



Walnut Country - The Signal | Volume 2023, Issue 2 | Office Phone: 925-687-9961 | Email: businessoffice@walnutcountry.com

Heritage Valley Oak Tree Update - March 2023

In our previous February cover page article, we discussed the condition of the Heritage Valley Oak tree located near the east pool playground, and that a recent inspection report was recommending its removal due to a significant amount of decay. The Board met in a special open meeting on February 9th and discussed these findings and recommendations and took questions and received suggestions from the membership. The city had approved a permit for removal and the work was scheduled to begin within a week or two.

Since that meeting, the city of Concord has requested that we postpone the removal as they wanted to have another city arborist inspect the tree and review the original report. Since our removal permit was suspended, it afforded us extra time to reach out to several arborists and specialists in the area for additional feedback and assessments. One thing every arborist we've talked to has said is that, if you ask three arborists for an opinion, you'll likely get three different answers. This is a testament to how difficult it is to truly know what's happening inside and underneath the tree, even with the advanced tech currently available to us.

We ended up connecting with McNeil Arboriculture Consultants, a professional consulting arborist who has extensive experience with oak trees. Joe McNeil is the arborist who assisted the city of Danville with their historical oak tree on Diablo Rd, and helped design the support structure keeping that tree stable and upright.

This vendor was able to perform a visual inspection as well as additional resistograph testing last week and provided the Board with a limited report indicating that they did not believe the tree to be an imminent risk, but that more testing was needed to confirm the tree's condition and trunk health. They confirmed there certainly is decay in the

tree, but the next step is to confirm the extent of it and how strong the surrounding wood is, as well as better understanding how the decay is impacting the structural integrity of the tree. They would like to focus on additional root testing through a root collar excavation, where soil and dirt is removed around the root flare using an air spade; once exposed, additional resistograph testing can be conducted. They are also recommending more testing of the areas where decay is thought to be present, as well as the base of the trunk. One assessment method is an arbotom, which uses sound waves to help create an "internal scan" of the tree. This may not be necessary depending on the findings of the additional resistograph tests, but it is an option available to the Board.



At this time, the board has authorized additional testing of the tree before any final decision is made, and this process may take anywhere from a number of weeks to several months, depending on the results. But there is no current plan to have the tree removed, as our removal permit has been suspended and we have received feedback from multiple arborists who do not believe the tree is at risk of immediate failure and instead are recommending we continue to test and gather more information. That being said, even with the most advanced testing available, the final assessment in situations like this is never a calculation, but rather a judgment. We will continue to conduct additional testing to gather as much information as we can about the tree before making any decisions but are cautiously optimistic that the tree might yet be salvageable.

This will likely be an item on the agenda for our regular Board meetings for many months to come. As more information is made available to us, we will be sure to keep all residents updated!

Walnut Country THE CROSSINGS

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Upcoming Schedule

- Board of Directors Meeting
- Thursday, March 23rd @ 7pm
- Architectural Committee Meeting
- Thursday, March 16th @ 6pm

Board Meeting Info

The Board of Directors meet on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7pm. As of March 2023, monthly Board meetings have resumed in-person at the Business Office, however we are utilizing a hybrid approach so that owners can still watch the meeting via Zoom. Contact the General Manager if you have any questions.

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!

Clubhouse Hours

Wednesday thru Sunday
12pm to 8pm

Want to rent the Clubhouse?

Visit this website:
<https://cowellhoa.skedda.com>

2023 Pool Hours

Main Pool

Open Daily | 7am to 9:30pm

Main pool will stay open for the winter, but heat will be turned off when weather worsens. Bathrooms and gym will remain open.

Dates for heating are TBD.

Treasurer's Report (Year to Date) Balance Sheet as of January 31st, 2023

Current Assets

Cash - Operating	\$ 239,292
Cash - Reserves	\$ 1,942,958
Receivables	\$ 7,450
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 42,716
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,232,416

Current Liabilities

Liabilities (Prepaid Assessments, Accrued Payables, Deposits, etc.)	\$ 133,070
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Delinquent Assessments, Fees, and Fines

Total Outstanding Assessments	\$ (7,359)
Total Outstanding Fees and Fines	\$ (4,091)
TOTAL OUTSTANDING DELINQUENCIES	\$ (11,450)



**A LOOK
at the
BUDGET**

Year-To-Date Budget Report

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance	Monthly Actual
Total Revenue (Accrued)	\$ 115,400	\$ 116,868	\$ (1,468)	\$ 115,400
Operating Expenses				
Insurance	\$ 6,321	\$ 5,250	\$ (1,071)	\$ 6,321
Taxes & Permits	\$ 2,451	\$ 583	\$ (1,868)	\$ 2,451
Legal Fees/CPA	\$ 2,675	\$ 1,293	\$ (1,382)	\$ 2,675
Management & Accounting	\$ 20,723	\$ 19,836	\$ (887)	\$ 20,723
Office, Admin, & Mailing	\$ 1,671	\$ 3,751	\$ 2,080	\$ 1,671
Staffing/Payroll	\$ 6,728	\$ 7,618	\$ 890	\$ 6,728
Security Patrol & Gates/Fences	\$ 1,030	\$ 1,750	\$ 720	\$ 1,030
Alarm Systems	\$ 555	\$ 633	\$ 78	\$ 555
Landscaping & Irrigation	\$ 14,500	\$ 16,567	\$ 2,067	\$ 14,500
Pest Control	\$ 1,260	\$ 1,335	\$ 75	\$ 1,260
Maintenance & Janitorial	\$ 901	\$ 1,563	\$ 662	\$ 901
HVAC & Plumbing	\$ -	\$ 517	\$ 517	\$ -
Building Mtnc (Roof/Carpets)	\$ -	\$ 133	\$ 133	\$ -
Pools, Tennis Courts, & Dog Park	\$ 2,050	\$ 4,580	\$ 2,530	\$ 2,050
Utilities	\$ 21,964	\$ 19,225	\$ (2,739)	\$ 21,964
Bad Debt (For Delinquent Owners)	\$ -	\$ 42	\$ 42	\$ -
Reserve Transfer	\$ 32,196	\$ 32,196	\$ -	\$ 32,196
Total Operating Expense	\$ 115,025	\$ 116,872	\$ 1,847	\$ 115,025

President's Corner // March 2023

Hello Walnut Country,
Thank you for reading our neighborhood Signal and staying informed. We held our last board meeting on February 23rd. Below are some of the highlights and additional news for the Association.

Heritage Oak Tree - Part II

As you read in the February Signal, an inspection of the Heritage Oak near Adelia Ct revealed a concerning level of rot and decay. A determination was made that the tree needed to be removed because it was in danger of falling down or having heavy limbs break off. That report was reviewed by several arborists and corroborated, including an arborist with the city. During the second week in February, another arborist with the city reviewed the report and had a different opinion. That arborist said he thought the tree could potentially be saved. Our General Manager spoke with many different arborists and was put in touch with an arborist who is largely considered a leading expert in California on oak trees. He agreed to examine the tree and review our report. After his review and preliminary testing, his expert opinion is that the tree does have signs of some rot but that it is not in imminent risk of failing. He has recommended additional testing and strongly believes that it is safe to wait while those tests are conducted. The Board has approved the next round of testing so that we can get all possible information available. We are cautiously optimistic that we may be able to save the tree. We must continue to weigh the historical significance of the tree with public safety since the tree is near several homes and

adjacent to a walking path. We will keep everyone informed and invite you to attend a future meeting to stay up to date. Thank you to those who attended our special meeting on this topic and provided feedback and suggestions.

Pool Updates

The vendor conducting the retrofit and refurbishment of the West Pool pump room is continuing with the project. They believe that they can have the project finished by the end of March. At the last meeting, the Board decided to heat and open the side pools April 1st. Although it's about 45 degrees while I write this, we know that won't last long. Normally we would open pools about a month later for the swim season. Our thought is to open these pools before the Spring Break for those with school age kids. As well, we know that the side pools being closed last summer was very inconvenient and want to provide as much usable swim time this year as possible. This is all dependent on the construction completion of course. Keep an eye on our website for updated information later in March.

Additionally, the Board approved hiring part time Pool Monitors for the main part of the summer. This came about from homeowner complaints of individuals who do not follow pool rules and create situa-

tions where others do not want to use the facilities due to bad behavior. Pool Monitors will work on differing days of the week and at random schedules to try and enforce rules and create a safe and enjoyable pool environment for all users.

Thanks again for reading. Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 23rd. The Board values and appreciates homeowner input at those meetings and hope to see you there. Now that the State has lifted the state of emergency related to the pandemic, we will be resuming in person meetings at the Business Office. Our General Manager is working on setting up a remote access where you will be able to view board meetings remotely if you can't attend in person. More to follow as we get closer to the March meeting.

Mike Kindorf
CHOA President

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WANT TO RENT THE CLUBHOUSE?

The CHOA Clubhouse is currently available to rent for a private party on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays! Here is a breakdown of costs to rent the Clubhouse:

- **Lounge:** \$300
- **Game Room:** +\$50
- **Kitchen:** +\$75

If your entire reservation takes place within Clubhouse business hours (12pm to 8pm), the price is reduced by \$100!

To make your reservation, just visit the calendar at <https://cowellhoa.skedda.com>. No deposit needed!

If you have any questions, please call 925-850-0250.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Concord Police (24/7 Dispatch)	925-671-3333
Concord Police (Non Emergency)	925-671-3220
CHOA Business Office	925-687-9961
CHOA Clubhouse	925-825-0250
CHOA Security ("Alarm Response")	415-854-8514
Concord Public Works	925-671-3132
Code Enforcement	925-671-3075
County Animal Control	925-608-8400
CORE Homeless Outreach	211

General Manager's Update // March 2023



Pictured: the General Manager "working"

Hey CHOA! Each week now I keep eyeballing my summer clothes, getting mentally prepped. My shorts are ready for action. Sandals are on standby. My beach body is....eh, let's not talk about that. But I am ready for the HEAT! Then the newest cold front swoops in and smacks me back into reality. Crazy to think that in a month or two, the pools will be open and this series of California storms will be a distant memory. I'm a San Diego boy born and bred and I cannot WAIT for the warmer weather. Bring it on!!

Anywho, here are some updates for things that were happening since the last *Signal*:

- We are conducting additional tests on our heritage Valley Oak near the east pool playground to get a better understanding of the tree's condition. We've enlisted the help of an oak tree expert of sorts who was the arborist who helped the city of Danville with their oak tree on Diablo Rd and assisted with the design of the support structure currently in use there. This firm will perform additional tests for us in the coming weeks to help us get a clearer picture of what's going on inside that tree. As for now, there is no plan to have it removed at this time and we will likely be discussing the tree and any updates available at all of our upcoming monthly Board meetings.
- Tree trimming for the first half of 2023 is complete and tree removal service should be wrapping up this week. Next our arborist will perform a QC inspection, ensuring that all work was completed per the agreements. Round two of 2023 tree maintenance is planned for late fall, likely around October (to avoid nesting season). Our arborist creates a tree care plan for us made up of two annual trimmings, with multiple site inspections year-round. All of the trees are currently tagged. If you have a question about a specific tree – what the overall condition was determined to be, maintenance plan, etc – please reach out to me and I can help answer any question you may have!
- We are continuing to add more playground-safe sand to the main playground, filling in areas that are getting a bit low or creating a slip hazard. Thanks to everybody who reached out to make this request. This sort of thing is easy to miss unless you're a playground regular, but easy to get fixed! Always appreciate feedback like this from our residents!
- Our CHOA Spring Festival is scheduled for Saturday, March 25th starting at 9:30am! Join us for donuts, juice and coffee, and the CHOA egg hunt! We will also have a petting zoo!! RSVP required – email the Business Office or Clubhouse if you need the link.
- As the weather warms, we are getting the pools ready to open up for our 2023 swim season. As you may recall from a previous *Signal*, the Main Pool is currently open year-round, it's just not heated in the winter. We are in the process of turning the heaters back on and hope to have it ready sometime this month. Our current plan is for the side pools to open up a little bit later, likely around the end of March or first week in April (before spring break is the current plan). Once dates are confirmed, we will send out an eSignal and make a post on the HOA website. But we do expect that the pools will be open and heated in the coming weeks!
- Speaking of pools, when the side pools both reopen, each restroom will have the Step N' Wash self-retracting step that we installed in the Main Pool last year. We hope this makes things easier for parents with little ones who need to wash up! (And another thank you to residents who requested something like this – another example of an easy/reasonable solution to a common problem!)
- Our next March Board meeting will be taking place in person at the Business Office. This will be our first in-person meeting since February of 2020. This change is a result of the State of Emergency being lifted by the Governor. That said, we are working on a hybrid system that will also permit residents to attend and listen in via Zoom. We'll send out a notice with more info once everything is ironed out.
- Frequent visitors to the main playground have probably noticed a crack in the slide for the smaller, 2-5yr structure. It took some detective work, but we were finally able to track down the manufacturer of that structure and connect with the department that handles replacement parts. A new plastic slide/climber part has been ordered and will be installed as soon as it arrives.
- The chest press weight machine in the gym is currently out of order due to a small part that broke. We have ordered a replacement and it will be installed as soon as it arrives.
- We have ordered a new small bike rack to be installed near the rear entrance to the clubhouse, by the steps that lead down to the main pool.
- Another reminder that we have Pickleball paddles and balls in the Clubhouse which can be checked out by homeowners from the Clubhouse staff, just like ping pong tables or pool cues.

And here's another book recommendation that no one asked for but you're getting anyway...



The Marriage Portrait

by
Maggie O'Farrell

O'Farrell also wrote Hamnet, one of the best books I've read in a loooooong time, and while I don't think The Marriage Portrait is quite as good, it's still excellent. She has a slow, deliberate writing style/pace that you sometimes need to be in the mood for, but her prose is gorgeous and she is wonderful at making complex emotions in a character relatable and understandable. She's definitely one of those authors where you stick around more for the writing and characters than the story, but the story was still very interesting and I did think it ended really well. It's historical fiction, but not heavy on the historical. Although you can tell she does a TON of research related the period, it really shows. Highly recommended!

Our March Board meeting is resuming in person at the Business Office. It's scheduled for the 23rd at 7pm. We are also working on allowing folks to join and listen in via Zoom; we know that's a lot more convenient for a lot of residents!

As always, if you have any questions about anything at all, feel free to give me a ring at the Business Office. Until next month!

Bill Mazza
CHOA General Manager

Walnut Country Swim Team News



Walnut Country Swim Team is hosting our annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, March 19th. It is a great time to learn more about the upcoming swim season, the team, and (of course) have ice cream. It will be held in the Clubhouse from 2-3:30pm. Stop by and say Hi! Go Stingrays!

-WCST Board of Directors

Christmas Light Reminder

We would like to take this time to remind all CHOA residents that the HOA rules require all holiday lighting to be taken down within 30 days of the end of the applicable holiday. We have noticed a few houses with their Christmas lights up and are respectfully requesting that, if you haven't already, please ensure that you take your holiday lights down at your earliest convenience.

The Architectural Committee will keep an eye out for holiday and Christmas lights during their next round of

inspections, so be sure to take your lights down before you get a letter from the HOA!

And of course, a big thank you to all of our residents who take care of things like this without needing any reminder or letter from the HOA - we appreciate you!



Spring Festival - March 25th

It's time for the Crossings' famous Easter Egg Hunt! Come join your Walnut Country neighbors for fresh donuts, fruit, juice and coffee out on the lawn beneath the main pool to celebrate the beginning of Spring.

We will be collecting new and gently used baby and toddler books for Sweet Beginnings Diaper Bank - each of these will be gifted as a little surprise in their weekly diaper distribution to local families.



Walnut Country Preschool News



Walnut Country Preschool

Last month zoomed by! Not just because it was a short month, but because we were talking all about transportation! This month we will be focusing on farm animals and welcoming spring. The extra cold weather and snow on Mt Diablo may have pushed back spring a little longer this year, but it's a fun opportunity to experience the snow so close to home. We also use spring as a chance to talk about our 5 senses. We can see the hills turning green (or white!) and hear the creeks rushing with water. We can smell the flowers blooming. If you can catch a sunny day for a walk these

are fun ways to engage your child's senses. Even better, you can plant your own edible garden.

It's also time for our annual auction! March 20-26th we will be hosting our online auction and you're invited! To participate, please visit our website (www.walnutcountrypreschool.com), where we will have a link directly to the auction items when it opens. Current families will receive an email to the auction. If you are a local business owner and would like to sponsor any part of our auction please contact our Fundraising Chair, Alyce, (925) 639-6903. Until then, stay warm and dry!

Salsa Dance Class Coming this March!

We are currently working on scheduling an introductory salsa dance class at the Clubhouse on a weekday evening in late March. This class will be free of charge to CHOA residents and will feature a two-hour instructional class with a professional instructor. We will be looking for about 20 couples (singles welcome as well!) to join, so around ~40 folks for this go-round.

If this intro class is a hit, we can work on potentially making this a regular class

for residents who wish to sign up (there will be a fee for these future classes).

This first intro class will likely take place on Wednesday, March 29th from 7pm to 9pm. We are still working on confirming everything, but once locked in, we'll send out the RSVP via eSignal. Anyone who wants to attend will need to RSVP ahead of time, so if you're interested in attending, keep an eye out for an email from CHOA in the next week!

The Egg Hunt will be divided by age groups and start promptly at 10am, beginning with children ages 3 and under. There will also be a Petting Zoo with small animals to pet and touch and photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny! Bring your own blanket, book donation and Easter baskets and get ready for some fun!

RSVP is required, households are allowed up to 8 attendees including guests. Hope to see you there! Meet us on the Main Pool lawn!

To RSVP: check the link in the eSignal email sent on 2/28, or email the Business Office to request it. You can also call the Clubhouse at 925-825-0250 if you are unable to RSVP online.

PS - Do you have extra plastic eggs at home that we could reuse? You can drop them off at the Clubhouse during business hours - please have both sides of the plastic egg are clicked together so we can easily count them - we will be filling over 3,000 eggs!

Board Meeting Summary // February 23rd, 2023

The CHOA Board of Directors meet every month on the 4th Thursday. During these meetings, all Association business is conducted. This is where your Board makes just about every decision related to the HOA – the budget, contracts, vendors, projects, rules, policies, etc. Pretty much every action taken by your board happens in these meetings, so it's always recommended that owners attend, so they have a grasp on what's going on in the community.

Of course we understand not everyone can make every meeting. After the meeting is over, the GM puts together the meeting minutes – a record of all decisions made during this meeting. Minutes are not meant to be a “summary” of the meeting, but rather a simple record of all action taken by the Board. Minutes are in draft form until approved by the Board at the following meeting. Once approved, they are signed and made available on the HOA website. This is usually about 30 days after the given meeting. Owners can always request to see a draft copy of the minutes from the General Manager, if you don't want to wait for the finalized version.

For those who didn't attend and don't want to bother with the minutes, here is a brief summary of what happened during last month's Board meeting. Important note: this is in no way an official record of the meeting – that would be the Minutes. This is simply an informal summary from the GM's perspective.

- The Board discussed the most recent information available about the heritage Valley Oak near the east pool playground. We have enlisted the help of an oak specialist who will be performing additional testing of the tree to give us a better

understanding of the condition and health. The Board resolved to rescind the previous motion approving the tree's removal, and authorized management to work with McNeil Arboriculture Consultants to continue testing the tree.

- The Board discussed the schedule for the two side pools and directed management to strive to have them open on or around April 1st, 2023. The East pool pump room project is complete and the West pool project is scheduled to finish up around the 3rd week of March. Once the West pool is finished, the plan is to open up both pools to residents, with an ideal date being April 1st.
- The Board also resolved to change the Main Pool hours so that it opens at 7am and now closes at 9pm (previously the pool closed at 8pm). This is a response to the positive feedback we received from the 2022 swim season where the Main Pool was open until 9:30pm. The east and west pool hours remain unchanged – they are both 7am to 8pm daily.
- The Board talked about pool monitors or staff on site to enforce the HOA pool rules during the busy swim season. The Board directed management to look into hiring part-time pool rules enforcement staff for the summer season, to help supervise the pools and ensure that residents and guests are following the HOA pool rules.
- The Board resolved that it has no plans to hire lifeguards this swim season. This means that a lap lane will not be made available during WCST summer practices. This is in

response to the infrequent use of a lap lane in the past.

- The Board approved a proposal to replace the non-functioning central water tank booster pumps with a single 7.5hp pump.
- The Board discussed the possibility of installing EV charging stations within the community, specifically in the parking spaces in front of the Clubhouse. The Board would like to obtain feedback from a third-party EV charging service like Charge Point to see if they would be willing to assist and what something like that might cost.

As a reminder, starting in March, our monthly Board meetings will now resume in-person at the Business Office. Meetings start at 7pm and the Homeowner Open Forum is always the first item on the agenda.

All homeowners are welcome and encouraged to attend! Contact the GM if you have any questions about how any of this works.

The agendas and notices for all Board meetings are posted outside of the Business Office a minimum of four days before the meeting. We also post the notice on the HOA website, and send out a link via the eSignal email blast.

Currently we are also working on a hybrid approach to our regular Board meetings, meaning owners will also have the option to attend via Zoom. We understand that this is much easier for a lot of folks and are currently working on making that a reality. We should have it up and running in time for our March 23rd Board meeting - keep an eye out for an eSignal later this month with more info!

Fruit Tree Picking Reminder

Walking through the neighborhood, you can't help but notice many homes with lovely fruit trees in the front and backyards. While these fruit trees look lovely when oranges or lemons are ripening, fruit that falls to the ground is likely to attract animals like rats, mice, raccoons, and opossums. If possible, we would like to recommend that residents pick their fruit trees frequently, to assist with preventing an influx of small animals and vermin. This area in particular sees a lot of rat and mice activity, and making sure your fruit trees are picked before the fruits are

dropped or shed will go a long way in keeping these pesky critters out.

Additionally, Contra Costa County provides a service that might help those who cannot pick their own fruit. Through their Fruit Rescue program, you can register your tree to be added to their system and they will assist in picking fruit from your tree to be donated to local soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and food banks. Their website is www.forestr.org/fruit-rescue/.

Thanks for doing your part in keeping our community great!



Pool Updates and Heating Schedules

As a quick reminder, the Main Pool is currently open to residents by using your standard key fob, but the water is not being heated. This change was made at the tail end of last year, and allows us to keep the pool bathrooms open during the winter, and the gym can now stay open outside of the Clubhouse hours.

Originally the plan was to have the Main Pool heated around the end of February. Unfortunately we are currently experiencing an issue with the gas line that services the pool heaters. A vendor is currently working on getting the issue repaired as quickly as possible, and we are hopeful the Main Pool water will be heated and ready for

swimming sometime around mid-March.

As far as the East and West pools go, traditionally they have opened either during the "standard" swim season – Memorial Day to Labor Day – but over the past few years they've been opening a bit earlier as the weather starts to warm. Our current goal is to open the side pools on or around April 1st.

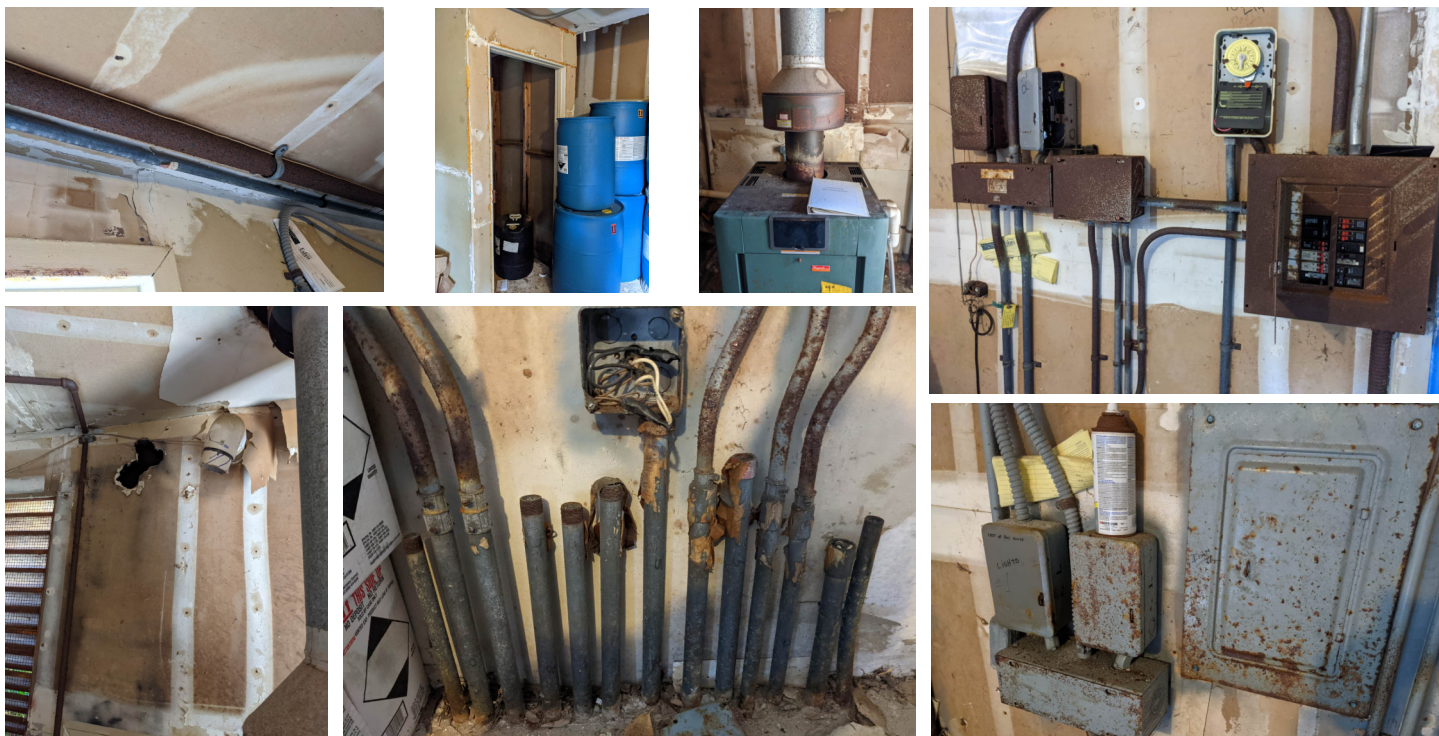
Currently the West Pool pump room project is 100% complete and signed off by the city/county. The West Pool is in the final stages – permits have been obtained (finally!!) and there is about ~2 weeks of construction remaining, which should have resumed by the

time you get this newsletter. If all goes according to plan, both side pools should be ready to open by the 1st of April.

We want to thank you again for your patience throughout this project. Frankly, having both side pools closed for all of last year was truly dreadful. But we hope that when both pools re-open you'll see a big difference in the overall quality and cleanliness of the water! Both pump rooms are getting a UV water sanitizer, which will work in addition to the chlorine to keep the water clean and clear.

Hope to see you out on the pool deck shortly!

East Pool Pump Room Project Pictures - Before



East Pool Pump Room Project Pictures - After



Pool Monitors & Rules Enforcement

For the 2020 and 2021 swim seasons, the Association was required to provide a Pool Monitor to enforce county COVID guidelines during operating hours. As a result of this, we did away with hiring lifeguards to enforce the CHOA pool rules. For 2022, the Clubhouse reopened in June and the Clubhouse staff was tasked with checking on the pools regularly and assisting owners in enforcing our pool rules.

At our last meeting, the Board discussed how to handle rules enforcement at our pools for the 2023 swim season. The general consensus was that the Clubhouse staff simply does not have enough time to effectively monitor the pools for rule breaking/bad behavior, especially during the hottest summer months and weekends. The Board has decided it will be hiring several part-time Pool Monitors this summer to patrol the pools and manage situa-

tions where there are violations to our pool rules. These monitors will be around during the busiest summer months. There are no COVID-related guidelines at this time; instead they will focus on things like disruptive behavior, diving, running, music, dogs in and around the pools, etc. So if you see a Pool Monitor this summer, be sure to say hey and follow any directions they may have. And if you notice any bad or concerning behavior, let them know!

CHOA Walking Guide Available

Several creative residents have put together a CHOA Walking Guide – a map of every street in our community complete with measurements for the distances of each court, along with several pre-measured walking paths for you to try out! You can use the guide to

easily map out your own walk or run based on a distance you are comfortable with. Copies are available in the Business Office – send an email to businessoffice@walnutcountry.com if you want a copy, or stop by during business hours!

Landscape Changes to your Property

Recently we have been receiving questions from owners asking about how to proceed with a landscape-related change to their property. The CC&Rs for CHOA require that an owner obtain approval from the Association for any modification to their property. The good news is that the CHOA rules currently do not require owners to submit or obtain approval from the HOA for any landscaping-related change.

So if you are doing any of the following in your front or backyard, you do not need any sort of approval from the Association:

- Changing your front yard landscape in any

way, so long as you are not adding hardscape components like a new walkway, pavers, pergolas, lattices, etc.

- Replacing front yard grass with a new material, be it shrubs, bark, small plants, etc
- Installing trees on your property
- Removing trees from your property (although you may need city approval, depending on the species and size of the tree)

That being said, if you are adding things like walkways, retaining walls, or any other hardscape feature, you

do need to submit an application for approval. Please note that the HOA rules currently require that the front yard be made up of no more than 50% hardscape; so half of your front yard must be landscaped. If you are making a change to your front yard, please be sure to include this sort of information.

To obtain HOA approval, you will need to fill out and submit an Architectural Application to the Business Office. You can get a copy of the application from the Association website (www.walnutcountry.com) under Documents and Forms. You can also grab a copy from the

Business Office, or email the GM and ask for a copy.

When filling out the application, try to include as much visual information as you can. The Committee that reviews applications is made up of 6 volunteer homeowners, and the primary focus when reviewing an application will be how it impacts the surrounding properties and fits with the aesthetic. Pictures are always recommended, as well as plot plans from the vendors performing the work.

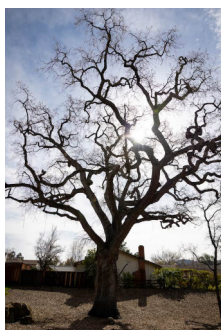
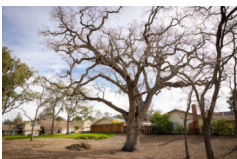
If you have any questions at all about the approval process, please contact the Business Office!

WANT TO ADVERTISE HERE?

This Association newsletter is delivered to 1,062 homes monthly!

Quarter page ad = \$100/mo
Half page ad = \$150/mo
Full page ad (one-sided) = \$250/mo
Full page ad (two-sided) = \$350/mo

Contact the Business Office for more information at 925-687-9961 or by email at businessoffice@walnutcountry.com



NANCY'S NEWS

CROSSINGS COMMUNITY

February, 2023

Issue 165

NANCY BENNETT



St. Paddy's Day Event



Eat, Drink and Be Irish!

Please join us on Saturday, March 11th

5:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Crossings Clubhouse—4465 South Larwin Ave, Concord

Free—Family Friendly Celebration

- Must RSVP to attend—
- Jana@BennettBetter.com or 925-391-6100
- Must be a Crossings resident
- Must wear green attire

Serving Traditional Irish Dinner

With Green Beer, Whiskey & Soft Drinks

A Special Thank You to Our Clients and the Crossings!



Nancy Bennett of The Bennett Team



Crossings Year To Date Real Estate Market

Status	Days	Address	List Price	Sold Price	SqFt	Beds	Baths	Sale \$/SqFt	Closing Date
Active	190	4409 Shellbark Court	\$1,398,000		2560	5	3		
Sold	6	4641 Sugarland Circle	\$788,000	\$812,500	1366	3	2	\$595	2/13/2023
Sold	177	4412 Sugarland Ct	\$899,999	\$828,000	2053	4	2.5	\$403	1/27/2023
Sold	195	4423 Weeping Spruce Ct	\$999,000	\$950,000	2130	4	2.5	\$446	1/10/2023
Coming Soon	0	4478 Pitch Pine Ct	\$985,000		2026	4	3		

COMING SOON!

Available and Coming Soon

- 3 bed, 2 bath, 1070 sq ft—Schenone Ct
- 4478 Pitch Pine Ct—4 beds, 2 baths \$785k
- Crossings 4 beds, March 24th

NEED—4 bedroom or larger Crossings home at the end of a court. And a single story 4 bedroom home, any condition.

SOLD—

5389 Concerto Cir Concord—11 offers
4641 Sugarland Cir Concord

Our team has helped over 600 families buy or sell homes ! We have a unique strategy to get your home sold. Are you the next family that we can help too?

NANCY E. BENNETT, REALTOR

Keller Williams Realty—East Bay

Top Selling Crossings Agent since 2006
#1 Agent In Concord, 2014—2019
Five-Star Professional Customer Svc Award 2013—2022

Founder and CEO, The Bennett Team
Agent Leadership Council, Faculty Member and Mentor
Phone 925.606.8400 and Nancy@BennettBetter.com
CalDRE #01399870

Selling a House with Solar Panels

If you add it, they will come? That's not really a question, but more like a statement. Yes, solar adds value to your home right now AND when you sell your home sale.

It's the details of that solar loan, lease, subscription or full ownership of the panels that is important for home buyers to fully understand BEFORE they make you an offer. Otherwise, it could blow up the deal!

Going solar is still a viable money-saving solution for your house, even if you expect to sell it in the foreseeable future.

Solar can increase your house's value in a sale?

Depending on how you decide to go solar, you may be able to benefit from your solar energy system during the home sales process. Studies show that homes with solar tend to sell more quickly and for higher prices (on average, 4.1 percent more) than comparable homes without solar.

Home sales if you own your solar energy system

In a study conducted by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, researchers found that potential homebuyers were willing to pay more for homes equipped **with customer-owned solar**. In fact, they discovered that homes with the average PV system in their sample size (3.6 kW) sold for a premium of \$15,000 across different states. Even if you have a portion of a solar loan to pay off, the increase in sale value of your home can help offset or even cover that loan residual amount.

Home sales if you leased your solar energy system

Many homeowners considering a solar lease express concern about reductions in home value. They worry about potential buyers being unwilling or unable to take over the lease, and the potential costs that they would incur if they had to buy out their lease. Luckily, most of these concerns are unfounded. A recent study completed in California, analyzed homes in southern California participants saw no impact on their home sale value as a result of their lease agreement.

Selling your house with a solar lease or PPA

Don't feel forced to pay high utility electricity rates today just because you might move in the next 20 years. The typical lease/PPA agreement lasts for 20 to 25 years, but it's well within your rights as a homeowner to sign an agreement now and then sell your home before the end of your lease term. There are two strategies to sell a home that has a leased solar energy system attached:

Buy out the remainder of the lease: By paying the rest of your lease, you can either have the panels removed from your roof, or keep them there and sell the system as part of the property.

Transfer the lease to the new property owner: If the new owner is willing to take over the lease and meets the third-party owner's criteria, you can transfer the agreement over to their name.

If you're considering transferring the lease to a new property owner, they will need to meet the credit requirements of the third-party owner of the system.

Selling your home with a solar loan

Your options for selling your home with solar if you own the system vary depending on how you financed the purchase. If you plan on financing the purchase with a secured loan (like a home equity loan or home equity line of credit), you will have to pay off the remaining balance of the home before you sell. This is because your property is used as collateral for the loan. In most cases, secured loans don't have prepayment penalties, so there's no disadvantage to paying the system off early.

Don't let a future move prevent a solar panel purchase today

Going solar is a great investment in your home, even if you're moving before the end of the solar panel system's life. As with any contract, review your financing agreement prior to signing to see if there are any restrictions, and be sure to discuss all your options with your solar installer before making a final decision.

Bottom line – buy the solar panels/program that works for you and we'll figure out the solar transfer/payoff or subscription details and provide that to a buyer BEFORE they make you an offer.

For now, enjoy the free or low cost electrical from your solar investment!

Until next time.....Nancy