

April 2023

THE BREEZE

***A quarterly newsletter celebrating 74 yrs. of life & living in Surf Pines,
the largest gated community on the Northwest Oregon Coast***

ART WALK: SATURDAY MAY 6, 12-4 PM



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Yerke

Fellow Surf Pines Homeowners,

Happy spring! If we are even having one at all with our continued days of cold and rain...Enough is enough! I am ready to start mowing my lawn more regularly and for the real spring to appear.

There are just a few items I'd like to cover for this quarter's Breeze.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

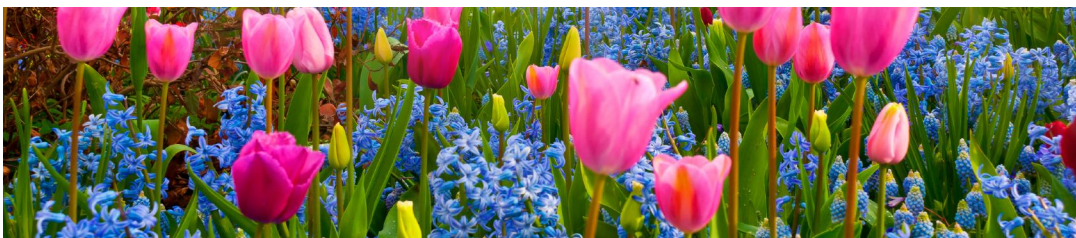
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Request for Information from Nicole Bales of the Astorian

In early April, I received questions from Astorian reporter Nicole Bales about Short Term Rentals (STRs) as they pertain to SP. I have no idea if my comments will be in the Astorian, but from a position of Board of Director (BOD) transparency, here are my verbatim responses to the questions asked.

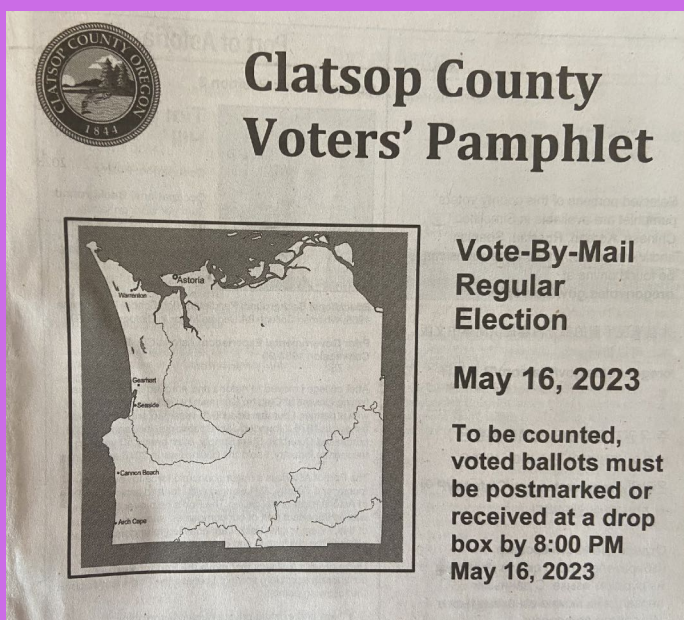
Nicole: "As the May election nears, we wanted to reach out to see if the SP Association has taken a position on Measure 4-221. Separately, could the Association on its own ban vacation rentals in SP? I appreciate your time."

John: "We are an HOA and as such are governed by our Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CCR) and Bylaws. CCR's address property rights. Nothing in our CCR's mentions STRs. As such, we do not regulate them. We operate under the STR covenants of the county. If our members wanted something more restrictive for STRs, 75% of the homeowners would need to approve the change. I hope this answers your question."

Nicole: "Has there been any efforts to make it more restrictive?"

John: "That is a complicated question. The 75% approval threshold makes it nearly an impossible hurdle to ever place a moratorium on STRs. About 5% of our homes are STRs with nearly all exceptionally well managed. We need the County to do a better job of managing the very few that are problems."

For those of you reading this who are domiciled in SP, I urge you to express your opinion by voting – regardless of your position.



Repeals County Ordinance 22-05 that allowed Short-Term Rentals in 16 unincorporated County Zones, including Surf Pines

2023 Annual Meeting and BOD Election

Our annual meeting is at **9:00 AM on Saturday August 5** at the **Astoria Golf & Country Club**. The BOD has yet to decide if it will be relayed via Zoom, but there is a strong likelihood of it. I urge you to attend.

There are two notable events at this meeting:

1) Approval of the Annual Budget

2) Election of BOD Members



Two open BOD positions exist this year. **Tim Regan and my terms are ending.** It's hard to fathom that Tim will have been on the BOD for three years and I for six years. Our Bylaws stipulate that the President form a Nominating Committee to assist in identifying BOD candidates. **For those interested in running, please notify me before the end of May.** If no candidates step forward, I will then appoint a Nominating Committee.

2023/2024 Budget

One of the most important items accomplished by the BOD this past year is the formation of the Finance Committee. It recently prepared a preliminary budget for 2023/2024. I will call a special BOD meeting at the end of May for the explicit purpose of reviewing it. The budget will then be referred to homeowners for comment. The BOD will vote to refer the budget to the membership for consideration at the June BOD meeting.



Saturday August 5, 2023 (9 am)

Miscellaneous

Our transition to Fieldstone is complete. As previously mentioned, we brought the administrative portion of our contract back to SP under the watchful eye of **Debbie Eddy**. Initially, Debbie agreed to be **our administrator** until at least the summer of 2023. **She has now agreed to extend that to at least the end of 2023.** That is a great relief. Her knowledge of and commitment to SP is not easily replaceable.

Sadly, we recently referred our first homeowner to delinquent dues collection. The process is simplified for SP with enactment of valid CCR's, a collection policy and involvement of Fieldstone. The lack of continuity with changing BOD members and accumulating the various associated costs always proved problematic. Now, Fieldstone manages the entire process for us. Their documentation is impeccable, and it will be difficult for anyone not to end up paying dues in full plus a considerable sum of attorney fees.

Cecilia Mushinskie has announced she is **resigning as chairperson of the Community Relations Committee** effective in July. She has done an excellent job with this essential committee whose responsibilities include: meeting new residents, managing the July 4th weekend picnic, planning our garage sales, and other social events. **We need a volunteer to step forward as CRC chairperson.** Hopefully, by the time you read this, someone will have. Should someone not step forward, these activities risk not occurring. The best part about volunteering in our community is getting to know more people.

Best Regards,

John Yerke



KEN'S CORNER

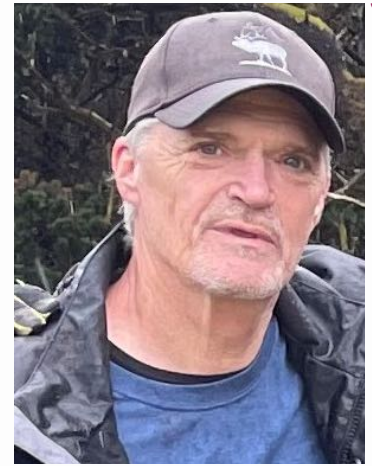
by Ken Weist

Hello Surf Pines! Spring has finally arrived! Here are a few important reminders for everyone this season:

1. Traffic will increase with warmer weather so please **drive slowly and carefully**. We have more children in SP and more individuals out walking every day.
2. **Trash and dog droppings** seem to get worse every year. Please remind visitors, renters, and guests to pick up after themselves. Surf Pines is our home.
3. **Don't put trash out before Thursday night** please! Wind blows the cans over and trash scatters everywhere. Several residents recently found syringes on the road (from a diabetic resident perhaps?) likely from trash cans that had blown over. We don't want a child or anyone in our community picking up such items.
4. Several incidents of **package thefts off of porches** have occurred. I strongly encourage residents to **get home security systems**. Law enforcement doesn't have the staff to patrol SP hourly and I can't patrol 24 hours a day. **Volunteer patrols are needed between 12am and 6am**. Two residents have assisted me but additional volunteers would be welcome. Such activity sends a message that we are protecting our community and may deter criminals from coming into SP.
5. Recently, some residents cleaning up their properties left big piles of debris on the road shoulder hoping I would clean it up. **Residents are responsible for disposing of yard debris from SP property. Please do not dump debris on my burn pile or leave on road shoulders**. Call me if you're unable to dispose of debris and I will provide you with options.
6. **My current phone number**, 24 hours a day, is: **503-298-7911**. The office number is no longer connected.
7. Finally, this summer will bring lots of family, friends, renters, etc. to SP. Please remember that if you don't know people, that doesn't mean they don't belong here. Let's always show SP guests a warm welcome.

I look forward to seeing all my neighbors that have been away and am excited for a nice hot summer. Thank you SP for all your support!

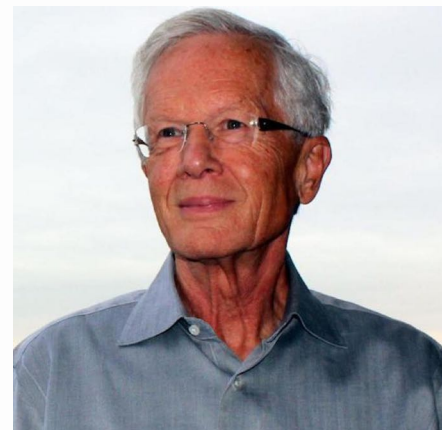
Ken



FINANCE UPDATE

by *Jim Aalberg, Director & Treasurer*

The Board approved the formation of a new standing **Finance Committee** which will work closely with the Treasurer regarding accounting, spending, budgeting, tax returns, reserve funding and insurance issues. The committee will meet a minimum of five times a year and report directly to the Board. Members include: **Debbie Boothe-Schmidt** (Chair), **Clare Hasler-Lewis**, **Debbie Eddy** and **Jim Aalberg**. Current finance summary:



- Operating cash: **\$63,076**
- Reserve funds total: **\$369,119**
- Contingency funds total: **\$18,510**
- Aggregate fund balance (cash/bank CDs): **\$450,705**



Schwindt & Co. CPAs have completed our required reviewed financial statement for the year ending June 30, 2022. Owners may review the statement on the SPA website. Schwindt has also completed an updated Reserves study, which the Board is currently reviewing. We anticipate no material increase in our reserve requirements.

We have moved to **quarterly financial reporting** (from monthly), saving both money and time. From a prompt monitoring perspective, the Finance Committee sees all transactions/vendor invoices in real time using Fieldstone's online accounting software. In consultation with Fieldstone and Schwindt, the Finance Committee recommended **reclassifying HOA-owned land parcels to Common Area status with the County, thus eliminating \$6,000 in annual property tax.**

To date, we are generally in compliance with budget, but some categories exhibit negative variance: **tree removal costs, maintenance/supplies, insurance.** The overall aggregate budget variance is positive: \$7,617 (as of Jan. 1, 2023). **Past dues are at the lowest levels** they have been for years given recent efforts to bring several significant delinquent accounts current. Going forward, with Fieldstone's assistance, we will be acting more aggressively on pass dues. The Finance Committee has drafted the preliminary July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 budget and has submitted it to the Board for review and approval.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the budget or any HOA financial issue, please feel free to contact anyone on the Finance Committee. The objective of this committee is **full and complete transparency.** The SP budget is derived from owner dollars and you need to know exactly how it is being spent.

SECRETARY REPORT & COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

by Thomas Smith

The Communications Committee held its first meeting on Sunday March 5. We reviewed upcoming expenses for all SP communication categories for the next fiscal year, including the Web, Blog, Email blast system, Breeze production, administrator time, and several other items detailed in the following report:



[Click here to view full report.](#)

Over the last two years, the cost of all SP communication items has **averaged about \$5,000/yr.** Although we estimate this will remain similar going forward, the budget does not take into account the large number of hours I put in monthly. This is not sustainable. First, if something were to happen to me, the SPA would find itself in the same position as **when Jeff Hall left in 2015. This all but crippled the SPA until 2020 when it was cleaned up.** Second, SP communications requires someone proficient in many online systems. Even if Debbie Eddy's eventual replacement is experienced in this technology, we have typically needed backup people. The committee agreed that, with the low number of volunteers, it would be prudent to budget for a 3rd party support company. This ensures that all the work we put into cleaning up our systems is not lost. Finally, I cannot continue to devote an average of 10-20 hours/month on this. We contacted several companies who might provide these services and found three that seemed to be a good fit. Although not completely vetted, the average cost is **\$69/hr.** Thus, **we are requesting an additional \$3,000 for our budget.** This would provide almost 44 hours/yr. of support (under 4 hours/month), making our **2023/2024 budget request \$8,000.** This is a conservative estimate based on my continuing to do some communication work for at least the next fiscal year. It also will allow me to train Debbie, our eventual new Community Manager and the new 3rd party support company on all systems, so when I do finally leave, our work will continue.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (CRC)

by *Cecilia Mushinskie*

Happy Spring Everyone!

I am very excited to welcome several new CRC team members: **Sari Esnard**, **Julie Seppa**, **Allison Bemrose**, and **Darren Graywolf**.

I'd also like to thank **Roberta Becker**, **Katie Weber**, **Robin Rhodes**, and **Tom Smith** for their continued support on the CRC, including coming up with great ideas and all of the hard work (and fun) that goes along with making our events happen! Thank you to **Sue Hoagland** for the past few years of CRC support. Your energy and enthusiasm will be missed. However, we hope to see you at the community events!

In 2023, the CRC is excited to coordinate a few new community activities, as well as the always popular Community Picnic in the Park, and Garage Sale. The **Surf Pines Art Walk is scheduled for Saturday May 6, 12 to 4 pm**. This is a Rain or Shine event (we are really hoping for a beautiful Spring day)! Several talented, resident SP artists will be opening up their studios and/or workshops for residents to visit, ask questions, and possibly purchase some of their beautiful art. A complete list of artists and locations will be sent out prior to the event date. Other events for 2023 follow and information will be sent out as the dates get nearer:

- ★ **Community Picnic in the Park: Sunday, July 2**
- ★ **Community Garage Sale: Saturday, July 8**
- ★ **Community Street Party on Surf Pines Landing: Friday, Sept 8**

I am looking forward to our upcoming events and seeing old friends and making new ones. I hope that you can join us!

As always, if you have any ideas for Community activities, please contact one of the CRC members.

Cecilia Mushinskie



REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

by Julia Radditz, Principal Broker/Owner, TOTEM Properties LLC
Market data provided by Clatsop MLS. Current as of 1/14/2023.

FOR SALE NOW IN SURF PINES

89751 Sea Breeze Drive: **\$949,000** (Pending)

89026 Ocean Drive: **\$1,225,000** (Pending)

90022 Ocean Drive: **\$1,299,000**

RECENTLY SOLD IN SURF PINES

89442 Ocean Drive: **\$1,025,000**

Since the last publication of this newsletter in January 2023, one house has sold in SP. This property sold for **91% of the original list price**, and average market time was **90 days on the market**.



There were **no vacant land sales** during this period.

Taking a broader look at real estate in Clatsop County, there are currently **119 homes on the market** in active status, and **70 are pending**. By the end of March, homes were selling for an average of **96% of their list price**, according to the Clatsop MLS. **The list-to-sold ratio has rebounded** to its October 2022 rate, after a decline from June through December 2022.

The **median sale price in March 2023 was \$595,000** compared to a median sale price in **March 2022 of \$535,000**, which represents a **11% increase** for the month. During that same period, median days on the market increased from 45 to 70.



The spring weather thus far has left something to be desired, but hopefully the spring real estate market will not. We hope to see more new listings coming on the market this spring, and expect to continue seeing longer active market times. This will give some buyers leverage to negotiate on pricing and repairs. Lenders are continuing to bring new and creative options to help buyers with rate affordability.

Wishing you a beautiful spring season!