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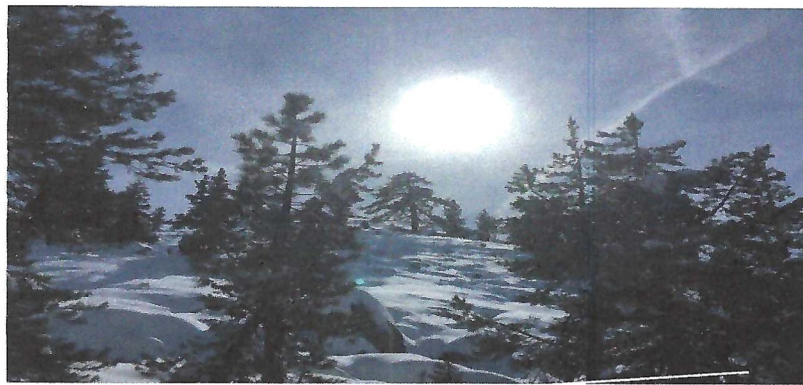
*BOD Election*

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Your Quarterly Newsletter – March 2024

# Gold Ridge Forest

*A Hidden Gem in Nature's Wonderland*

## Upcoming Events

### **Call for Candidates for the Board of Directors Election**

**Letter Deadline**

**April 18<sup>th</sup>**

**See Page 3**

### **Book Club**

**Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**

**@ 6:00pm @ the Lodge**

### **Board of Directors 2024**

President - Jack Mermod

VP/Secretary – Bill Simonson

Finance - Mark Weiner

Greenbelt - Chris Soule

Recreation – Jack Mermod

*Gold Ridge Forest POA*

*4101 Opal Trail*

*Pollock Pines, CA 95726*

*530-644-3880 [grfoffice1@gmail.com](mailto:grfoffice1@gmail.com)*

## ***From our President***

Dear Neighbors,

As we bid farewell to another winter season and store our snow shovels and snowblowers away for the year, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the resilience this community continually shows in the face of the challenges each winter brings. It's a common sight in Gold Ridge, to see neighbors helping each other with clearing snow-covered driveways, delivering groceries, or sharing firewood, and that is one of the things that makes this community a true gem in the Sierras.

As we eagerly anticipate the arrival of spring and the promise of summer, the Board and Gold Ridge's fantastic employees will be working hard to ready our swimming pools for the summer season. The laughter, camaraderie, and shared moments by the pool are some of the highlights that make Gold Ridge Forest such a special place. Please take the time now to ensure you have a current key fob if you wish to access the pool this summer.

Below in this quarter's newsletter, are several informative sections about ongoing projects the Board is working on. You will find an update on our progress with the CC&R's, instructions on updating your recreation key fob, and an update on how the association will collect outstanding member dues. If you are behind on your dues payments, please reach out to the Gold Ridge Office. Payment plans are available if needed and the Board is always willing to work with our members in a reasonable way.

A special thanks to my fellow directors, Mark Weiner, Bill Simonson, and Chris Soule for their continuing contributions to Gold Ridge. The Board is seeking director candidates currently, as well as for the coming term this July. If you have any questions about what being on the Board entails, please feel free to reach out to the office or any current directors! We are happy to answer questions and welcome anyone who wishes to participate.

*President's Message (continued)*

Thank you for being an essential part of Gold Ridge Forest. Here's to a season of sunshine, laughter, and unforgettable moments by the pool!

Warm regards,

Jack Mermod, President



 **Join the Gold Ridge Forest POA Team as a Seasonal Pool Attendant!** 

Are you ready to dive into a fantastic seasonal opportunity? Gold Ridge Forest POA is seeking enthusiastic individuals to join our team as Seasonal Pool Attendants. If you love the sun, enjoy a laid-back atmosphere, and want to be a part of a vibrant community, this is the perfect job for you!

**Position: Seasonal Pool Attendant**  
**Location: Gold Ridge Forest POA Pool**  
**Season: Memorial Day to Labor Day**

**Job Details:**

- **Hours:** Approximately 10-14 hours per week
- **Pay:** \$16 per hour
- **Shifts:** Mornings and evenings available (3-4 Hour Shifts)

**Responsibilities:**

- Ensure a safe and enjoyable pool environment for community members
- Assist with pool maintenance tasks as needed
- Provide excellent customer service to residents and guests
- Participate in community events and socialize with pool-goers

**Qualifications:**

- Must be at least 16 years old
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team

**Perks:**

- Spend your days in the sun while earning a competitive wage
- Flexible shifts to accommodate your schedule
- Be a part of a friendly and welcoming community
- Gain valuable customer service and pool related experience

• **How to Apply:**

- If you're ready to make a splash this summer, send your resume and brief email of interest to [grfoffice1@gmail.com](mailto:grfoffice1@gmail.com). Please include your availability and any relevant experience. Interviews will be scheduled on a rolling basis, so apply early to secure your spot on our team!

Don't miss out on this opportunity to make a splash in the Gold Ridge Forest community. Join us for a summer of fun, sun, and great times by the pool!  

Gold Ridge Forest Property Owners Association

CANDIDATE SOLICITATION NOTICE

**Board of Directors Election**

**Results to be announced at the July 13, 2024 Annual Membership Meeting**

All eligible members of the Association are invited and encouraged to become candidates for election to the Board. In order to become a candidate, you must notify the Association Office in writing, by hand delivery, by mail, or, the notification may also be e-mailed to the Association at [grfoffice1@gmail.com](mailto:grfoffice1@gmail.com)

Submit to the following address:  
Gold Ridge Forest Property Owners Association  
4101 Opal Trail  
Pollock Pines, CA 95726

Your written notification of your desire to be a candidate (and any Director Election Statements described below) **must be received by the Association no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 18, 2024.** Each eligible member whose written notification is timely received by the Association shall automatically be a candidate.

**Election packets will be mailed to GRF members 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.**

**Completed ballots must be mailed to the Inspector of Elections address included in the packet, and must be received by the Inspector of Elections no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024**

**This election is for TWO (2) board member positions; each with two-year term is from July 13 through July 11, 2026 The officer positions are to be determined by the Board of Directors. There shall be no nominations from the floor at the Annual Membership Meeting, held on Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 1:00 at the Lodge.**

Candidates may, but are not required to, submit (to the address listed above) a Director Election Statement that sets forth their qualifications and interest in running for the Board. Director Election Statements may not exceed one side of a single 8-1/2 x 11 inch page. All Director Election Statements that are timely received will be reproduced as submitted and will be included with the ballot package which will be mailed to all **Gold Ridge Forest Property Owners Association** members. By submitting a Director Election Statement, you accept full responsibility for its content and agree to indemnify the Association and its agents and representatives for any and all damage arising from and related to any such content.

It is each member's responsibility to confirm that his or her written notification of desire to be a candidate and the Director Election Statement was received by the Association.

Members will **NOT** be eligible to become a candidate if they are:

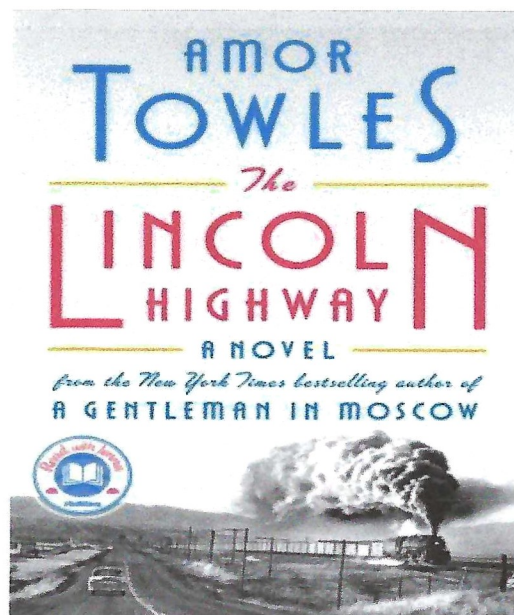
- **Delinquent.** The person is delinquent in the payment of regular and special assessments **unless** (i) paid under protest (ii) entered into a payment plan, (iii) not provided Internal Dispute Resolution (IDR). (Civ. Code §5105(c)(1)&(d).)

- **Listed as Joint Ownership.** If the person, if elected, would be serving on the board at the same time as another person who holds a [joint ownership interest](#) in the same separate interest parcel as the person and the other person is either properly nominated for the current election or an incumbent director. ([Civ. Code §5105\(c\)\(2\).](#))
- **An Owner Less Than 1 Year.** If that person has been a member of the association for less than one year. ([Civ. Code §5105\(c\)\(3\).](#))
- **Have a Criminal Conviction.** A past criminal conviction that would either prevent the association from purchasing the fidelity bond coverage required by Section 5806 should the person be elected or terminate the association's [fidelity bond coverage eligibility](#) as to that person should the person be elected. ([Civ. Code §5105\(c\)\(4\).](#))

We look forward to receiving your notification of desire to be a candidate.



## **Book Club Discussion Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm at the Lodge**



## **Solicit Board Members**

With the recent resignation of Leah Van Meter from the Board of Directors, there is currently a vacancy from now until July of 2023. We would like to thank Leah for her time on the Board. The Board is considering filling this temporary position with an appointment, which would offer a valuable opportunity to see what a full term would have to offer.

As a valued member of our community, we invite you to consider taking an active role in shaping the future of our neighborhood by volunteering for the Gold Ridge Forest Property Owners Association (POA) Board of Directors. This July, we will have two seats available, each offering a fulfilling two-year term. This is a unique and important opportunity for you to contribute your skills, insights, and passion for our community, directly impacting the decisions that shape our shared environment.

By joining the Board of Directors, you'll have the chance to make a positive impact on the neighborhood, help guide community initiatives, and ensure the continued growth and prosperity of Gold Ridge Forest. Your voice matters, and this is your chance to be a driving force in the decisions that shape our community's future. Embrace the opportunity to serve, connect with your neighbors, and leave a lasting mark on Gold Ridge Forest.

If you're ready to step up and make a difference, see the attached instructions for becoming a candidate. Let's work together to create an even stronger and more vibrant Gold Ridge Forest community. Your commitment can truly make a world of difference!

## **Survey**

Our Association's new bylaws require the board to distribute a survey to the membership to solicit feedback from members. See Section 17.5, page 30, entitled, "Annual Survey of the Membership." This section further informs that questions might include how the Association is meeting the needs of members, what members enjoy about the Association, and how the Association can improve. The survey must also include a space for members to provide other feedback. The board is composing the initial survey and expects to issue it later this year. At a minimum, the board expects to include questions suggested by the bylaws.

Are there matters that you think the board should survey members about in addition to the general examples above? Feel free to inform the office about your ideas. Your ideas will be shared with the board and might very well become part of the survey. Did you know that you do not have to wait for the survey to let the board know what you think about living in Gold Ridge and membership in the Association? At every open meeting of the board, members may orally address the board during the scheduled Open Forum, subject only to a reasonable limitation on time and the discretion of the chairperson running the meeting. In addition, members may always submit written material to the office that will be shared via email with board members. If you comment, you will be heard.

## **Assessments**

Every member must pay their dues in a timely manner. The current annual rate is \$428, which can be paid annually or quarterly. Each of our registered 627 property owner members is personally liable for the annual dues. If a member does not timely pay their assessments, members lose their access to our recreation areas and the board is authorized to take action to collect the delinquent amounts. The board is currently updating its collection policy to ensure that it reflects best practices and complies with our bylaws. The board expects the updated policy will include a way for members to dispute a determination that their dues are delinquent. As always, members who are delinquent in their payments may propose a payment plan to the board. Members can always expect the board will be reasonable in evaluating whether to accept a payment plan proposal.

## **The Continuing Quest to Refresh our CC&Rs**

Our Gold Ridge Forest Property Owner's Association was formed as a non-profit mutual benefit corporation on November 15, 1971, and has been in continual existence since then. While our corporation was set up in 1971, our current mutual promises to each other were formalized with our First Restated Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions ("CC&R") were filed with El Dorado County on January 3, 1995. The 1995 CC&R established our modern governing structure and mutual promises to each other whereby each of our 627 members must pay the same amount of dues every year and is entitled to access our recreation areas. Since 1995, there has been one amendment to the CC&R which was filed on April 18, 2002. (The amendment made clear that the Association is not responsible for maintaining easement roads used by members to access their property from the county roads.)

Like all homeowner's associations in California, ours is subject to the Davis-Stirling Common Interest Development Act, which is the California state law that establishes rules, responsibilities, and boundaries. Each association then creates their own CC&Rs unique to their circumstances and which must yield to the state law when there is a conflict. This law is routinely updated and changed by the California legislature and when changes are made to the law it sometimes makes provisions in any CC&R useless and confusing.

Our long-time general counsel, who specializes in the law of community associations, recommends that associations repeal and replace their CC&Rs every ten years. Obviously, as we sit here in 2024, we are behind in updating our key governing document.

We recently experienced the confusion that can be caused by our outdated governing documents. In this case, the confusion came from our old bylaws, which were also adopted last century. As you know, we held an election in 2023 to restate our CC&Rs and bylaws. The CC&R restatement did not receive enough votes to be adopted, even though 90% of members who voted, voted yes to restate the CC&R. The bylaws did receive enough votes and have been adopted.

The election began in January and since not enough votes were received to pass the restated CC&Rs, the election period was extended on six different occasions, extending the election period out until August 2023. The extensions were controversial to some members, due to a section in the old bylaws which limited extensions to only two 30-day extensions. Understandably, some members drew the conclusion that the election was in violation of the bylaws by being extended beyond what was allowed, even though the ballot and its instructions explained that the election period may be extended an unlimited number of times for all members to have the opportunity to vote. Ultimately, our general counsel informed the board that the extensions were valid because of a change in the state law which rendered moot or obsolete the bylaw limit on extensions.

Attorney Darren Bevan pointed out the limits on election extensions in the old bylaws only referred to “written ballots.” Mr. Bevan explained that written ballots are distinct and separate from “secret ballots”, which was the type of ballot used in the 2023 governing documents election. The law changed in 2004, prohibiting the use of written ballots and requiring associations to use secret ballots in governing document elections. Because our old bylaws were adopted well before 2004 so they only referred to written ballots and did not mention secret ballots.

Written ballots made public which way each member voted, while secret ballots do not allow the association to see how each member voted.

Written ballots were outlawed in California due to cases where associations had harassed members over their voting choices, secret ballots add protection for members to prevent this scenario from occurring. Since our election used secret ballots and not written ballots, the limit on written ballots did not apply.

With our secret ballots informing us that the election period may be extended, the 2023 election was valid, and the adoption of the proposed bylaws was proper and legally sound. Our newly adopted bylaws are clear and compatible with the current status of the law. One governing document refreshed; one to go.

Mr. Bevan shared his views about the proposed CC&R's, including opinions on the substance of its various provisions. This “second opinion” is valuable to our Association, as the proposed CC&Rs were written and reviewed by a different law firm and Mr. Bevan is a most eminent attorney practicing community association law. While the board voted on November 30, 2023 to make two small changes to the previously proposed CC&R and resubmit to the members for a vote, the additional time and Mr. Bevan's review has shown that additional changes to the substantive provisions is in our best interests. For example, the provision dealing with recreation area access for tenants or short-term lodgers could be addressed in a manner that will provide a workable answer and compromise on the controversial matter of short-term vacation rentals in our development. In addition, the timing of a second member election is under consideration.

Please stay tuned for the next segment in this series as the board works on a roadmap for a CC&R update, with plans for town-halls, member feedback, and comment periods, and ultimately a new CC&R election. The board expects to solicit the input of members on the substantive provisions and allow for community discussion before finalizing a new proposed CC&R for a membership vote.

## **Access to Recreation Area**

We installed a new gate access system in August 2023. To gain access to the recreation areas, members need to update their FOB or register for a smart phone app, as set forth below. The patience of members is much appreciated during this upgrade process. Thank you.

Once you have completed the updated form and submitted it to the office, and you currently have a FOB, you may choose from one of the following:

### **Option 1**

If you currently have a FOB in your possession, you must bring it to the office, along with a cell phone, and have a few minutes to take a walk to the tennis court and call the office to get it activated.

### **Option 2**

If you are vacation homeowner, or cannot come to the office during office hours, (Monday-Thursday, 10:00am-2:00pm), you can return your FOB to the office either by:

- 1-Put it in an envelope with your name/address and dropping it in the mail slot at the Lodge Office, or,
- 2-mail it to the office, with a note requesting to program and mail it.

### **Option 3**

#### **Cell Phone APP Option**

Call the office to get your cell phone number registered, and APP download instructions. When the APP is downloaded, a text will be sent to your phone, which may take a few minutes up to 48 hours to activate on your phone. Next time you come to the Recreation Area, check it by opening the APP near the gate to give push notification for gate access.

#### **Recreation Area Rules**

As our summer recreation season approaches, Gold Ridge Forest wishes to remind members of the rules regarding rental of properties and the corresponding use of our recreation facilities, such as the pools and tennis courts.

There are no rules restricting a property owner from leasing or renting out their residence to long term tenants (15 days or more) or short-term lodgers (less than 15 days). Simply stated, members may rent out their property.

Second, all members who wish to use the recreation facilities must submit the Recreation Registration Form (available on our website) to the office. This form identifies the individuals in a household who are entitled to use the recreation facilities.

Third, any members who rent out their property to long term tenants, i.e. those who rent more than 15 days, may turn over their access to the recreation facilities to their tenants by submitting the Recreation Area Release Authorization form to the office. This form essentially transfers access from the owner to the tenant and makes clear who is authorized to have access to the recreation facilities.

Lastly, property owners may not transfer recreation facility access to their short-term renters (14 days or less), per the Recreation Area Rules. This rule keeps costs low and prevents our community recreation facilities from being overburdened by short-term rentals. As such, all owners who make their property available to short-term renters should not advertise or promote that their short-term rental includes access to recreation facilities. Short-term renters may use the recreation areas as a guest if accompanied by a member.

A copy of the Recreation Area rules, the Recreation Registration Form, and the Recreation Area Release Authorization are available at the office or on our website for your convenience. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

