

In this issue >>>

From Our President

Finance Update

Recreation news

Gold Ridge Forest POA

4101 Opal Trail

Pollock Pines, CA 95726

530-644-3880 grfoffice1@gmail.com



Your Quarterly Newsletter – September 2023

Gold Ridge Forest

A Hidden Gem in Nature's Wonderland



Upcoming Events

**Fire Safe Council
Free Dumpster Day
Saturday, Sep. 23rd
at the Lodge 8am-12pm**

**Book Club Discussions
6:00pm
Wednesday, Oct. 11th
10:00am
Thursday, Oct. 12**

**Craft Faire
Saturday, Oct. 14th
at the Lodge
10am-3pm**



From our President

It's a beautiful day in this quiet community nestled in the Sierra Nevada's. The mornings are a little cooler, the days a little shorter, the fall season will be here soon. Here in Gold Ridge, big things are happening as your all-new board works tirelessly to continue making Gold Ridge a great place to live and play.

On August 17th, the CC&R and Bylaws election was concluded with a ballot count by the League of Women voters. The message was clear: of the 291 votes received, the updated CC&R's and Bylaws received over a 90% approval rate! While the Bylaws passed, the CC&R's unfortunately fell just short of the 315 yes votes required. We only needed 52 more votes to pass the CC&R's. It's well known that associations across the country struggle to get the required participation in elections, which typically require over 50% of members to vote in order to change the CC&R's. Even national elections struggle to get turnout, so we understand this is not an easy task.

The new Bylaws, while not as significant as the CC&R's, are a huge win for Gold Ridge! There were several benefits to the new Bylaws, such as term limits for directors, and a requirement for a community vote before a management company could be installed. Encouraging fresh members to join the board will help ensure there are always new ideas in Gold Ridge, and not the same handful of members running the board for decades. The spirit of Gold Ridge has always been one of self-sufficiency, and getting a lot done for a low cost to the members. Hiring a management agency would result in significantly higher costs for the members, and a loss of autonomy. This is not a decision that should be made by a handful of people in a closed-door meeting.

Continued on Page 2

President's Message (continued)

To all those who participated in the vote, thank you! Your voice was clearly heard, the members are overwhelmingly in support of the updated CC&R's. The goal of the proposed CC&R's is simple, to vastly reduce the number of rules that apply to homeowner's private property. The current CC&R's desperately need an update and contain antiquated rules such as a limit of two household pets, and written board approval for simple home improvements such as house paint, window replacements, or even planting a rose bush. My vision for Gold Ridge can be summarized as this; it's your home, you should be free to use it as you wish. You shouldn't be at the mercy of a five-person board to get permission for the simplest of home improvements; often these are already regulated appropriately by the county, and the redundancy of getting additional association approval, delays homeowners from moving forward with improving their properties.

Rest assured, the push for new and improved CC&R's is not over. Some minor changes will be made to the proposed CC&R's, based on the feedback the previous and current Boards received from the members. Therefore, we are looking to remove the rules regarding barbecues on decks, and the tree height requirement. Again, the goal of the new CC&R's is less rules for homeowners, not more.

Additionally, more groundwork will be done to promote participation in the next election. We realize that everyone is busy and being asked to vote on a 60+ page document is not anyone's idea of a fun time. More work will be done in this area to ensure everyone understands exactly what the benefits of the new CC&R's will be.

My belief is that Gold Ridge should be focused on three primary objectives:

1. Excellent maintenance of the recreation areas.
2. Responsible and frequent management of the green belts.
3. Total fiscal responsibility; keeping dues low and doing more with less.

We are incredibly fortunate to have inherited so many improvements from the previous board. A brand-new swimming pool, playground, and so much green belt work accomplished. As well as many behind the scenes updates, especially in the office and in our financial practices.

Even with all these improvements, Gold Ridge is still in a strong position financially. At the time of this letter, GRF has over \$427,000 banked between the operating funds and reserves. Over the next few years, we will continue to rebuild the reserves to be prepared for future maintenance.

We've got this Gold Ridge!

Your President,
Jack Mermod



Thanks again to our local Gold Ridge Forest Fire Safe Council for their hard work procuring more grant funds for Gold Ridge. In August the USDA contributed a little over \$19,500 to GRFPOA for our green belt management. Sherry Hawk, Rich Wade, Pat Schoggins, Alex North, and Dominique Smith are working for us!

Finance

My name is Mark Weiner. I volunteered to serve on the Board and was selected to be the finance director. This is the first time I have lived in a development with a homeowner's association, so I have familiarized myself with the operations of our Association and the general legal landscape of HOAs. It appears to me that our Association is financially sound and well established to continue its mission and purpose. My optimism is founded on the objective state of our finances and the spirited dedication of the newly installed board members and employees of Gold Ridge.

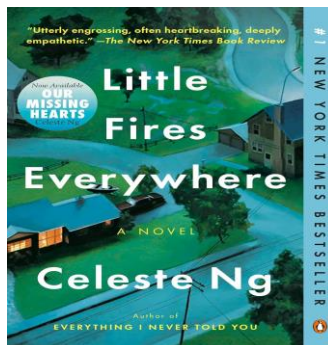
I certainly agree and support President Jack Hermod's call for our focus to be on maintaining our recreation areas, responsibly managing the green belts, and exercising fiscal responsibility. As finance director, I review every expenditure made by the Association. In the coming weeks, we will be formalizing our budget for 2024, which is the process for establishing the amount of our mandatory dues. As Jack writes, we will strive to keep the dues low and do more with less, but at the same we all recognize that the cost of living is rising.

Part of living in a common interest development such as ours is the opportunity to pursue our interests on behalf of the community. I have two initiatives. First, the Gold Ridge Book Club is embarking on its initial book, Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng. There will be two opportunities to discuss this book at the Lodge: Wednesday October 11 at 6:00pm and Thursday October 12 at 10:00am. You are welcome to attend one or both sessions. I purchased several copies of the book, and they are being circulated. Check "Carol and Steve's Little Free Library" outside the Lodge for a book and/or the Association office. (The book costs \$10 on Amazon.). If you want to read the book and join a discussion, we will be sure to get you a copy. At the discussions, we will share our reactions to the characters and their actions. You can share as little or as much as you would like. Decades later, I continue to remember reading Catcher in the Rye when in sixth grade and how marvelous it is to see into other people through the written word. Books are great! This book club is available to all adults and teenagers in the Gold Ridge community, and I look forward to meeting with you.

Second, I love watching and playing sports. Upon retiring and moving to Gold Ridge I bought a Cornilleou Indoor 500 ping pong table. It's a medium-high quality indoor only table and is not getting enough use in my house so I plan on proposing to the Board that I lend the table (at no Association cost) for use at the Lodge for a number of years. Ping pong is fun and helpful to one's mental and physical well-being, so I hope to develop a community of players. The table folds and easily wheels around, but we have not yet decided just exactly where in Lodge we will play. Something to look forward to, so stay tuned.

Residentially yours, Mark Weiner.

Gold Ridge Forest Book Club First Book Title



Little Fires Everywhere, author Celeste Ng
Discussion sessions held at the Lodge
Wednesday, October 11th at 6:00pm AND
Thursday, October 12th @ 10:00am
Hope to see you there!

Hello Gold Ridge Friends,

My name is Leah Van Meter, I have accepted a one-year appointment to the position of Recreation Director. It's been a difficult few years with Covid restrictions, Caldor fire evacuation and the pool remodel keeping us from using our recreation facilities to their fullest potential... but we're back with good things happening.

Because of your comments and requests, we have extended the pool hours and will be **OPEN from 9:00am-7pm Saturday, September 16th and 23rd, and Sunday, September 17th and 24th**. The pool gate will be locked so make sure you stop in visit Karen to have your old **FOB** reprogramed. Or provide your cell phone number for access through the free **Schlage APP** or get the **access card**. Only one method of access to the keyed recreation areas *per Gold Ridge lot*, so you will need to bring your old FOB to be reprogrammed, choose the APP, (which lets you register 2 cell phones) or get an access card. We are also working on a plan to relocate the gym equipment into the lodge so it can be available for use during the rest of the year. The Gold Ridge website will be updated with our progress.

The fun doesn't have to end because the weather is changing, so the outdoor gaming equipment will be available for check from the office. I hear you, "What outdoor gaming equipment?" Gold Ridge has horseshoes, shuffleboard supplies, corn hole boards and bocce balls, all for your enjoyment. If you're a ping pong player, go read the finance Director's message, he is donating the limited use of his personal ping pong table for some indoor play, AND starting a book club, which I'm pretty excited about.

If you know any crafty people, or are one yourself, the Craft Faire at the Lodge has been approved by the Board and is set for October 14th. Tables are available for \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. It's a great way to acquire handmade crafts and art made by genuine local folds and start off holiday shopping without fighting with the Apple Hill traffic. Contact the Gold Ridge office for more information.

On a personal note, as some of you know, I have a job where I work more than full-time hours, and my professional skill set does not necessarily translate over to my current position on the Board. I knew this would be a challenge when I volunteered to fill the open Recreation Director spot. I thought it through and realized that I **really** like where we live. I enjoy the feel of the community here that is guided by our CC&R's. I saw a need and believed I could help. When voting on issues and making decisions I am choosing based on how to best maintain, sustain, and improve Gold Ridge over the long run. I believe **your** participation; using facilities, showing up for events, and coming to board meetings makes our association stronger. I have really enjoyed meeting so many of my neighbors and appreciate your support, questions, suggestions, and comments about the recreation area. I encourage all of you to continue to get involved and remember, the 5 of us on the other side of the table are all volunteers so speak kindly and please, have a bit of patience-we are just getting started, this is not a simple task, and we are trying to be good stewards of our resources and finances for the benefit of us all.

Board of Directors 2023-2024

President - Jack Mermod

VP/Secretary – Bill Simonson

Finance - Mark Weiner

Greenbelt - Chris Soule

Recreation – Leah Van Meter