

**JULY 2025**

# **THE BREEZE**

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

Photo Credit: J. Barbeau



## **THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

***by John Yerke***

Fellow Surf Pines Homeowners,

I hope this Breeze finds you well and enjoying the beautiful summer season.

### **Membership Vote Results**

Recently members voted on three By-Law changes. As I communicated earlier, the results were as follows:

- Board Member Election, Numbers, and Terms:  
Passed 183-6
- Amendment to Article IV, Section 4.4 (Electronic Ballots): Passed 173-16
- Amendment to Article IV, Section 4.6 (Prohibition of Proxies): Passed 97-16



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**WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

The first measure was a simple update to clarify and add missing verbiage to our bylaws. However, the second and third amendments will significantly improve the efficiency of our HOA voting processes at the annual meeting by allowing electronic voting and prohibiting proxy votes.

Since approval, the BOD has contracted with Inspectors of Election to manage the annual meeting vote.

**Gates**

Gate damage remains a significant concern for our community. We have had so many incidents with people hitting and damaging our gates this year, it exceeds comprehension. While many suggestions have been offered, a lasting solution has yet to be implemented.

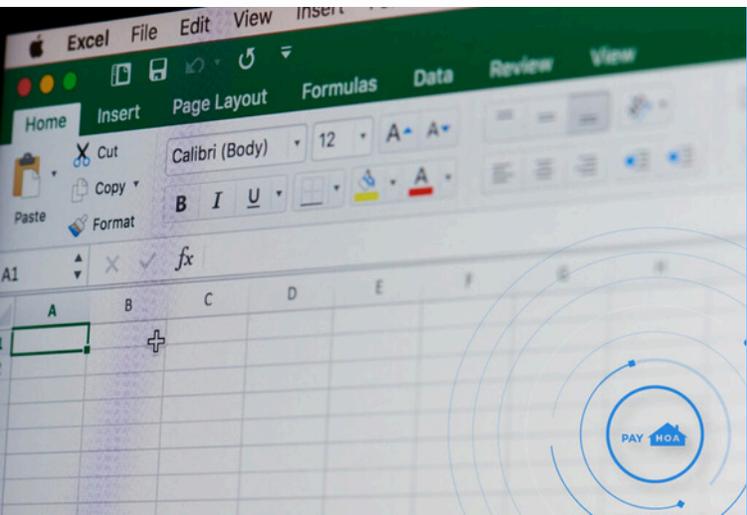
Repairs costs range in cost from \$1,000 to over \$3,000, often caused by inattention or malicious actions. One proposal is to add a speed bump near the keypad kiosk to deter aggressive speeding to gain entry to SP. Our R&G’s committee, together with advice from Metro, our gate and kiosk supplier, is currently evaluating potential solutions. We look forward to sharing their recommendations.

What is obvious is our signs are not doing the job. A speed bump just might. Our R&G’s committee has a team studying solutions. Hopefully, that will include advice from Metro our gate and kiosk supplier. I look forward to the committee’s recommendations.

**Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting is just a few weeks away. This will complete Tom Smith’s term. He is not running for reelection. Tom has done a phenomenal job serving as both secretary and treasurer.

Our Breeze editor, Jordan Barbeau is running for Tom’s position and is unopposed. Her bio is in the Breeze. I can unequivocally say she will be an excellent addition to our BOD.



**ANNUAL MEETING REMINDER**  
**AUGUST 9th**  
**Call to Order at 8:30 AM**  
**Astoria Golf and Country Club**  
**Vote your paper or online ballot**  
**BEFORE August 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM**

With the addition of electronic voting this year, the efficiency of the meeting will <sup>p 3</sup> be much improved and be of a shorter duration.

### **STR - Lawsuit Wigant, Hunter, Smith vs Surf Pines**

Four of the five Board members, our legal team and Laura met with a mediator attempting to resolve the lawsuit seeking to prohibit STR in Surf Pines. The plaintiffs are reviewing Surf Pines STR documents prefacing a second mediator session on August 14, 2025.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best regards,  
John

### **EDITOR'S NOTE: as promised, here is the bio for the candidate for Tom's position... written by Jordan Barbeau, of course.**

Well, hello again, Surf Pines! My husband, Jamie Dunnam, and I have been full-time residents of Surf Pines since we moved from Portland in July 2024. I soon joined the Community Relations Committee, and recently became Editor of The Breeze. I am an attorney and have negotiated numerous contracts for organizations with hundreds of employees, managed independent contractors, as well as dabbled in wills and trusts. I was a bonded signer for a non-profit legal organization in Portland, where I practiced for several years. I also have managed substantial databases and served as an IT admin, have experience reviewing and updating policy manuals and other handbooks, including serving a three-year term on the Oregon State Bar UCrJI Committee, and am well-versed in Robert's Rules of Order, all of which would likely be helpful to the broader role as a member of the BOD. When I am not working, you can usually find me strolling the beach with our dogs.



You know what 's better than the same photo I used to introduce myself last time?  
A photo of elk bums.



# KEN'S CORNER

*by Ken Weist, Safety & Maintenance Manager*

Hello Surf Pines,

We have had a wonderful summer this year in Surf Pines. But the one big issue as we all know are the gates being hit so much. And as you also know, changes are coming. But the biggest culprit is speed: we need to slow down to **10 miles per hour** when approaching the gates. Recently, while working on the gates, I was shocked how fast everyone enters and exits.

And guests play follow the leader. If you're going fast, they try to catch up. So let's all work together on slowing down - especially after exiting. **90 percent of all gate hits are due to speed.**

Thank you, everyone, for your patience during the new kiosk transition. I'm excited about the software but still learning more each day. So if you're having issues with gate remotes take a picture of the back and text to me for reprogramming. New monthly codes become active at **7:00 am on the first of every month.**

Residents, I want to commend you on community. So many of you have been really helping at bringing the community together, more residents are getting involved than anytime during my eight years. When gates get hit, residents have been huge in assisting me, as well as other minor issues. The Roads and Grounds Committee has never been stronger. The Community Relations Committee team have been amazing. And I can't give enough credit to the Board for always providing me with what I need. What I'm saying is Surf Pines has never been better. Thanks everyone for giving Shawna and i the privilege of calling this incredible community home.

As summer comes into fall, let's remember that those winds are coming so don't forget to move things (plant pots, chairs etc.) inside or secure properly.

Have a wonderful rest of summer everyone!

Ken & Shawna



# FINANCE REPORT

*by Thomas Smith, Treasurer*

## **Preview of the 2025–2026 Budget: A Year of Practical Improvements and Strategic Planning**

The Surf Pines Association Board of Directors and Budget Committee have finalized a proposed budget for the 2025 – 2026 fiscal year, which will be presented to members for adoption at the Annual Meeting coming up on **August 9, 2025**. This year's budget reflects a balance between maintaining essential services, addressing long-term infrastructure needs, and managing our reserves responsibly.



Among the key themes guiding this budget cycle were inflationary pressures, the need for ongoing road maintenance, and legal and administrative realities. While costs have risen in many areas, the Budget Committee worked to keep the proposed dues increase well below the rate of inflation over the past three years. That was made possible in part by revising our reserve funding strategy and adopting a more cost-effective maintenance plan for our roads.

Another change this year involves **how we handle billing for quarterly dues**. Historically, the Association billed dues at the end of each quarter—essentially collecting payments after services were rendered. This year, we are taking the first step to correct that practice. Starting in September 2025, invoices will be sent 30 days before the quarter begins, with payments due on the first day of the quarter. This one-time adjustment does not increase dues or require overlapping payments, but it will bring us closer to standard HOA accounting practices and reduce the likelihood of late fees.

We've also updated several budget categories to better reflect real operating needs, including adjustments to payroll, administrative support, insurance, and gate system maintenance. Importantly, we are continuing to prepare for the possibility of additional legal costs related to the pending short-term rental lawsuit by strengthening our contingency fund.

The full budget proposal, along with a detailed explanation of key changes, will be shared and discussed at the Annual Meeting. All members are encouraged to attend and participate in the budget approval process. Your input ensures that we remain transparent, fiscally responsible, and focused on the long-term health of our community.

If you have questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Treasurer or Community Manager.

# ROADS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

by **Margaret Simmons-Cross, Chair**

Roads & Grounds we quite busy this spring. Here is what was accomplished:



- New Kiosk Keypad Installation – We finalized the agreement Metro Access Control on the replacement of both north and south gate kiosk keypads which were installed in May. The installation of a rock veneer pedestal will follow, targeting summertime.
- The installation of additional security cameras as approved by members as part of the last annual meeting was completed in May. Ken constructed concrete foundations and mounting poles for their installation.
- Roadway project for 2025 – The Board approved a pavement restoration project at the June 13, 2025, Board meeting. The full scope of the project includes shoulder stabilization, pavement patching, roadway sealing and crack repairs. The majority of the work for the project will occur on northern Manion Drive and areas of Surf Pines Lane. The Invitation to Bid and contract documents were prepared and issued on June 24<sup>th</sup> to local contractors with bids opened on July 16<sup>th</sup>. We received two bids and have awarded the project to Olson Asphalt Restoration with work planned for September. Stay tuned for additional information as we get closer to the start of construction.



- Sandspur & Scotch Broom Treatment – Roads & Grounds Committee member Mark Miller coordinated bids and the efforts of a local landscape contractor, Daniel Becerra, to manually remove sandspurs from the Surf Pines Park and on trails #2 and #4. While this does not eliminate them, the park and trails should be much better for this year. Further, the considerable amount of Scotch Broom at the south end of the park will be cut and hauled away in July by Daniel Becerra. There was concern that there were coyotes gathering in the scotch broom.

- In light of the numerous gate crashes that have occurred in the past several months, Roads & Grounds formed an Ad-Hoc Subcommittee to review the nature of the occurrences and develop recommendations aimed at improving visibility and clarify operations. The group included me and fellow community members Jon Tullis, Christie Smith, Tom Hatch, and Clare Hasler-Lewis. We visited the gate locations to review layout and signage. Ken Weist helped us understand the situation by sharing his experience, answering our questions, and providing data and video clips of typical gate crashes.
- Some important conclusions were reached based on review and discussions:
  - The highest incidence of crashes occurs at the entrance to the neighborhood rather than at the exit. Exit arms are opened automatically so very few incidences regarding egress.
  - The north gate has a higher incidence of crashes than the south gate. Conditions at the north and south gate vary, with the north gate more shaded and perhaps less visible.
  - Ken reported that most gate crashes were a result of chronic practice of cars tailgating other cars.
  - Ken also reported that there are numerous incidents of cars directly hitting the gates indicating operator errors such as improper use of remotes or possibly impaired driving.
  - The committee also suspects that LED lighting on the gate arms may not be visible during the day.
  - It appears that operator errors are frequently at fault, namely:
    - failure to stop
    - misjudging the timing of the gate's operation
    - drivers' impatience
    - failure to operate a remote properly
    - failure to stop or even slow down while using a remote

The Ad-Hoc Subcommittee has provided the Board with a summary of our findings and recommendations for consideration, which will be reviewed with the Board at an upcoming Special Board meeting on Monday, July 28, 2025.

South Gate Area



North Gate Area



# COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (CRC)

*by Katie Weber & Roberta Becker*

**OUR COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE** has been busy these last few months.

If you missed it, our **Plant Exchange** went well thanks to Fred & Debby McBride. We had quite a few suppliers and lots of takers. Looking for an even better turnout next year. Plan for us next May.

Our **Surf Pines Picnic** was another successful day. Held on the last Saturday of June (28th). We had around 55 attendees this year. Our weather was perfect; food was fantastic and our volunteers for setting up and tearing down were outstanding. I can't say enough about the way our team got everything set up in record time. I love it when a plan comes together.

We want to give a **BIG HUGE THANK YOU** to Mike Mushinskie who was our head chef at the BBQ and has been for the last 6 years. What a guy to spend his time cooking all day long and cleaning up after as well as a **BIG THANK YOU** to Ken who gets the park ready for us every year.



What a spread!  
(Photo credit:  
Katie Weber)



The **Garage Sale** was yet another fun day. Roberta Becker and Katie Weber headed up getting this event set up with emails to the members getting them signed up and handling the advertising on the websites and in the newspapers. We had 26 homes sign up but as I drove around there were several others who joined in the fun. All totaled we had round 33 homes participating. Hope you all had a great day and made some money but most importantly got rid of old treasures to make room for new ones.

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**Upcoming events** include:

The Annual Meeting August 9th

The Street Party August 23rd on Ocean (more information to follow)

The Art Walk / Garden Walk September 13th (more information to follow)

**Lastly**, CRC welcomed another three new members to our homeowner's association the first part of July. If you are new to Surf Pines and haven't been welcomed by our team please let us know so we can come and bring you our information and knowledge of the area.

**Thank you** to everyone who has worked on our committee and or with us to make our community a warm and friendly place to live. You are so appreciated. If you would like to join our committee you are more than welcome to come to our meetings with your bright ideas and helping hands.

**Come out, meet your neighbors, have fun and play with us.**

Looking forward to a great rest of the summer!

Your CRC Team



Neighbors getting to know each other at the Fourth of July picnic.

(Photo credit: Katie Weber)

# REAL ESTATE MARKET WATCH

*by Julia Radditz, Principal Broker/Owner, TOTEM Properties LLC  
Market data from Clatsop MLS (current as of 7/25/2025)*

Hello Surf Pines Homeowners,  
Happy summer! Since the last newsletter in April 2025, two homes have sold within the Surf Pines community. One property sold for 95% of its original list price after 57 days on the market, and the second sold for 93% after 50 days. While not record-breaking, these sales reflect the current reality of a market shaped by higher borrowing costs and shifting buyer sentiment.

As expected for this time of year, more homes are coming on the market daily. However, buyer demand continues to be tempered by ongoing economic uncertainty and interest rates that have remained stubbornly high. Two of the active listings in Surf Pines have had recent price reductions—an indicator that even well-qualified buyers are approaching their purchases with caution and budget discipline.

We're also seeing more contingent offers and a notable uptick in transactions that fail to make it to the closing table. Common reasons include employment-related issues, increased insurance premiums, or simply buyer hesitation. It's a reminder that in today's market, no sale is guaranteed until it's fully closed.

Looking ahead, there's hope that lower interest rates may unlock some buyer activity, but that momentum has been slow to build in 2025. For now, successful sellers are those who are realistic about pricing and prepared for a bit of back-and-forth with today's more selective buyers.

Zooming out to the broader Clatsop County market: as of July 2025, there are 290 homes listed as active and 79 under contract. By the end of June, county-wide sales were averaging 97% of list price, according to the Clatsop MLS. The median sale price in June was \$556,700—down 10% from \$625,000 in June 2024. During that same period, average days on market rose from 84 to 94, suggesting that while buyers are still active, they're taking more time to make decisions.

## FOR SALE NOW IN SURF PINES

Vacant Land - Manion Drive **\$599,000**  
89508 Manion Drive (Pending) **\$625,000**  
89650 Sea Breeze Drive **\$750,000**  
89523 Manion Drive \$790,000  
89610 Sea Breeze Drive **\$1,202,000**

## RECENTLY SOLD IN SURF PINES

89898 Manion Drive **\$763,000**  
89062 Manion Drive **\$1,002,000**

As always, real estate is hyper-local and ever-changing. We'll continue keeping an eye on both national trends and how they play out right here at home.

No matter the market conditions, it's a privilege to be your trusted local resource-

Julia Radditz



# WHO'S NEXT DOOR?

**by Chris Villiers**

They met over a foosball table: He already had fought a war in his underwear. She was ensuring billions of barrels of oil flowed smoothly on Alaska's North Slope.

Nearly five decades (and multiple adventures) later, Fred and Debby McBride are an integral part of Surf Pines.

They've opened their house for wine tastings and community events. Debby grows flowers, and their garden yields an abundance of fruit and vegetables, including garlic, onions and ingredients for homemade pickles frequently given to neighbors. Fred's humor regularly brings smiles to the community Facebook page, while Debby creates whimsical art using driftwood and items collected from the beach.



Although both are drawn to the ocean, neither grew up near the shore.

After graduating from an Ohio high school, Fred jokes that he "tried college for a semester" adding that "if I didn't want to go to classes, I wouldn't."

He "banged around" in various jobs, including selling pots and pans door-to-door, before joining the Navy in 1963 – just months after the atomic-powered submarine, USS Thrasher, sunk during initial testing, killing everyone onboard.

"I walked into the recruiter and said, 'I want to join the Navy, but I won't go on a nuclear submarine.'"



The Navy, however, had other ideas, sending Fred to submarine school in Connecticut to train as an electrician before transferring him to the Idaho desert to learn how to work on nuclear generators that power massive aircraft carriers. “I finished one year of school for nuclear power training, and they send me to Da Nang Harbor, Vietnam.”

Assigned to a landing craft utility boat, Fred was part of a crew that ran ammunition and equipment up the Perfume River to Marines fighting near the city of Hue. “We were hauling all sorts of stuff, and a lot of it was beer and soda pop,” Fred says, recalling the ruses he and his fellow sailors used to divert substantial portions of the liquid cargo for their own consumption.

Fred was asleep the one time his crew got caught in a fire fight. He emerged from his bunk in the middle of the battle without a weapon, a helmet or even his uniform – just a colorful pair of boxer shorts.

During his six-year enlistment, Fred served on both diesel- and nuclear-powered subs and did a tour of duty on the USS Constellation, working as an electrician on the elevators that move aircraft to the carrier deck and the catapults that launch fighter jets.



All WND photo credits: Chris Villiers

**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](mailto:villiersmedia@frontier.com)**



# NEW BOARD MEMBERS: BRENT SEPPA AND STEVE WILSON

by *Jordan Barbeau, Editor*



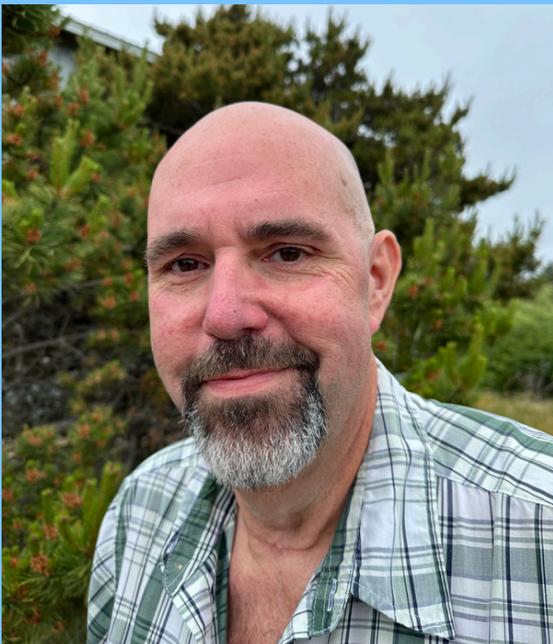
Please join me in welcoming two new(ish) additions to the Surf Pines Board of Directors!

Brent Seppa grew up on the family farm outside Astoria and went to Oregon State University. He and his wife, Julie, have owned property in Surf Pines since 2005. After 37 years with USG Corporation, including 23 years living in Chicago, Brent retired as VP of Sales West and they happily moved back to the Oregon Coast full-time in 2018.

That year, Brent and Julie built their home in Surf Pines, just across the lake from his mother Carol Seppa and a few houses from his brother Scott. Surf Pines is truly part of the Seppa family. Brent and Julie have two children and three grandchildren that they enjoy spending time with. When not gathering with family and friends, Brent's spare time is filled with most anything outdoors, golf, yard work, and travel.

Brent is a member of the Gearhart Rural Fire District Board and previously served on the Board of Directors at Astoria Golf and Country Club. We are honored and delighted that he has joined our very own Board of Directors earlier this year.

Steve Wilson and his wife, MJ, started building their dream weekend home in Surf Pines in 2021. By summer 2022, they elected to sell their Portland house and moved to Surf Pines permanently. Steve is a General Contractor, and has owned his own



business for roughly 30 years, which he started after holding various roles in construction and maintenance following his service in the United States Navy.

Steve has found a multitude of ways to give back by volunteering his time, from coaching youth baseball and football, to announcing high school games, to driving for Golden Bond Rescue of Oregon, transporting rescue dogs in need of foster and adoption. Steve also brings considerable experience as a member of his past Condominium HOA Boards. His diligence and collaborative approach have been a welcome addition to the Surf Pines Board of Directors since he accepted the appointment earlier this year.