

JANUARY 2025

THE BREEZE

***A quarterly newsletter celebrating 76 yrs. of life & living in Surf Pines,
the largest gated community on the Northwest Oregon Coast***



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Yerke

Fellow Surf Pines Homeowners,

I bid everyone a Happy New Year and wish you all the best in achieving your 2025 resolutions!

Laura Holgate - Administrator



It is well publicized that SP hired Laura Holgate to replace Debbie Eddy, our retiring administrator.

Laura is a real find for us. I am exceptionally impressed with her knowledge of HOAs and Oregon HOA-related statutes.



IN THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KEN'S CORNER

FINANCE REPORT

GATE HISTORY

ROADS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY RELATIONS UPDATE & EVENT CALENDAR

RADDITZ REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

WHO'S NEXT DOOR?

Laura is thorough and possesses a keen willingness to learn in all necessary areas. She is everything and more that we desire, and **she is local**. I hope all homeowners will reach out to meet her!

Annual Planning Strategies

Out of our planning session last fall, two strategies emerged:

- 1) Evaluate the **effectiveness of the Annual Meeting voting process** and review options to simplify it. Surely it will include **electronic voting**.
- 2) Form a **Short Term Rental (STR) ad hoc committee** to determine what we can do to decrease animosity toward STRs in SP. I am responsible for this and formed a nine-person committee with **Laura Holgate** as the **chairperson**. The first meeting was in January. Opportunities are already availing themselves.

Ken and Shawna

In December, Ken and Shawna lost one of their sons to a tragic and yet unexplained death. I talk to Ken daily and I cannot begin to know their grief. Few can. What I do know is: they have had, and continue to have, extraordinary expenses. One homeowner asked if SP could collect donations to help them. Doing that is complicated, but Laura did post a message that addressed how homeowners could help them financially. So many in SP have responded and continue to respond compassionately, sensitively, and financially. Ken commented to me recently that the support from so many homeowners has been a beacon of hope during this incredibly challenging time. It is moments like these that remind us of the strength and compassion within our neighborhood. Thank you to everyone who has reached out, offered support, and contributed in any way. Your actions have made a significant difference in Ken and Shawna's lives, providing them with some comfort and relief amidst their grief. Let us continue to stand by them and offer our help in any way we can. Thank you for your continued support,

Best regards,
John



KEN'S CORNER

by Ken Weist, Safety & Maintenance Manager



Hello Surf Pines,

As you all know, Shawna and I have recently lost our son Andrew. As devastating this has been to our entire family, we are so very grateful to each and every person in Surf Pines for the unbelievable amount of love and kindness that has been shown to us. Shawna and myself have never felt more of a community and part of a bigger family than these last few weeks. Our healing up to this point has come from this amazing community that we are blessed to call home. Shawna and I truly have never felt so much love. Thank you Surf Pines for being there for Shawna and myself. Our hearts are filled with gratitude.

Ken & Shawna



FINANCE REPORT

by *Thomas Smith, Treasurer*

In reviewing our financial position, I am happy to report that our current financials are tracking as expected and that our reserves are in good standing. Below is a list of questions/topics submitted to me which I address below.



1. Has a CD been purchased with 0677 contingency funds?

Last year it was decided to change the contingency's 0677 account type to a Money Market Account (MMA) rather than a CDAR (Certificate of Deposit Account Registry), since rates were comparable. Money is also available with no penalty from an MMA.

2. Can I get the breakdown of our CD's, rate amount and maturity dates?

See the following Account ID: Effective Date / Maturity Date / Interest Rate / Amount:

6728: 12/27/24 / 12/26/25 / 3.75% / \$106,829.57

1726: 11/01/24 / 10/31/25 / 4.25% / \$231,725.00

1065: 12/21/24 / 9/20/25 / 4.00% / \$ 51,907.62

3. Maintenance and Supplies: We are at \$5,700 at the end of Q1. If this spending rate continues, we will be \$14,000 over budget at year end. Should we be concerned? Some of these expenses (pump refurbishment project) will come out of our reserve account.

4. Legal Fees: Our legal budget for 2024 was spent in the first 90 days. Are additional legal costs anticipated? How will future legal costs be covered and accounted for in the budget? Let me provide some context and our plans moving forward. In 2022, a 16.5-year report prepared by Debbie Eddy showed our average annual legal expenses were nearly \$15,000. Based on this, we initially budgeted accordingly.



In 2023, the finance committee reduced the legal budget to \$5,000— one-third of the historical average. Despite my concerns, I was assured overages would be covered by contingency funds. For fiscal year (FY) 2023–24, legal expenses again approached the \$15,000 historical average, with net costs of \$9,054.50 after insurance reimbursements—still nearly double the \$5,000 budget. Despite this, the committee maintained a \$5,000 budget for the current year. As Treasurer I will ensure that next year’s budget will be adjusted to align with historical averages, ensuring more realistic financial planning.

5. **Office supplies:** How do we best address on-going office supply expenses? (budget was been spent in the first 90 days). Most expenses were charged to the wrong account. It was for the renewal of our email and will be charged to the Web account.

6. **Payroll Expenses:** If we annualize the first quarter wages, we will be \$9,000+ over budget at year end. This year our total payroll for the first quarter was only \$425 higher than last year. Our FY starts July 1 and covers the first quarter, Ken’s busiest time (more overtime). With this year's increase in payroll budget, it is actually \$200 below budgeted expense for the first quarter.

7. **Website Expense:** If we annualize the first quarter’s website costs, we will be \$3,200 over budget at year end. In comparing last FY to this FY, our current expenditures are in line with what was spent by the first quarter of last year.

**NEED
TO
REDUCE
EXPENSES!**



HISTORY OF SP GATE SYSTEM

by Thomas Smith, Director

Several members have asked why we don't install more substantial gates and also expressed concerns about the costs of maintaining the current ones. I'd like to provide some history and context regarding our gate system.

The Origins of Our Gates

The gates, installed in the 1980s, were not designed as a security measure. Their primary purpose was to prevent large trucks from cutting through SP to avoid the weigh scales on Highway 101. While the gates achieved this goal, maintaining them has been a challenge ever since. The original gates were solid aluminum, and their heavy weight made repairs costly and time-consuming, often taking a month or more. Additionally, their slow closing speed allowed tailgating, leading many members to believe the gates didn't effectively limit non-member access. Over time, the gates reached the end of their expected lifespan.

Transition to the Current Gates

Around 2016, the Roads & Grounds Committee led an effort to replace the aging gates. After consulting with our vendor, Metro Door, the committee opted for the current gate system for several key reasons:

Quicker Closing Times: lighter gates close faster, reducing tailgating

Breakaway Design: If hit, the gates can be repaired in days rather than months.

Cost Efficient: The new system was significantly cheaper than alternatives.

While **these gates were never intended as a robust security measure** (as the budget didn't allow for staffed security at both gates), they provided a practical and cost-effective solution.



Successes and Challenges of the New Gates

Over the past seven years, the new gates have largely met the committee's goals: (1) quicker closing times, (2) faster repairs, and (3) lower costs.

Quicker closing times have led to a substantial decrease in tailgating. Damage caused by collisions can now be fixed much more quickly and maintenance expenses have dropped significantly. For example:

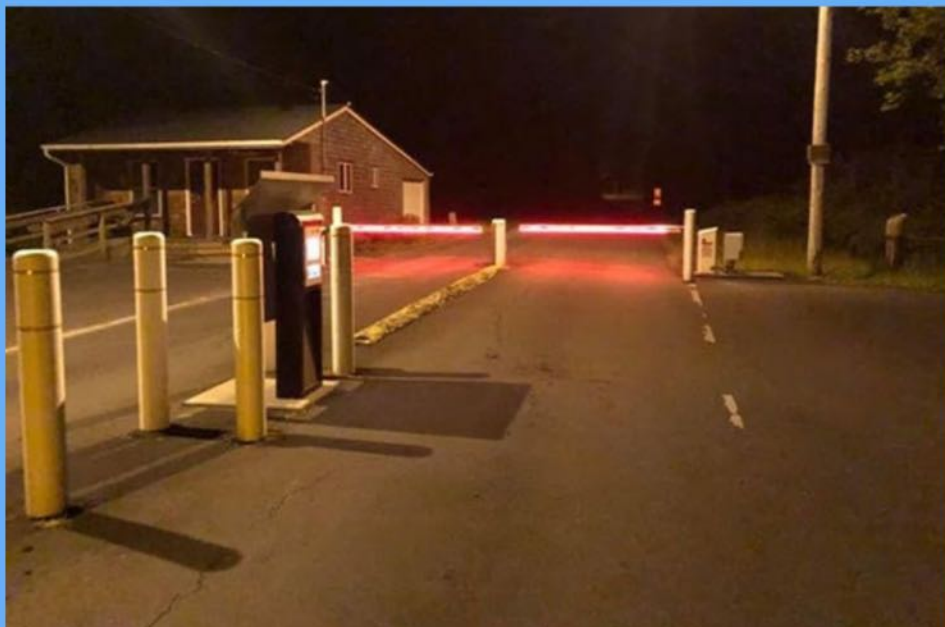
In FY 2023-24 we budgeted \$6,000 for gate repairs but spent only \$4,136, a 31% reduction.

For FY 2024-25, the repair budget was lowered to \$2,000. As of the first quarter, gate repairs have generated a credit of \$2,049 due to reimbursements from previous collisions.

Additionally, frequent collision damage has essentially resulted in new gates, eliminating the need for a planned \$4,000 replacement from our reserves in the next FY. However, the quicker closing times have also resulted in an increase in collisions from tailgaters. Fortunately, with cameras at both gates, repair costs are mostly covered by the individuals who were responsible. Weather-related damages, particularly to the electronics, have also occurred but are covered under insurance regardless of the gate type.

Considerations for a More Substantial Gate System

If the membership wishes to replace the current system with a more substantial one, the costs would far exceed the \$4,000 currently allocated in our reserves. Implementing such a system would require a special assessment to cover the significant additional expenses.



ROADS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

by Margaret Simmons-Cross, Chair

Roads & Grounds had a productive fall season. Here are some of the activities and achievements:

US-101/Surf Pines Lane Reconstruction. As reported in the October Breeze, North Pacific Excavation completed this project in September. Ken spent time adding pavement markings and reflective pavement markers to delineate lanes and make the intersections safer for our members, as shown in the pictures below.



Work on Manion and Sea Breeze. Additional work was performed by North Pacific Excavation in late October under a Board-approved change order to complete repairs to deteriorated pavement areas on Manion Drive and finish the extension of Sea Breeze Drive. Photos below show this work in progress and completed.



**PAVING
ACTIVITIES
FOR NORTH
EXTENSION OF
SEA BREEZE
DRIVE**



**MANION DRIVE
PAVEMENT
REPAIRS**



Margaret hosted a Roads & Grounds Committee meeting on December 4, 2024 to refocus on upcoming projects. Items discussed included:

1) Gate Enhancement. The immediate task for 2025 will be replacement of both north and south gate kiosk keypads due to the difficulty in reading the screens and outdated software. Work will include supply and replacement of the keypads by Metro Access Control. A rock veneer will be constructed around the kiosks following installation (**see example below**). This work is expected to occur within the next 5 months. A larger project for additional gate area beautification will be discussed with the SP Board for their direction.

2) Camera Installation. As approved by members in August, camera installation is underway. Cameras have been ordered and field work will follow to locate and install them. The committee also discussed development of policies around camera usage. A team has been identified to move development of policies forward. We will use example policies prepared by similar communities as a starting point. Draft policies will be shared with residents.

3) Pavement Repairs. The next project will focus on pavement repairs in areas of need throughout the community. Ken will be taking photos of deteriorated road areas and work with Margaret on priorities. The scope of the work is expected to include shoulder stabilization, pavement patching and crack repairs.

4) Refreshing of 2025/2026 Reserve Study. This will be undertaken in early 2025, including updating our condition assessment of existing facilities and forecasting cost and timing of any needed repairs.

Entrance to The Highlands in Gearhart



Keypad Entry at Pinehurst Estates, Gearhart

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (CRC)

by *Katie Weber & Roberta Becker*

HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

It's the beginning of a new year and your CRC will be planning several up-and-coming events (**see calendar on next page**). We would be pleased to have your new ideas and suggestions.

The last quarter of 2024 (Oct. - Dec.) was a success with our **October Trick or Treat** throughout the neighborhood. Several residents reported they had quite a few Treat seekers in costumes.

Our next event was our **Holiday Party** at the Astoria Golf & Country Club. This was a well attended and fun gathering (**see photo below**). Cocktails, appetizers, costume contests and a fun game had us all in laughs and smiles.

The last event was our **Festival of Lights**. A big thank you to all residents who put up their sparkly lights for the rest of us to enjoy. With our ever-changing weather this year, it was a bit of challenge to keep our lights on and the streets clear for those out enjoying our events.

We'd like to thank everyone who helped throughout this last year with all of our events. We wouldn't be able to pull it off without your fearless help. We are hoping to catch the new residents we have missed during the last part of last year with a **Meet & Greet by the end of February**. If you would like to schedule a greeting with a team member, please give Katie a call at 503-440-6156.

Best Wishes to all, The CRC Team



**December 14
Holiday Party
at the Astoria
Golf & Country
Club**



Surf Pines Schedule of Events

Check web page for actual dates and times -

www.surfpines.org

Dated 1/8/2025

Month	Event	CRC Meeting	Date	Time	Agenda Items	Lead
January	Update your information at Surf Pines Make sure the information we have is current and accurate if anything has changed over the previous year.					
February	Wine Tasting Party - Last Saturday CRC Meeting 1st Thurs10am Wine Tasting Party, Calendar					
March						
April	CRC Meeting 1st Thurs6pm Street, Plant, Picnic & Garage					
May	Plant Exchange - 1st Saturday, at park 10am-12noon Street Party - 3rd Saturday CRC Meeting 1st Thurs10am Picnic & Garage					
June	Picnic - Last Saturday, at park - 1:00pm CRC Meeting 1st Thurs6pm Picnic & Garage					
July	Garage Sale - 2nd Saturday, gates open 8am to 3pm CRC Meeting 1st Thurs10am Garage, Art/Garden & Annual Mtg.					
August	Surf Pines Annual Meeting - 2nd Saturday CRC Meeting 3rd Thurs6pm Garage & Art/Garden					
September	Art Walk or Garden Walk - 2nd Saturday					
October	Trick or Treating - Last Saturday - 3 to 5pm, pumpkin at end of driveway CRC Meeting 1st Thurs10am Holiday, Lights					
November	CRC Meeting 1st Thurs6pm Holiday, Lights					
December	Holiday Party - AGCC - 2nd Saturday, 5:30-8:30pm Festival of Lights in Surf Pines -3rd Saturday 6:30 to 7:30pm					

REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

by Julia Radditz, Principal Broker/Owner, TOTEM Properties LLC
Market data from Clatsop MLS (current as of 1/19/2025)

FOR SALE NOW IN SURF PINES

89650 Sea Breeze Drive: **\$813,000**
89562 Lakeside Court: **\$926,000**
89610 Sea Breeze Drive: **\$1,275,000**
89040 Ocean Drive: **\$1,287,500** (Pending)

RECENTLY SOLD IN SURF PINES

90027 Ocean Drive: **\$949,000**



As we settle into the new year, it's a great time to reflect on the latest real estate trends in and around SP. Since the October 2024 Breeze, just 1 home has sold--for **100% of its original list price after 37 days** on the market. A testament to well-aligned pricing and buyer interest!

Looking at the broader Clatsop County market, 148 homes are listed as "active" and 27 homes "under contract" as of January 19, 2025. By the close of December 2024, homes across the county were selling for an average of **95% of their list price**. The **median sale price** in December reached **\$608,000**, reflecting a **17% increase** from the median price of **\$518,275** in **September 2023**. However, the average time on market increased slightly during that same period, from 110 to 119 days. Since August 2024, we've seen a steady uptick in average days on the market, resulting in a slower pace (by about 9 days) compared to December of the previous year. Meanwhile, active median list prices have been gradually declining since October, though not enough to align with market trends. This has created a delicate balance where accurate, data-driven pricing is crucial. Sellers who rely on recently sold comparable properties to guide their pricing decisions are better positioned to adapt to shifting conditions.

As always, I'm here as a resource for questions or insights about the market. Whether you're thinking about selling, curious about how your property fits into current trends, or just staying informed, I'm happy to help. Wishing everyone a bright start to the year ahead!

All my best-

Julia Radditz



WHO'S NEXT DOOR?

by **Chris Villiers**

If creativity takes courage, as the artist Henri Matisse famously said, then **Cecilia Mushinskie** may be one of the most courageous people you'll ever meet.

Cecilia spends hours in her garage studio, painting canvases, firing ceramics in a kiln, and producing functional culinary artwork, which she currently sells at **Crafted In Seaside**, an artist Co-op steps away from the beach near the turnaround on Broadway. Her creations include olive, teak, bamboo and acacia charcuterie boards, lazy Susan's and cutting boards inlaid with colorful resin designs (**see photos below**), and spoon rests formed from empty wine bottles heated and shaped into useful tools for home chefs.



Cecilia also has exhibited and sold her unique artwork at other local venues, including the Astoria Sunday Market and the Black Friday sale at the Seaside Convention Center. Art "is in my DNA," she says. "My dad and mom were super creative. There were six kids, and we were allowed creative freedom. Whatever we wanted to do, our parents allowed us to try it."

Her father owned a welding shop and produced works of metal art, raised farm animals and rode in the rodeo while Cecilia was growing up in California; her mother drew pictures, sewed, and practiced embroidery. Following in their footsteps, Cecilia, at various times, has thrown pottery, painted, forged stained-glass windows, and built a darkroom in her house "back when you developed your own film and hung it to dry. Whatever strikes me, I just attempt it," she explains. "I do stuff for a while and I either master it, or get bored with it, or both. And then I move on to something else. I like creative challenges. I don't like to get complacent."



**Two favorite Cecilia creations
in my kitchen!**

(Clare Hasler-Lewis, Editor)



When not working in the “organized chaos” of her garage, Cecilia takes refuge in the greenhouse she helped design next to her home. The space incorporates antique windows she found in old houses and her own stained-glass creations. Working in “my greenhouse is a form of art to me,” she says. “I do bonsai, grow tomatoes, peppers and herbs in the summer, and succulents in the

fall and winter.” However, “I’ve tried orchids and resigned myself to the fact that I can’t master them.”

Cecilia and her husband, Mike, moved to SP seven years ago after retiring from careers at Southern California Edison. He was responsible for constructing and maintaining high-power distribution lines; she held multiple positions over 32 years, ending up leading a team that taught large commercial customers how to reduce energy costs by millions of dollars. Scoping out possible retirement spots, Cecilia and Mike completed five RV journeys over a period of 18 months – including a trip from Southern California to Toronto. A lesson learned from that cross-continental drive was “we wanted to be close to the coast and not in the central part of the country. An article in Coast Living magazine about a “cute cabin in Seaside” focused their search on the Oregon coast. After looking at 40 to 50 houses between Brookings and Astoria, they chose the house where they currently live with their 13-year-old cocker spaniel Joey and two puppies, Hershey and Willy.

Being interviewed in her home trimmed with holiday decorations just before Christmas, Cecilia recalls, “I love my family, loved my life in California. It took some convincing to move away.” In California, the couple were known for hosting large holiday parties, with decorated trees in every bedroom for overnight guests. “When we moved away, I had people say, ‘We’re going to miss you but, Dang! I’m really going to miss your Christmas party.’” They were attracted to Surf Pines by the proximity to the ocean, the large lots, a sense of privacy and its cohesive neighborhood. “I could feel a sense of community just talking to people,” she says. “I knew immediately that if there were people in need, everybody would just rally.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Who’s Next Door? is a feature profiling the people of Surf Pines.

To recommend someone for a future profile, send an email to Chris Villiers at: villiersmedia@frontier.com

