Broadband (Internet) at Ocean Reef

As you know, the internet is becoming more pervasive in our lives. We use it for e-mail, web browsing, photos, social networking and for numerous other purposes. The Club and ORCA have formed a task force to review community technology topics and to share this information with the Ocean Reef community. One of the significant responsibilities of this committee is to review the member requirements for internet speed and availability in the common areas of Ocean Reef. In addition, we will be exploring internet and other technology services available in Ocean Reef homes.

In the Community

The club currently offers free wireless internet access in many of the common areas under the ‘oceanreef’ wireless network name (no ID or password is required), however there is no private service provided to homes or condos. At this time the primary covered areas are as follows:

- Ocean Reef Business Center
- Main Marina
- Member fitness center and spa
- Fishing Village
- Ocean Reef restaurants
- Buccaneer Island
- Cultural Center
- Medical Center
- Airport
- Rec Room
- Hotel rooms

At Home

In addition to internet access in central areas of Ocean Reef, all of us use the internet while at home – in some cases with varying success. One Ocean Reef member complained that internet speeds were terrible. His next door neighbor had fabulous internet service. How can this be? Often times it is simply a matter of switching providers or adding / changing equipment. Location, construction, equipment in your home and other variables can significantly affect the speed and reliability of your service.

The purpose of this article is to outline the options that you, as homeowners, have for internet access in your home (known as broadband). Future articles will address other technology related topics including accessing the internet with your smart phones (e.g. iPhones/Androids) or tablets (e.g. iPads and Android tablets).

Speed Limits

There are two primary providers of internet broadband service at Ocean Reef. AT&T provides DSL coverage via the telephone lines which provides download service up to 6 megabits per second – this service may be adequate for e-mail and web browsing but may not perform well streaming music or video. In addition, speeds vary depending on the location of your home at Ocean Reef. In general, the faster speeds are available if your home is located near the center of the club. Service can drop to 1.5 megabits (quite slow) if you are quite a distance from the center of the Club (such as Sunrise Cay and the Hammock area). Comcast offers internet service via cable (known as Xfinity) with speeds up to 50 megabits per second (very fast). The speed of the Comcast residential service is shared by your neighbors so the speed may drop when usage in your area is heavy.

Equipment Matters

Unfortunately, there is one other layer of complexity. Even if you buy the fastest broadband service you need to make sure that the equipment in your home is up to the task, equipment that is more than 4 or so years old may (or may not) become a bottleneck for your fast broadband service. One of the electronics service providers at Ocean Reef could assist you with this.

This is clearly a very complex topic and there are numerous variables that may affect the performance in your home. We suggest speaking with AT&T and Comcast to see what internet speeds are available to you and also to speak with your neighbors to see if they are happy with the speed and reliability of their service. Also, the technology service companies at The Reef are very competent and could provide solid advice.

Learn More Nov. 20

We are planning some complimentary educational sessions (including an interactive discussion) on technology at ORC. The first session is scheduled for November 20th at 3:00 pm in Town Hall - details will follow.

In the meantime, should you need assistance with personal technological matters, the Chamber of Commerce has several business members available to assist. They can be found in the ORCA Directory under “Electronics.”

ORCF Community Grants Application Deadline Dec. 1

Last year, the Ocean Reef Community Foundation moved the Community Grants application deadline back from Jan. to Dec. 1st, making the annual deadline earlier than in the past and applications for 2014 grants actually due Dec. 1, 2013.

According to Grants Committee co-Chair Janie Sims, “The Foundation always encourages members and employees of Ocean Reef to recommend our Community Grants program to worthy charities. We ask the community to help us communicate the deadline to any local charities they support to ensure applications are in by Dec. 1st for consideration for 2014 grants.”

The success of the Community Grants program, primarily funded by the annual All Charities Auction Weekend, has lead to an increase in applications in recent years and the earlier deadline will give the committee additional time to process applications, schedule site visits and evaluate proposals.

Each spring the Community Grants program awards funding to dozens of qualified charities at Ocean Reef and in Homestead, Florida City and Key Largo for projects supporting Education, Youth, Health & Family Services and Community. To learn more, visit the Community Grants page at www.orfound.org or call Administrator Yuriana Mikolay at 367-4707.

Share Your News

All members are encouraged to share their family milestones with their fellow members. News of member engagements and weddings, births, and similar family and Club-related happenings are welcome for publication. Please e-mail your news to ORP@oceanreef.com. All photos should be emailed at actual size in order to be considered for publication.

Rod & Gun Club Gearing Up

The new 2013-2014 season for the Rod and Gun Club is almost here! We’ve got plenty of fishing tournaments, seminars, and sporting clay shooting opportunities for our members and friends! Card Sound Sporting Clay range will open Nov. 30 and is open to Rod & Gun Club members Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 10 am – 4 pm. If you’re not a member already, you can sign up by visiting our website at rodandgun.org or stop by our office and fill out a form! Or for more information please call 305-367-2727 or email rodandgun@bellsouth.net.