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IF YOU THINK YOUR PROPERTY TAXES ARE HIGH, TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT WHAT INDIAN RIVER COUNTY'S PROPERTY APPRAISER, DAVID C. NOLTE (AND WIFE), ARE BEING TAXED FOR THEIR GOLF COURSE HOME

Real estate taxes are public information

For the past three years, more and more residents – mostly middle class folks – have been complaining about excessive real estate taxation, excessive utility bills plus seemingly excessive assessments for those residing in private, gated communities.

Out of curiosity, the *Vero Beachside News* looked up what Indian River County's property appraiser is paying real estate taxes for his Spanish-styled home on ritzy Royal Palm Place which was constructed in 1925.

The home and adjacent buildings (a total of 1,653 square feet), occupying .51 acre, adjoin the magnificent golf course of the Vero Beach Country Club.

Last year the home of Mr. and Mrs. David C. Nolte was assessed at \$121,990. This year the property is assessed at \$112,640 (with an exemption of \$25,000).

Last year, the Noltzes paid \$1,708.18 in property assessments. This year, their bill will be reduced to \$1,604.28

Comparative Shopping

When Dr. and Mrs. Fred Foy Strang (he was a minister at the First Presbyterian Church) sold their nearby 1920's Laurel Drive Spanish-styled home with 1.423 square feet less than years ago, the property was assessed at \$81,090.

This year the same property, across the street from the Vero Beach Country Club's golf course, is being assessed for \$203,180 (with a \$25,000 exemption).

Taxes for the Laurel Drive home were \$987.85 in 2006 and will be \$2,904.06 this year.

The Laurel Drive home (a) does not adjoin the golf course and (b) is somewhat smaller.

The two properties are approximately the same age.

So why the difference in appraised values:

Residents wishing to buy a vacant piece of property on Royal Palm Place would be expected to pay well in excess of \$150,000 and more likely, in excess of \$250,000 for a homesite in the upscale country club neighborhood.

For some years, Mr. Nolte has been property appraiser for Indian River County. His wife, now retired, also worked in his office.

Perhaps some enterprising residents can determine why Mr. and Mrs. Nolte's taxes continue to decline while those of so many other homeowners, particularly along the Indian River and on the barrier island, continue to increase – even though residential real estate values here are currently undergoing a major downshift as county real estate sales continue to decline particularly in upscale neighborhoods.