM to 7 PM) and 8AM to 12 PM on Saturday members will also have "off hour" card access to the facility. A variety of types of membership programs are available. For standard membership, in addition to a \$99 initial enrollment fee, there is a \$49 per month fee for single payment annual membership and \$59 for monthly payment membership. At the present time the \$99 initial enrollment fee is being waived for the first 50 new members and ½ off for the next 50 members. To insure retention of quality service there will be a maximum limit of 250 members. Lois, with 9 years experience in group and personal fitness training, is a graduate of the National Academy of Sports Medicine and certified in Optimum Personal Training and Sports Specific Training. In 2004 she appeared in a nationally released fitness video. For additional details regarding the club she invites you to either visit their web site (www.fitofbeaufort.com), call her at 524-2348 or even better stop by the new location for a tour of the club.

We, in LIBPA, welcome Ms. Newberry to Lady's Island, wish her great success and thank her for choosing Lady's Island for the location of her business. We look forward to working with her in the future.

Lady's Island 2004 Law Enforcement Statistics:

When a Beaufort County Sheriff's Deputy responds to an incident on Lady's Island a report is required to be submitted as a matter of record. Following is a representative number of types of incident reports which were submitted in 2005 as compared to the previous 4 years.

Type of Incident	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Criminal Domestic Violence	74	97	98	70	68
Traffic Accidents	71	93	135	128	144
Breaking/Entering Vehicles	54	78	157	55	89
Vehicle Thefts	25	37	30	25	21
Petit Larceny	194	228	264	170	160
Grand Larceny	45	60	67	62	57
Aggravated Assault	9	4	1	10	11
Robbery	11	6	13	9	8

Criminal Sexual Conduct	8	15	6	7	12
Murder	2	3	0	0	0
Burglary	71	74	122	98	74
Total Number of Reports (all types)	2345	2510	2882	2530	2309

During 2005, a Sheriff's Deputy responded to an average of 6 incidents each day which were of the nature as to require submission of an official report. The total number of such incidents is the lowest in the last 5 years. As in previous years the most frequent cause of an incident report continues to be nonviolent domestic disturbances (179) although this area did see a decrease from the previous year which had 234 such incidents. Interestingly enough, even with the dramatic increase in the price of gas the island had only 3 reported incidents of individuals driving off without paying for gas as compared to 17 the previous year. An indication of the increase in the number of vehicles on our road is the fact that the number of traffic accidents on the island has doubled over the last 5 years.

We are a community of approximately 12,000 residents living in 5,200 homes on a 13,000 acre island and making over 10,000 trips per day on our roads. When you look at the relatively small number of incidents it is apparent that we are privileged to live in a very safe community, thanks to the efforts of Sheriff Tanner and the officers of the Sheriff's office.

Editor's Note: As always, we offer our appreciation to Lt. Jimmy Walton of the Sheriff's Office for his courtesy and gracious cooperation in researching the information contained in this article. The openness and courtesy we receive in response to our request for information is a complement to Sheriff Tanner.

The Lowcountry Landscape - How To Save Money In Our Landscapes: by Michael Murphy, President of Preservation Tree Care

These days with rising fuel prices driving up the costs of everything around us, we are all looking for ways to save money around the house. Whether you have a landscaper taking care of your property or you do it yourself, here are some tips on how you can save time and money by "cutting out" some superfluous gardening chores. At the top of the list is unnecessary pruning of Crape Myrtles. Every year, throughout the South, hundreds of thousands of dollars are wasted in the topping of Crape Myrtles. This "Crape Murder" is 95% of the time not needed. If the wrong species of Crape Myrtles were planted in a too confined area then annual crown reduction is sometimes acceptable. Crape Myrtles need full sun to thrive. They are best planted in open and sunny spaces. There are many different varieties that mature at different heights and sizes from the dwarf "Chickasaw" that stay 3'-4'tall up to the standard "Natchez" that can reach 40'. Know your varieties and space limitations before you plant. A year or two ago there was an article in the Gazette on the DOT maintenance budget cuts and it was noted that they just had enough money to prune the Crape Myrtles at the McGarvey's Corner Cloverleaf in Bluffton. This site is wide-open and a perfect growing area for Crape Myrtles. Perhaps they could have saved more money by allowing them to grow freely since no pruning was necessary.

Overseeding Centipede and St. Augustine lawns with winter rye grass is a practice of southern golf courses that has become popular with many homeowners. Golf Courses do it to keep their fairways green and attractive to winter golfers from colder climates. Fairway turf is a different kind of grass and the superintendents know how to handle any of the problems that this overseeding can develop. All of our home lawns are made up of St. Augustine and Centipede, which are warm weather grasses that need to be dormant for the winter. Overseeding causes shade problems and other issues that can be exacerbated by the extra care and watering that the overseeding can require. Overseeding encourages shallow rooting and stresses these warm weather grasses, which make them more susceptible to insect and disease infestation. According to Dorie Eckard Redmon of Green Industry Resources, "Overseeding is not only a waste of money, but damaging to the permanent grass, which is usually already having a hard time fighting insects, diseases and nematodes."

Trying to sustain grass deep under the shady dripline areas of large trees is usually a losing battle. If you have sodded more than twice with shade tolerant grasses under these conditions then maybe you should think about returning the area to a mulched forest floor environment. Crown cleaning and lower limb elevation of trees for increased sunlight can help to an extent, but if this has been done in conjunction with the resodding in the past and after a few short years the shade conditions have returned then it's time to go to "Plan B". Your trees will be much happier; you will irrigate less and no more mowing!

Know your soil's water holding capabilities before you set your irrigation timers. Many of our home lawns are over watered and over fertilized. The water requirements of trees, shrubs and lawns are directly proportionate to how well or poorly your soil drains. Centipede lawns as a rule are said to like to be a little hungry and a little thirsty. Lawn irrigation can be turned off for the dormant winter months and shrub bed irrigation turned down to a minimum. Too much fertilizer and water coupled with improper timing can encourage insect and disease and waste money.

Cleaning out mulched beds to bare ground is a waste of time. Mulched areas around trees and shrubs equates to happy and healthy root systems. The mulch should be maintained at a consistent 2"-3" depth with no tree root flare areas at the base of the trees covered up. Properly mulched trees and shrub beds need less water and less fertilizer and are rich in beneficial fungi and other important soil microorganisms and bacteria.

Weed & Feed applications. The correct timing of fertilizer for healthy and thriving turf is way too late for timing of pre-emergent herbicide applications. Also, the broadleaved weed control chemicals have proven to be harmful to tree and shrub root systems. The health of warm season grasses dictates a first application of fertilizer late in the spring. It would be much better to do simple spot treatments on lawn weeds. Maybe this one won't save you time but it will definitely save money and your lawns, trees and shrubs will be happier for it.

All of the subjects that have been addressed in this article have a single, common underlying theme. When you apply any of them your trees, shrubs and lawn areas will be overall healthier, begin to thrive and be more resistant to insect and disease. Saving time, saving money and doing the right thing, that is what I call a true win-win situation.
