



Walnut Country - The Signal | Volume 2021, Issue 10 | Office Phone: 925-687-9961 | Email: businessoffice@walnutcountry.com

Winter 2021 Pool Schedule

As you may be aware, both side pools have been closed for the winter as of Monday, November 1st. **The main pool will remain open through the month of November and into early December, closing on or around December 6th.**

The Board will discuss this main pool schedule in more detail at the December 2nd board meeting. If you have any feedback or comments

regarding the pool schedule, we encourage you to attend the meeting and let the Board know during the homeowner open forum portion of the meeting (at the very beginning).

We always appreciate and value feedback from the CHOA residents and would love to hear what you think about the 2021 swim schedule, or just the CHOA swim schedule in general. This year the Board decided to keep the

pools open a bit longer than usual to document the amount of activity at the pools after summer's end, and to use that as a barometer when making future pool schedule decisions (as we sometimes receive questions from new homeowners asking why the pools all close during the winter months). We know the pools are a valuable asset to the community and want to make sure that your voice is heard!

Reminder - New CHOA Security Patrol Company as of 10/1

We included an article about this in the October *Signal*, but we thought it worth mentioning again in case you missed it!

Due to ongoing issues with our previous security patrol vendor, the Board has contracted with Admiral Security Services starting October 1, 2021.

This new vendor is a local security company with headquarters here in Concord. They will be performing nightly vehicle patrols for the Association and are also available to respond to owner calls for situations like trespassers using the CHOA pools after hours, for example.

As a reminder, please know that CHOA residents are highly encouraged to call the police if wanting to report suspicious activity anywhere on site. The police are

equipped to remove trespassers from CHOA property, and will likely be able to respond more quickly to a serious concern. Residents should call security to report concerns that are not serious or time-sensitive in nature. Please note that this security vendor, much like the previous vendor, can only respond to owner calls during the nighttime and early morning patrol hours.

All existing signs displaying the previous vendor's contact information are being taken down, as their last day of service was 9/30. If all



goes well during this transition, new signs will be installed detailing this new vendor's contact information.

In the meantime, owners who want to report a concern to the new security vendor during patrol hours may call Admiral Security at 415-854-8514. When calling, state that you are calling for an "alarm response".

Again, please limit calls to the security patrol company to concerns that are **not** serious, life-threatening, or time-sensitive in nature. For example, if you notice someone actively damaging or stealing HOA property or resident CHOA property, call the police immediately. If you see a group of teenagers in the CHOA pool after hours, you can call either HOA security or the police – both will be able to address this concern.

Walnut Country THE CROSSINGS

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Upcoming Schedule

Board of Directors Meeting

- Thursday, December 2nd @ 7pm

Architectural Committee Meeting

- Thursday, November 18th @ 6pm

Board Meeting Info

The Board of Directors meet on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7pm. Meetings are currently held via Zoom and owners are welcome to join by phone or by utilizing the Zoom app. Meeting information is included on the agenda, which is posted at the Business Office and also available online at the HOA's website.

The Architectural Committee meets on the third Thursday of every month at 6pm - please contact the Business Office for the Zoom info if you are interested in attending!



If you see a blue tree tag attached to a CHOA tree, please leave it be! This is for inventory purposes, and helps us keep track of all trees and their maintenance histories.

Treasurer's Report (Year to Date) Balance Sheet as of September 30th, 2021

Current Assets

Cash - Operating	\$ 87,274
Cash - Reserves	\$ 2,336,994
Receivables	\$ 54,035
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 42,265
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,520,568

Current Liabilities

Liabilities (Prepaid Assessments, Accrued Payables, Deposits, etc.)	\$ 135,047
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Delinquent Assessments, Fees, and Fines

Total Outstanding Assessments as of 9/30	\$ (4,754)
Total Outstanding Fees and Fines as of 9/30	\$ (4,716)
TOTAL OUTSTANDING DELINQUENCIES	\$ (9,470)



A LOOK at the BUDGET

Year-To-Date Budget Report

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Total Revenue (Accrued)	\$ 1,012,991	\$ 1,003,905	\$ 9,086
Operating Expenses (Abridged)			
Insurance	\$ 44,006	\$ 44,010	\$ 4
Taxes & Permits	\$ 2,486	\$ 6,741	\$ 4,255
Legal Fees/CPA	\$ 28,850	\$ 13,698	\$ (15,152)
Management & Accounting	\$ 160,375	\$ 159,003	\$ (1,372)
Office, Admin, & Mailing	\$ 35,431	\$ 26,073	\$ (9,358)
Staffing/Payroll	\$ 34,664	\$ 113,031	\$ 78,367
Security Patrol & Gates	\$ 15,691	\$ 18,003	\$ 2,312
Alarm Systems	\$ 7,571	\$ 6,372	\$ (1,199)
Landscaping & Irrigation	\$ 121,243	\$ 120,420	\$ (823)
Pest Control	\$ 9,812	\$ 7,497	\$ (2,315)
Maintenance & Janitorial	\$ 11,664	\$ 18,981	\$ 7,317
HVAC & Plumbing	\$ 4,306	\$ 5,607	\$ 1,301
Building Mtnc (Roof/Carpets)	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,494	\$ (156)
Pools, Tennis Courts, & Dog Park	\$ 46,880	\$ 45,783	\$ (1,097)
Utilities	\$ 199,469	\$ 162,603	\$ (36,866)
Bad Debt (For Delinquent Owners)	\$ -	\$ 1,503	\$ 1,503
Reserve Transfer	\$ 253,093	\$ 253,089	\$ (4)
Total Operating Expense	\$ 977,191	\$ 1,003,908	\$ 26,717

Note regarding new categories: Discerning readers will notice the categories are different from those found in previous Signals. Good catch! Common Interest Management recently transitioned over to a new accounting system, and as a result, some of the categories are displayed a little bit differently in the monthly financial reports.

President's Corner // November 2021

Hello Walnut Country, So long Summer, hello Fall. Autumn skies, pumpkin pies.... A friend forwarded me an email with seasonal sayings for the Fall time of year. Most of it was fairly silly, but I kind of liked those two. And yes, this means I am officially getting desperate for things to write at the opening of the monthly President's Corner. The Board and I hope that everyone has time to get our and enjoy our common areas as the season changes and leaves start to drop.

We held our last monthly meeting on October 28th. Below are some of the highlights and other current events.

Combined November and December Meeting

Our monthly board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Just a reminder that due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, we hold our combined November and December meeting for this year on Thursday December 2nd.

Clubhouse Inspections

As you know, our Clubhouse is still closed due to the pandemic. The Board has di-

rected the General Manager to have the balconies of the clubhouse inspected by a licensed professional while the facility is still closed.

Lawsuit Insurance Reimbursement

In the Fall of 2020, the Association published our annual financial statement to all homeowners for our current fiscal year. In that document, you may remember reading about large legal fee expenses totaling almost \$250,000 for fiscal year 2019, and how those expenses had greatly reduced the size of our Operating account, and partially contributed to the 2021 monthly assessment increase. Your current Board of Directors, which came into office at the conclusion of the legal matters in 2019, have been negotiating reimbursement with our insurance companies. After almost two years and with help from an insurance attorney to help us negotiate with our insurance carrier, we have reached a settlement agreement and can try to put this issue to rest. Because this newsletter is available to the public, we can't post more details - but you can reach out to the GM later this month if you would like more informa-

tion. It will take several years to fully recover from the remaining deficit. At the October meeting, I spoke to the board and the members present on my personal thoughts about the matter. I am glad the matter is finally over and that we as a community can move on.

Greenbelt

The Board approved the purchase and installation of "Walk On Bark" ground cover that will be put in place adjacent to some of our walkways in areas where vegetation has not been successful and in an effort to reduce the use of irrigation water. Also, we approved the re-seeding of some of our high use turf areas in the central greenbelt that have died during the hot summer so that those areas are back up to standards by the Spring.

Pools

On November 1st, the East and West pools were closed for the season. As you may remember, the Board approved needed upgrades in the pump rooms for those pools earlier this year. The parts for those upgrades have been on back order for well over half a year. If current

projections on parts availability are accurate, we should have both pump room projects complete before the start of the Spring swim season. The needed work in the pump rooms will greatly modernize the filtration systems and we should see much clearer water in the future.

Director George Fulmore

George Fulmore has decided to step down from his board position. The Board would like to thank George for his time and dedication to the community. This was George's second time serving our community as a board member. I would like to personally thank George for his shared knowledge and past experiences that he brought to the table. Thank you George!

Thanks for reading. Hope to see you at our next regular Board meeting. All of our meetings are currently held on Zoom so hopefully owners are able to attend. We'd love to see you there.

Mike Kindorf
CHOA President

Architectural Committee Chair's Corner // November 2021



Now that we've had our first rain of the season and the weather is cooling, the leaves are falling from many of our trees. While this won't last that long, keeping our leaves swept up will help keep our neighborhood looking good. Keep in mind that the city helps with this by having its street sweeper come through on the fourth Monday of every month. They do a great job, BUT...it's up to us to keep our cars out of the way!

Speaking of trees, a number of homeowners have palm trees and some of them have not been trimmed for several years. This would be a good time to take a look and if you have one with dead fronds, they need trimming. In addition to being unattractive, dead fronds offer a haven for rats and can pose a danger to passersby when fronds break loose and fall to the ground. Our rules do require homeowners to keep vegetation trimmed to maintain a

safe, clean and groomed appearance.

Finally, the Christmas season is rapidly approaching and many will be displaying holiday decorations in our front yards. Please remember that holiday decorations should not be put up more than 30 days before nor left up more than 30 days after the holiday season.

Ken Dixon
Arch Committee Chair

General Manager's Update // November 2021

Hi CHOA, <insert comment about the rain/hope everyone is staying dry>! As annoyed as everything being wet and muddy and overcast all the time makes me, I know rain is like, super important for our planet or whatever. *But now I have to wipe down my dogs' paws before coming inside after I walk them! Every time!!*

All jokes, of course! The rain is welcome and will certainly help our grass recover from a very, very hot summer and fall. And with the rain comes the annual closing of our pools for the winter season. As you may have seen in this Signal, the side pools both closed on November 1, and the Main Pool will remain open until Dec 6th. The Board will discuss the pool schedule at their meeting on December 2nd and decide if they want to keep it open longer, or officially close it for good. If you have an opinion on the matter, please join us and mention it at the beginning of the meeting! The Board meetings are held via Zoom and start at 7pm. Email businessoffice@walnutcountry.com if you need the Zoom info or have questions.

Ok enough complaining about the weather – on to the monthly GM update! Here's a quick breakdown of some of the things we had going on this month:

- We had new lighting fixtures installed under the trellis at the main pool deck. One of the two previous fixtures had actually broke off and fallen, so we replaced them with something that is better affixed to the trellis and no longer dangling over the area where people like to sit down and relax!
- The foam pads wrapped around the main playground

support poles were replaced – the previous ones were deteriorating and coming apart; one of them had fallen off completely.

- We replaced the missing traffic mirror that was previously installed across from Arrowwood Circle.
- A portion of the slide at the east pool playground had been damaged (the lip at the end of the slide the prevents water from collecting). A replacement part was ordered and installed last week.
- The upper tennis court lights that are out should be replaced this current week or next by our long-time lighting vendor
- We will be replacing all of the brown metal lids on the single concrete trash bins scattered throughout the community – expect that to be completed sometime before the end of the year!
- The east and west pool pump room rehabilitation project is scheduled to start in November or December and complete before the 2022 swim season
- We are getting the main playground sun shade repaired – the big windstorm we had a few weeks back loosened the cable supporting this shade, causing it to droop down. Should be all fixed by the time of this publication!
- A light vendor vendor was on site to perform a light run and fix some of the non-functioning fixtures throughout the common areas. I found about 3 or 4 that were missed and should be repaired later this month.
- The Board recently approved delivery and installation of a whole lot of bark/wood chips along the green-belt interior walkway – be on the lookout for that sometime this month!

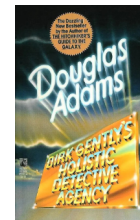
- Our new landscapers, Mike McCall Landscape, just started month two of maintaining the property and are becoming more and more familiar with day-to-day requirements of the Association. Apologies for those days where the dog waste bag dispensers were empty – that should all be taken care of moving forward! If you ever notice something like that, please don't hesitate to let me know and I can have it addressed ASAP!

As a bit of an aside, I am coming up on my two-year anniversary of being hired by Common Interest to be the onsite GM for Cowell HOA. Before this, I was a portfolio HOA manager, responsible to manage anywhere from 10 to 15 individual HOAs spread around the Bay Area, from Gilroy to San Jose to Livermore to Petaluma. And now I can say unequivocally that CHOA is by far the best community I've had the pleasure to manage. The patience, grace, and general positive demeanor that just about every homeowner I talk to tend to has is, if I'm being honest, pretty unique to CHOA. Being in the HOA industry, you hear about frequent horror stories that other communities are going through. I know 2019 wasn't an easy year, but since I've been on board, it has just been such a nice experience dealing with everyone who has called, emailed, or stopped by the Business Office these past two years. I'm so thankful to be in this position, with a great board, great membership, and great community. Thank you to all CHOA residents for making these last two years such a pleasure! It honestly feels like I just started 6 months ago!!

Ok, I don't want to get too sappy here. Let's ruin the

mood with another another book recommendation from the GM that no one asked for but you're getting anyways....

I'm in somewhat of a reading funk right now - the last three books I've read have ranged from bad to meh, so I'm gonna throw out a couple of different recommendations that maybe aren't my absolute favorites, but ones that I certainly enjoyed!



Dirk Gentley's Holisitic Detective Agency

by Douglas Adams

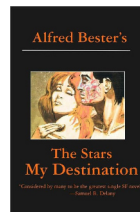
Funniest book I've ever read, for sure - I enjoyed it more than The Hitchiker's Guide!



The Transall Saga

by Gary Paulsen

Young-adult book, highly recommended to parents who are trying to get their middle schoolers or teenagers into reading! I read this in 6th grade and I absolutely LOVED it!!



The Stars My Destination

by Alfred Bester

Amazing sci-fi written in 1956. Loved how everything came together at the end. Warning, there might some upsetting themes/situations in this book and it's very...1950s. If you can handle/look past those, it's well worth a read!

Until next month!
-Bill, CHOA General Manager

Happy Halloween from the Dog Park!

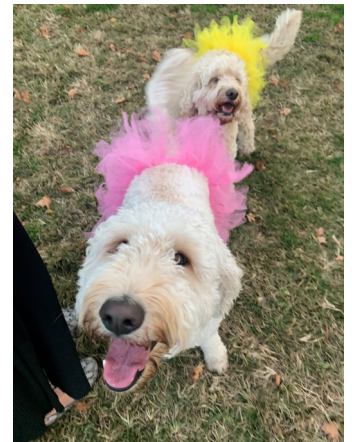
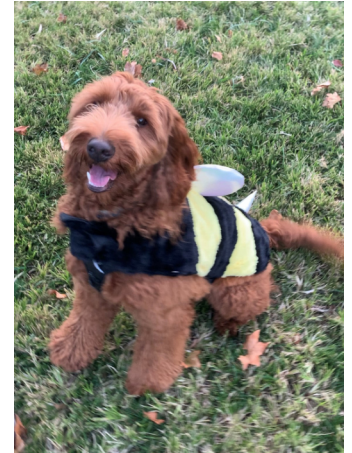


Some Cowell HOA residents sent us pictures of a Halloween costume party for dogs (and some of the owners!) that was held at our Dog Park recently. Over twenty of our four legged

neighbors attended in costume and were treated to Halloween dog treats and some great play time! We are always glad to see people out enjoying our Association common areas. There are already rumors of a 2022

Halloween costume parade in the works; time will tell!!! Thanks to everyone who participated, and thanks for sharing with us!

Some of the pictured dogs: Coco, Astro, Cheny, Sierra, Lola, Lily, Smokey, Rocky, Westley, Peyton, Dorothy, Parker, Mochi and more!



Walnut Country Preschool News



Walnut Country Preschool

We enjoyed celebrating our spooky festivities with our annual costume parade and creepy crafts. We have found some delightful ways to continue hosting our traditional activities with families. Integrating our preschool community with the student's family and home is an important part of early childhood education that we strive for.

We will be shifting our focus to apples and giving thanks. You can practice both of these at home with your little turkeys. Incorporating apples offers so many ways to explore our senses and fundamental academics. You can teach basic math by counting apples or comparing which apples are bigger or smaller, counting slices or seeds inside

the apple. Discover colors by sorting apples by color or even noticing how some apples have many colors. Identify shapes like the star inside of the apple, or semicircle slices. Our favorite lesson is providing language for the sensory experiences of smelling and tasting the apples! And of course, we can give thanks for all the ways we experience these apples, our loved ones we gather with this season and much more. Thank YOU for checking us out and being part of our community.

As always, if you have questions about our program, please call 925-798-9686 or email WalnutCountryPreschoolDirector@gmail.com.

Gutter and Roof Cleaning

A vendor was on site on Friday September 24th to clean out the gutters for every HOA facility, and also clean off any debris found on the roofs. This included the roofs of the side pool pump rooms, where a significant amount of tree debris had collected. This ser-

vice is typically performed once annually.

And for what it's worth, here's a last minute reminder to homeowners here to try to have your gutters cleared out before the rains come in the winter, to help prevent any buildup or water leak issues!

Here's the crew in action:



Recent Theft Incidents - Stay Vigilant!

The Business Office recently received a report from a homeowner on Clear Creek Ct that their car, which was parked on the street, was broken into. From there, the thieves were able to get a hold of the garage door opener that was stashed in the car, open up the garage door, and steal a number of bikes that were being stored in the garage. A report was promptly filed with the Concord police department, but we also wanted to make sure all residents were aware, and to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the local police department immediately.

In the meantime, we would recommend that owners who are parking their vehicles on the public streets avoid keeping a garage door opener in the car when parked, if possible.

We are also still seeing ongoing issues with mail theft from non-locking mailboxes. As a reminder, the HOA re-

cently approved a new policy that permits homeowners to replace their existing mailboxes with more secure, locking mailboxes without requiring approval from the Architectural Committee, so long as they are standard, customary boxes that comply with all USPS guidelines. Please see the Mailboxes architectural committee policy on the HOA website at www.walnutcountry.com for a complete list of all guidelines when replacing your mailbox.

The Association does contract with a security company who provides nightly patrols, but their main point of focus is and always has been the Association's common area and facilities (as all streets are public and fall within the city of Concord's jurisdiction).

Stay vigilant everyone, and please report anything suspicious to Concord PD as soon as possible! **Their 24/7 non-emergency dispatch number is 925-671-3333.**

See a Light Out?

As a reminder, all streets within CHOA are public, which means street lights along the roads (including North and South Larwin) are maintained by the city of Concord. If you see a street light out, please call the city's



Street Light Hotline at 925-671-3213. About halfway up the pole, you will see a pole number- please reference this when making your call so Public Works can easily locate the light. The Association does not maintain any public street lights, only light poles

found throughout the greenbelt and common areas.

That being said, if you do happen to notice a light out along the greenbelt or around the Clubhouse or pools, please do let the Business Office know so that a work order can be sent for repairs! The CHOA light poles have stickers at the very top indicating a location (W for West, E for East, and C for Central) followed by a number. Please try to have this information handy when reporting lights out, as it makes it much easier for the vendor to find and repair. Thank you to everyone who helps to report these issues so we can keep the CHOA facilities running smoothly!

Side Pool Pump Room Projects - Starting Winter 2021

We are anticipating that the East and West Pool pump room rehabilitation projects will get underway sometime in November or December of this year. Because this will be a sizeable project, we wanted to take this time to better explain the scope of work, so all CHOA residents will have a good understanding of what is happening and why it is needed.

The pump rooms are in the same building as the pool restrooms, and house the pools' most important equipment: heaters, filters, pumps, and chemical control systems, to name a few. Originally, when Common Interest was hired at the end of 2019, management was notified that the Main Pool remodel project was in the process of being scheduled and the scope of work finalized. Unfortunately that project ended up being further off than initially anticipated, and it quickly became apparent that 1) the main pool components weren't really in that bad of shape, given their age, and 2) the two side pools had much more urgent maintenance and repair needs.



For example, the filter system at the west pool was wholly inadequate and underperforming for a commercial pool of its size and was desperately in need of an upgrade, so it could keep up with the west pool's demand. Additionally, many of the electrical components, panels, and connectors showed signs of visible corrosion (as you can



see in these pictures), which may have been due to improper storage of the muriatic acid and chlorine in the common space of the pump room.

As a result, the Board asked for bids to rehabilitate and reconstruct the pump room, to ensure that it was brought up to code and that all components were fully functional and appropriate given the size of the pool.



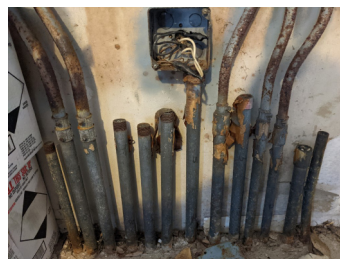
This scope included removing the interior drywall, sheetrock, vents, and electrical panels and fixtures, and then the construction of a new water-resistant sheetrock wall and ceiling, installation of new electrical panels and fixtures, as well as improved ventilation.

Additionally, several pieces of pool equipment were found to be in need of replacement. The pool heater had failed last spring and was subsequently replaced, so that would remain and be incorporated into the new design, but the pump would be replaced with one that was a Variable Frequency Drive (which should help with both efficiency and the electric bill), the filters replaced with an up-



graded sand filter, and a new backwash system installed. Additionally, we will be switching over to a chlorine tab system (similar to what we currently have at the main pool). This has two major benefits: 1) we no longer need to rely on liquid chlorine, which is currently in the middle of a severe shortage, and 2) we no longer need to store a large quantity of liquid chlorine in the pump room. Another upgrade is to the chemical controller system, which allows the chemical levels to be monitored remotely, instead of having to test with the pool chemical test kits. This scope of work also included a UV cleaning system, which should also help reduce the amount of chlorine needed and help the water looking clean and crystal clear!

The East Pool was in slightly better shape from a component perspective, but the pump room itself looked very similar to what we saw at the West Pool. The east pool filter system was not in need of replacement, but items like the heater were on their last legs and a replacement promptly ordered. The door to the chemical storage closet had deteriorated and was physically inoperable. The interior drywall was also in bad



shape. Outside of those changes, the scope of work is nearly identical to the West Pool – new VFD drive pump motor, new sheetrock and drywall, and all new electrical fixtures and components.

Of the two side pools, the West Pool (Barberry) was in more urgent need of work than the East Pool. However, due to the ongoing shortages and difficulty in getting the necessary equipment in a timely manner, the Board ap-



proved also moving forward with the East Pool project at a meeting earlier this summer. The hope is that both pool pump rooms can be completed before the start of the 2022 swim season in early spring, and all residents can enjoy the new and improved side pools when they reopen next year!

We understand that these projects aren't exactly "sexy" upgrades, but these are necessary upgrades and repairs made with the intent of extending the lifespan and performance of our side pools, which both get a significant amount of use! Once these upgrades are in, we hope that residents will immediately notice the cleaner, clearer water – but behind the scenes, we also anticipate lower electricity bills, a reduction in our pool chemical costs (and in turn, a reduced reliance on chlorine), and an overall decrease in extra maintenance and time spent on these pools. We are thrilled for this project to be completed so we can all start enjoying the newly upgraded pools!

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