



Walnut Country - The Signal | Volume 2024, Issue 3 | Office Phone: 925-687-9961 | Email: [businessoffice@walnutcountry.com](mailto:businessoffice@walnutcountry.com)

### Spring Architectural Committee Reminders

As Spring is upon us, we wanted to send out a quick reminder to all homeowners with some common violations our Architectural Committee inspectors frequently see this time of year:

- Christmas or any other winter holiday lights need to be removed immediately if still up – any houses with Christmas lights up in April will likely be called a Board hearing and fined in the near future! Per the Rules, holiday decorations need to be removed no more than 30 days after the end of the applicable holiday.
- WEEDS – we know everyone is having to deal with these right now (the HOA included!), but something we see a lot of is weeds along the walkways or a side yard fence that runs along the main roads. Please check the exterior of your property for weeds, especially along your fence line or sidewalk.
- This time of year, especially after the March rains, any front yard grass should be looking pretty lush and full. If you have exposed dirt or dry patches in your grass, this might be a good time to reseed! We also would encourage all owners to look into a more natural, drought-tolerant lawn conversion. The county water district offers rebates of up to \$2,000 to all residents who convert their lawn area to space for low-water plants. Search "Lawn to Garden Rebate" on the County Water District's website

for more information! Changes to your front yard landscaping do not need approval from the HOA.

The Architectural Committee is made up of volunteer homeowners who perform monthly inspections of all homes in the community. They are looking for violations of the HOA's Rules and architectural guidelines that the Association is required to enforce. The HOA sends letters to owners whose lots were noted to be in violation. The first letter is a courtesy notice, indicating that often times issues like these are temporary or might be a simple misunderstanding, asking for the issue to be addressed at the owner's earliest convenience. Follow up letters are then sent if the violation remains uncorrected or is repeated. Ultimately, owners are called to Board hearings where a fine may be assessed, common area access privileges revoked, or the HOA attorney engaged for potential legal action, depending on the seriousness of the issue.

Unfortunately this process can be rather slow moving if the owner or resident simply decides to ignore the letters they are sent. It is safe to assume that if you see a house or property that isn't in great shape (by CHOA's standards), they have already been sent multiple letters from the HOA and have not yet taken action or are simply ignoring them. We are working on increasing the frequency that disciplinary hearings are held to try to speed up this process. If you have any questions about the HOA's rules, architectural standards, or disciplinary process, please contact the Business Office!

### Walnut Country THE CROSSINGS

#### In This Issue...

- Treasurer's Report pg. 2
- President's Corner pg. 3
- GM Update pg. 4
- Board Meeting Summary pg. 6

#### Upcoming Schedule

- Board of Directors Meeting
  - Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm
- Architectural Committee Meeting
  - Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm

#### Board Meeting Info

The Board of Directors meet on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7pm. Meetings are at the Business Office but also available via Zoom. Contact the General Manager if you want the Zoom info!

The Architectural Committee meets on the third Thursday of every month at 6pm via Zoom - 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>

#### 2024 Pool Hours

Main Pool  
Open Daily | 7am to 9:00pm  
• Heated as of February

East & West Pools  
Open Daily | 7am to 8:00pm  
• Heating later this month...

WCST Preseason  
April 8<sup>th</sup> thru June 7<sup>th</sup>  
• Monday thru Friday  
• 3:30pm to 8pm

### Yoga Classes - Wednesday Nights @ the Clubhouse

We are still hosting weekly yoga classes at the Clubhouse! Classes are every Wednesday evening at 6pm and the cost is \$8 per class. Residents can sign up online at the following website:

[www.walnutcountry.com/yoga](http://www.walnutcountry.com/yoga)

This is a Gentle Yoga class, which is performed at a slower pace with less intense positions than a more demanding class might be. There is a stronger emphasis on stretching, seated poses and low-impact movements.

Participants need to bring their own yoga mats. There are 25 slot available for each class. We hope you join us!

## Treasurer's Report (Year to Date) Balance Sheet as of February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Current Assets

Cash - Operating	\$ 126,286
Cash - Reserves	\$ 1,593,748
Receivables	\$ 12,790
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 48,369
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,781,193</b>

### Current Liabilities

Liabilities (Prepaid Assessments, Accrued Payables, Deposits, etc.)	\$ 127,345
---	------------

### Delinquent Assessments, Fees, and Fines

Total Outstanding Assessments	\$ (9,515)
Total Outstanding Fees and Fines	\$ (1,976)
<b>TOTAL OUTSTANDING DELINQUENCIES</b>	<b>\$ (11,491)</b>



## A LOOK at the BUDGET

### Year-To-Date Budget Report

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance	Monthly Actual
<b>Total Revenue (Accrued)</b>	<b>\$ 255,207</b>	<b>\$ 255,672</b>	<b>\$ (465)</b>	<b>\$ 127,605</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Insurance	\$ 15,039	\$ 12,867	\$ (2,172)	\$ 7,493
Taxes & Permits	\$ 1,721	\$ 1,166	\$ (555)	\$ -
Legal Fees/CPA	\$ -	\$ 2,467	\$ 2,467	\$ -
Management & Accounting	\$ 44,061	\$ 41,398	\$ (2,663)	\$ 20,100
Office, Admin, & Mailing	\$ 5,676	\$ 10,192	\$ 4,516	\$ 2,789
Staffing/Payroll/Events	\$ 21,479	\$ 17,200	\$ (4,279)	\$ 10,864
Security Patrol	\$ 2,293	\$ 3,900	\$ 1,607	\$ 1,147
Alarm Systems	\$ 1,599	\$ 1,284	\$ (315)	\$ 657
Landscaping & Irrigation	\$ 30,450	\$ 34,033	\$ 3,583	\$ 15,225
Pest Control	\$ 2,824	\$ 2,833	\$ 9	\$ 1,412
Maintenance & Janitorial	\$ 2,398	\$ 3,500	\$ 1,102	\$ 707
HVAC & Plumbing	\$ -	\$ 917	\$ 917	\$ -
Roofs & Gutters	\$ -	\$ 317	\$ 317	\$ -
Pools, Tennis Courts, & Dog Park	\$ 7,515	\$ 10,316	\$ 2,801	\$ 3,050
Utilities	\$ 20,770	\$ 42,450	\$ 21,680	\$ 8,918
Reserve Transfer	\$ 70,832	\$ 70,832	\$ -	\$ 35,416
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>	<b>\$ 226,657</b>	<b>\$ 255,672</b>	<b>\$ 29,015</b>	<b>\$ 107,778</b>

### Are you signed up for the CHOA eSignal?

The eSignal is the email program we use to send out community-wide updates to CHOA residents. We typically use this for things like project or maintenance updates, CHOA events RSVPs and info, and Board meeting notices and agendas. The eSignal is a great way to see what is happening here in your community! It will also get you time-sen-

sitive updates if, for example, a facility is closed for maintenance or a gate is out of order.

You can sign up for the eSignal online in less than a minute! Just visit this page:

[www.walnutcountry.com/esignal](http://www.walnutcountry.com/esignal)



## President's Corner // April 2024

**H**ello Walnut Country, the Board and I hope that you all are doing well. The Board and I hope that you all are doing well and enjoying the beginning of Spring. Thank you for taking a few minutes to read our monthly Signal publication and staying informed. Our last meeting was March 28<sup>th</sup>. Below are some highlights and news for the Association.

### Reserve Study

Every year, our Association contracts with a third-party company that conducts our annual "Reserve Study." During the study, the company examines all the components of our Association to determine if the items are in need of repair or replacement, and if not, how long will the item last until it does. The Reserve Study produces an exhaustive list of things like "Clubhouse Roof," "Playground Swings," and "Pool Drinking Fountains." The Study tells us when an item was last upgraded and gives us a projected year for when it will need attention again. Further, this study guides the Association and the Board on how much money must be saved "to reserves" for our annual budget. Our monthly Reserve Contribution

that funds these items is the largest monthly expenditure in our budget.

### Clubhouse Furniture & Painting

Speaking of the Reserve Study, the Association is past due on painting the interior of the Clubhouse and upgrading some of the furniture. As you know, we rent the Clubhouse out to Association Members for special events. The one consistent request after those rentals is to "please upgrade the furniture!" We hear you and that project is underway now!

### Water Aerobics Classes

We are glad to welcome back Water Aerobics to the Association for the upcoming swim season. Please see the pg. 6 article for details.

### HOA ID Badges

Prior to the Pandemic, the Association made resident badges for all our neighbors. Badges were required for common area use, such as pools, the dog park, and tennis courts. We had to stop issuing badges once the Clubhouse was closed and therefore could not reasonably enforce the badge requirement from our HOA Rules. We are going to

start making those badges available again soon. The goal will be to start enforcing the badge requirement later this year.

### Tree Preventative Healthcare

As you may remember from past Signal articles, we now contract with an Arborist who helps us maintain our HOA Forest (as I like to call it; not an official term!) and make sure that our trees are healthy and safe. At our last meeting, the Board approved a service for some of our trees that will prevent bug infestation and disease. We also approved the removal of several Eucalyptus trees that are no longer healthy and are close to homes. That work will be occurring over the next several weeks.

Thanks for reading and we hope to see you at a future meeting. Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024. We hope to see you there. You can attend in person or join us via Zoom to watch.

**Mike Kindorf**  
CHOA President

## Three Eucalyptus Trees Approved for Removal Near Snowberry Ct

**A**t the recent March meeting, the CHOA Board approved removing three eucalyptus trees at the end of Snowberry Ct. These are trees #61, #62, and #63. This work is scheduled to be completed on April 29th and should be done by the end of the day.

The contracted arborist took a look at these trees last month and provided an updated report to the Board on their condition. They had been on a "watchlist" since last year as potential candidates for removal and were last pruned back in fall of 2023. Per the report received, past poor pruning practices (heading cuts) along with the recent heavy rainfall and subsequent new growth (resulting in a heavy canopy) have exacerbated the situation. Several options were recommended, all involving immediate pruning to get the trees in better shape, followed by monitoring and (most likely) full removal of some or all of the



trees later this year or next.

The Board was not in favor of spending money to prune a tree that would most likely still be removed later this year, so it approved a quote to have all three trees removed as soon as possible.

## CARRASCO CONSTRUCTION

Lic. #797947

**\* Quality \* Satisfaction \* Trust \***

Additions & Remodels  
Kitchen & Bathroom  
Renovation  
Concrete Drives,  
Pool Decks & Patios  
Termite / Home  
Inspection Repairs  
Fire & Water Restoration

**BONDED & INSURED**

Frank Carrasco  
Bus: 925-446-7489  
[www.carrascoconstructioninc.com](http://www.carrascoconstructioninc.com)

## General Manager's Update // April 2024



Pictured: the General Manager "working"

**H**ey CHOA! I hope you've enjoyed the last few sunny, warm days earlier this week after a collllllld month of March! I know I sure have. The new trees along the South Slope are starting to bloom and the green, red and pink color palette is looking great!

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

- We recently had the two pool tables in the Clubhouse sanded down and refinished! They are looking good as new. We also were able to repair the nets/pockets as those were coming loose.
- Both toilets at the West Pool were having issues and running 24/7. We had a plumber out last week who replaced most of the parts in the tank and they are now back to working normally.
- Warranty work on the concrete walkways in the central greenbelt was originally scheduled for 3/29 but had to be pushed back due to rain. This work will likely be completed before the end of the month. There are two sections of concrete where the edges cracked as the ground settled. Smaller hairline cracks are not a structural concern and won't be covered under a warranty.
- A vendor was on site last week replacing broken tiles and repairing some damaged or leaky areas of the Clubhouse roof. Overall the roof is in pretty good shape, per the last inspection we had performed, and (fingers crossed)

we can make it last another decade or two!

- The landscapers are going through the common area greenbelt with pesticides targeting those pesky broadleaf weeds that are starting to grow up out of the grass. They are servicing different areas every week or two, so you should see most of those taken care of before summer officially starts.
- We are looking into LED lights for the upper tennis courts. Those bulbs are currently metal halide and very expensive to replace when they burn out since we need to rent a lift to reach them. Currently there are two lights out, one at court #4 and another at court #2. Before moving forward with an LED transition, we want to make sure that there won't be a significant impact on anyone who regularly uses the courts at night.
- Just a reminder for those who might have missed it – the Main Pool is fully heated and open for residents to use outside of Swim Team practices (Mo-Fri, 3:30pm to 8pm). Pool hours are 7am to 9pm daily. The side pool heaters are scheduled to be turned on later this month when the weather stays a bit warmer – looking like sometime around the week of the 15th or so is a good target date. We will send out an eSignal when a date is confirmed and post it on the HOA website.
- We've slowly been making some improvements in the Clubhouse gym – last month we put up a rack with some foam rollers, a yoga mat, and stretch bands. Last week we added some posters with workout suggestions. Next week we will be installing a small rack for hanging clothes/hats/jackets, as well as a large 3x6 gym-safe mirror along the wall where the treadmill faces. This should help those on the treadmill see what is going on behind them as well as those who want to check their form during a workout. We will continue to do our best to improve this space!

- We are working with the landscapers to figure out the best solution to the weeds that continue to grow up along Cowell Rd, towards the southern corner of Ygnacio Valley. This area isn't irrigated and it is costly to cut down or spray the weeds in this area several times per year. An ideal solution would be to plant ground-cover that would take over and naturally suppress weed growth, but that would be costly since we would need new irrigation installed as well. We are looking into options like a weed tarp and bark to go in this area.
- We installed some new signage around the Preschool playground area. Residents were using the playground after hours, moving things around, leaving trash behind, etc.

And once again, the return of my favorite column, another book recommendation that no one asked for!



### *In Defense of Food*

by Michael Pollan

*I can't remember if I've already put this one in my Signal recommendations since I've been here, but it's worth repeating if I have! I know the phrase is a cliché, but this book has the ability to be life-changing if it hits you right. Pollan's approach to food and eating is both simple and novel and has really shaped my relationship with the food I buy and what I eat. Be warned - it might turn you into one of those organic, grass-fed, pasture-raised eating weirdos like me...*

Hope to see you at this month's Board meeting! 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

## USTA Teams at the CHOA Courts

**T**here are several competitive U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) tennis teams that play in our development in league matches against other non-Homeowner club teams. The 18 and over men's 3.5 team is currently looking for Crossings residents that would be interested to play on a USTA tennis team. Please contact the captain Joseph Ibrahim ([joetenis@astound.net](mailto:joetenis@astound.net)) to express your interest. To learn more about the USTA league, check out the Norcal USTA league site.

The USTA practice and match schedule is posted online at the following website:

[www.walnutcountry.com/usta](http://www.walnutcountry.com/usta)

A link to the calendar is also posted at the entrance to the upper tennis courts. Practices are usually held on Mondays thru Fridays, from 6pm to 8:30pm. Matches are typically held on weekends, but can vary due to weather. Court 1 is most often available to all residents to use during these times, but

sometimes a rescheduled match might need to use court 1 for an hour or two. We strongly recommend that all residents just quickly check the CHOA USTA schedule online before going out to play on the upper courts. The lower courts (5 through 8) are seldom used for USTA matches and never used for USTA practices. The online USTA schedule will indicate which courts are reserved for each match and practice and is updated as soon as matches, practices, or rain-outs are scheduled.





## Board Meeting Summary // March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The CHOA Board of Directors meet monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday. 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.

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 legal 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 need 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 approved the audit and financial statements provided by the CPA for the 2023 fiscal year. This is required to be performed annually and mailed the membership. You should be

receiving the financial statement packet in the mail later this month.

- The Board approved a proposal for the 2025 reserve study. This year's study includes a site inspection of the components (required every three years).
- The Board approved a legal firm to act as Inspector of Elections for the 2024 Board elections (needed if ballots are sent out).
- The Board approved updated Signal advertising rates due to an increase in printing costs. The printer we use is still the least expensive in the area (we obtained quotes from three other local printers to confirm).
- The Board approved continuing water aerobics classes at the East Pool. More info can be found in the water aerobics write-up in this Signal.
- The Board approved enlisting the help of an interior designer for replacing the Clubhouse furniture. They will also help create a paint palette and we will incorporate repainting the Clubhouse interior in this project.
- The Board talked about options for increasing capacity for the Winter Festival by potentially adding a third time slot. As this would be an additional expense, the Board considered charging a small entrance fee for the event, like was previously done with the Haunted House.
- The Board held a lengthy discussion regarding HOA ID badges and guest passes. The Board clarified particulars for how the process will work and what the requirements will be. Management will draft a policy with the details for approval at the April meeting. Badges will likely be able to acquire from the Clubhouse this summer, and enforce-

ment will begin once everyone has had a chance to obtain theirs. Much more info will be coming once all of the details are finalized. Old badges from pre-COVID years will still be valid.

- The Board discussed the ongoing electrical issues at both the east and west entrance monument signs (the lights are out at both areas). Management will focus on the east entrance as that is currently the more difficult of the two problems. The Board approved a proposal for preventative tree healthcare services for around 70 common area trees, mostly oaks and crape myrtles.
- The Board approved a proposal for removing three Eucalyptus trees near the end of Snowberry Ct. More info about that decision is included in this Signal edition.

As a reminder, 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. If you have any feedback or comments for the Board, that is the time to bring it to the Board's attention! All homeowners are welcome and encouraged to attend! Contact the GM if you have any questions about how any of this works.

We are also going to continue making the meetings available via Zoom as often as possible. The meeting agendas will include the Zoom login info for those who would prefer to attend remotely! It is still using the same Zoom login info since we started in 2020. You can find the meeting agendas uploaded online at [walnutcountry.com](http://walnutcountry.com), or posted at the bulletin boards at the Business Office at least four days prior to the meeting date.

## Water Aerobics Starting April 29<sup>th</sup>!

Water aerobics classes are scheduled to resume at the East Pool on Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at 10am! We are also adding another class on Wednesdays at the East Pool at 10am, which will be taught by the instructor who was a substitute for last year's classes.

The Board did look into weekend and evening aerobics classes, but no instructor was available. Classes will continue through the summer and likely into the fall,

depending on instructor availability and resident participation.

Classes are \$8 per person, paid directly to the instructor. You can sign up for classes online by clicking the link at [www.walnutcountry.com/wateraerobics/](http://www.walnutcountry.com/wateraerobics/).

### **CHOA Water Aerobics**

- Starting April 29<sup>th</sup>
- Mondays & Wednesdays
- 10am at the East Pool
- \$8 per class

## WANT TO RENT THE CLUBHOUSE?

The CHOA Clubhouse is currently available to rent for private events on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays! Here is a quick breakdown of Clubhouse rental fees:

- Lounge: \$300
- Game Room: +\$200 (Saturdays only)
- 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 email the Clubhouse staff at [clubhouse@walnutcountry.com](mailto:clubhouse@walnutcountry.com), or call 925-825-0250.



## New Natural Play Area Near West Pool

You may have noticed some tree logs and stumps that were recently moved over to an open area between Silverberry Ct and Shellbark Ct. A few eucalyptus trees were removed at this location earlier this year. While waiting for the crew to return to haul away the logs, it was brought to our attention that many younger kids were having a blast climbing over and on top of the horizontal logs. An idea

was proposed that we use some of these logs to create a sort of natural play area, so we worked with the tree removal company and soon struck a deal to help us move some of these logs into a good position at no additional cost to us – since we would have paid to have the logs hauled away anyway. The area we installed this in was just an empty dirt patch where a tree had previously stood. Installing a new irrigation system and plants/trees/mulch would have cost at least one to two thousand dollars. This way we were able to provide a benefit to the homeowners without any additional expense.

Once in position, we had our handyman inspect the logs and shave down any sharp or potentially dangerous corners/edges. Earlier this week, we were able to add some playground safe certified wood chips around the area to help



make sure this play area is as safe as possible. This is a bit of a pilot program and we would welcome any feedback you may have. While there is no current plan for additional natural play areas like this, if it's a hit we would love to incorporate similar ideas as it is a sustainable way to continue to give life and purpose to these mature trees that needed to be removed.

## Another Call for Futsal! Feedback Needed if you are Interested!

We are still looking for more feedback from residents regarding interest in a Futsal court at the lower tennis courts. Futsal is similar to indoor soccer, usually played 5 on 5, using smaller, heavier, low-bounce ball. It can be played indoor or outdoor and tennis courts are frequently converted into Futsal courts when there is demand.

While soccer (football) is unquestionably the most popular sport in the world, the Board wanted to obtain feedback from the membership here to help gauge potential popularity for a project like this. We would love to hear from you if:

- You have played Futsal before
- You have never played but you or your children would be interested in playing
- You would be interested in learning more about Futsal
- You feel strongly one way or another

Futsal can be played by all ages. A lot of the local leagues around the East Bay cater to ages 8 to 16, so it is an ex-

cellent sport for younger children and teens.

If enough positive feedback is received, the next step might be to install some temporary Futsal nets over on a lower tennis court for a weekend or two and to monitor feedback/usage during that time. The location would likely be tennis court #7 (near the Pickleball courts) or #5 (near the entrance to the tennis courts). There would need to be another barrier between the Futsal court and other courts, but because the ball is heavier, it is less likely to bounce over or be kicked over fences, unlike your standard soccer ball.

If you have any feedback at all, we would love to hear it! A conversion project like this can only happen when we hear from a significant number of residents, giving us an idea of true demand (similar to the Pickleball court conversion project). If we don't get much positive feedback or interest, the project likely won't happen. So let us know what you think! You can send an email to the Business Office with your comments:

[businessoffice@walnutcountry.com](mailto:businessoffice@walnutcountry.com)





## CHOA Events Committee Updates



### **SPRING FEST**

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Spring Festival in the rain - what a beautiful (and weather-full) day we experienced together!

Residents enjoyed indoor and outdoor activities, including a coffee & pastry bar, craft tables, photos with the Easter Bunny, a Petting Zoo, so many bubbles, a huge egg hunt and a colorful celebration of Holi.

We also collected children's books to donate to the Sweet Beginnings Diaper Bank - these will be gifted to families picking up diapers. What a generous community we have!

Did you make it to the Festival? Wish you had? We'd love to hear from you! We created a quick 8-question survey to get input on this year and planning for future years: <https://bit.ly/SpringFestSurvey24>

### **SUMMER CONCERT - SATURDAY, JULY 20**

Mark your calendars, we're planning a fun outdoor Summer Concert, right on the Greenbelt! We'll have music from the Dream Tellers, a local 60s & 70s rock-inspired cover band, food & beer trucks, and fun stations for the kids. More info to come as we get closer to the warm summer months.





# NANCY'S NEWS

## CROSSINGS COMMUNITY

April, 2024

Issue 175

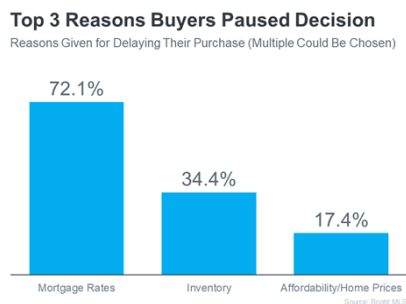
NANCY BENNETT



### What Mortgage Rate Do You Need To Move?

If you've been thinking about buying a home, mortgage rates are probably top of mind for you. They may even be why you've put your plans on hold for now. When rates climbed near 8% last year, some buyers found the numbers just didn't make sense for their budget anymore. That may be the case for you too.

Data from Bright MLS shows the top reason buyers delayed their plans to move is due to high mortgage rates (see graph below):



David Childers, CEO at Keeping Current Matters, speaks to this statistic in the recent How's The Market podcast:

"Three quarters of buyers said 'we're out' due to mortgage rates. Here's what I know going forward. That will change in 2024."

That's because mortgage rates have come down off their peak last October. And while there's still day-to-day volatility in rates, the longer-term projections show rates should continue to drop this year, as long as inflation gets under control. Experts even say we could see rates below 6% by the end of 2024. And that threshold would be a gamechanger for buyers.

As a recent article from Realtor.com says:

Four out of 10 Americans looking to buy a home in the next 12 months would consider it possible if rates drop below 6%."

While mortgage rates are nearly impossible to forecast, the optimism from the experts should give you insight into what's ahead. That means it may be time to start thinking about your move. The best question you can ask yourself right now, is this:

### What number do I want to see rates hit before I'm ready to move?

The exact percentage where you feel comfortable kicking off your search again is personal. Maybe it's 6.5%. Maybe it's 6.25%. Or maybe it's once they drop below 6%.

One of my preferred lenders is Greg Lartilleaux from Avenir Mortgage Planners ([Greg@AvenirMP.com](mailto:Greg@AvenirMP.com)). He mentioned this today when I asked him if "buying down an interest rate is a good strategy for home buyers, and if so, what would it cost?" He responded:

To get a 6.00% rate on an \$800K loan and \$1M purchase price would cost almost 4 points! = \$32,000

To be frank that would be a bad strategy ... buyers need to understand they must:

- Buy now while there are less buyers on the market = they get the home at a LOWER price
- REFINANCE in 1y when rates are lower = then they get the LOWER rate
- If they wait for the rates to come down and then buy they will get the LOWER rate BUT get the home at a HIGHER price (and with a lot more competition!)

### Bottom Line

If you've put your plans to move on hold because of where mortgage rates are, Do you want to wait for that rate? Or buy sooner and refi later??

Full article at KMC, March 2024

Until next time...Nancy

Home Buyer Need

Current clients need the following properties:

- **NEED—I HAVE AN IMMEDIATE NEED FOR A SINGLE STORY CROSSINGS HOME. FULLY approved now!**
- **Crystyl Ranch—over 2,000 sq ft, Can be an as-is sale with rent back available.**
- **Need single story rental—Crossings asap.**

*Our team has helped over 500 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  
925-606-8400

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  
[Nancy@BennettBetter.com](mailto:Nancy@BennettBetter.com)  
CalDRE #01399870

# Mark Your Calendars



**SHRED IT AND FORGET IT!**  
Get your documents shredded for **FREE!**

**WHEN:**  
Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**WHERE:**  
Kmart parking lot  
5100 Clayton Rd.  
Concord, CA

**YES:**  
Financial statements, receipts, invoices, tax forms, medical records and other personal documents. Docs will be shredded on site by a mobile shredding company.

**NO:**  
Plastic materials

We are accepting donations for:



**Nancy E. Bennett, Realtor**  
Nancy@BennettBetter.com  
(925) 606-8400  
CalBRE#01399870



Shred your documents for free!

Saturday April 20th,

9:00am to 12:00pm

Kmart Parking lot 5100 Clayton Rd.



**Concord Crossings Annual Community Garage Sale!**

 **Saturday May 4<sup>th</sup>**  
8AM - 1PM

**Are you signed up yet?**

Registration is **FREE** for this awesome community event.

To register go to:  
[BennettBetter.com/GarageSale](http://BennettBetter.com/GarageSale)  
or call (925) 606-8400 for more info.

Deadline to register is **May 1<sup>st</sup>**.



Annual Crossings Garage Sale

Saturday May 4th

8:00am to 1:00pm

Sign up ASAP

[BennettBetter.com/GarageSale](http://BennettBetter.com/GarageSale)

We typically have over 75 families join in each year. And remember to look for the beer cart!

## Crossings Real Estate Market Update:

As of this printing, there has not been one home listed for sale in the Crossings year to date. Not one all year!  
In my 20 years of selling real estate in this community, I have never seen anything like it.

Two things to consider:

1. I hope you like your neighbors, because no one is leaving !!
2. Could you probably "NAME YOUR PRICE" right now if you were to list your home for sale?

Something to think about!