

# ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2020

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**NEWSLETTER TEAM**

Writers — RTGA Board  
 Editor — Bob Rice  
 Layout — John Meyer

**Annual RTGA meeting**

Thursday, May 7, 2020  
 6:30 p.m.

St. Dunstan's Church  
 28005 Robinson Canyon Rd

*Hope to see you there!*

**PRESIDENT'S LETTER:  
 BOB'S TOP FIVE IDEAS FOR TIERRA GRANDE**

Teddy Roosevelt referred to his presidency as a "Bully Pulpit." My pulpit is somewhat less than his, but it's the only pulpit I have, so here goes with Bob's Top Five suggestions for things we all can do to make Rancho Tierra Grande an even better place to live than it already is.

- **Slow down.** We don't have many vehicle accidents in Tierra Grande but we have many close calls and speed is almost always the culprit. The few seconds you may save by speeding aren't worth putting your safety and the lives of pedestrians and pets at risk (not to mention our resident quail, turkeys and deer).
- **Reduce your fire fuel load.** Limb up and thin out the trees you want to keep and cut down the ones you don't. Yes, it's expensive but the price we pay for protecting our homes and neighborhood. Make your home one of the ones that the fire personnel can save if fire should ever sweep through our neighborhood.
- **Get rid of genista.** It may seem a formidable task, but we can make Tierra Grande a genista-free zone if we work at it. We've already achieved this in a few areas. Right now is when this invasive fire hazard is easy and very soul-satisfying to pull out by its ugly little roots.
- **Get to know your neighbors.** I'm often surprised to meet people who may have lived here for years but don't know who lives next door. It can be a

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**MONEY MATTERS — PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES!**

Yes, money does matter. You will find enclosed with this Newsletter, a self-addressed return envelope for your annual dues payment of \$100. I would greatly appreciate your using it to mail in your check at your earliest convenience. Please be aware that your dues are tax deductible because we are a 501(c)(3) corporation. Your dues are very important in helping us address safety, appearance and maintenance issues throughout Tierra Grande.

Due to some higher than normal expenditures in 2019 and a lower than average return of dues from the residents of Tierra Grande, we had a \$2,000 deficit for last year. You receive well in excess of \$100 in value from the efforts of the Board members and others who give their time and labor toward our community. Your financial support benefits all of us. Thank you.

— Mary Cushing, RTGA Treasurer

## BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE



We have had some decent success dealing with the unsightly but necessary county-owned chain link fence at the entrance to Tierra Grande. Our gardener, Felipe, has been tremendously helpful in bringing in extra crews to eliminate weeds, dig holes, plant and irrigate the new hardenbergia and plumbago which now help to draw your eye to the greenery and purple and blue flowers. We eliminated 11 stumps of old Monterey pines last year and there are ongoing issues to deal with the remaining fire-prone ones that line much of the lower part of Tierra Grande Drive. It's a massive job keeping our entrance looking groomed. We hope soon to organize a weekend work party of residents to weed, prune, and generally spiff things up. Let either of us know if you wish to get in on the fun. As always, we welcome your input and participation.

— Nancy Bartell and Mary Cushing

## TREES

A number of pines near our entrance have come down or been removed in recent years. RTGA is considering whether to leave open vistas or replace the

pinus with less flammable native oaks. We're also considering the idea of allowing residents to sponsor a replacement oak, perhaps as a memorial to a loved one. If this idea is of interest to you, please let us know.



## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH/SAFETY

Our subdivision has low crime rates due mostly to having only one ingress/egress road. Also, criminals see homes close to one another and realize neighbors can easily see criminal activity. Despite this, one resident recently had a vehicle stolen from their garage while away on errands. The car, miraculously, was recovered a few miles away within a week, undamaged.

Please take the simple precautions of locking all exterior doors; arming your vehicle's security system even while at home; and consider installing a home security system, including cameras and/or alarms which activate when motion is detected. There are many relatively inexpensive options now available.

Also, participate in neighborhood watch. Recently I heard a neighbor's home alarm go off mid-day, walked up to the house while calling his cell and learned that the housekeeper was having issues turning off the alarm. Case solved.

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## THANKS!



When RTG resident Mike Colyer sees something in the neighborhood that needs to be done, he just goes and does it. That includes cleaning pine needles and debris from our storm drains, picking up bags of dog poop that others left behind, and maintaining the beautiful Mexican sage in the area across the street from our entrance. When asked why he does it, he offered up two words: "I'm retired."

Thanks Mike!

## Welcome/Membership

Five new residents have received a welcome packet since the last newsletter. If you know of someone who didn't please let me know. John Meyer and I try to be very diligent with accurately maintaining the data base.

If you haven't yet checked out the Little Free Library at the corner of Venado and Tierra Grande Drive it's a great way to "take a book and leave a book" and to keep up with your reading. It's been there for four years now and is almost self-sustaining. Thanks to all of you who support it.

— Nancy Bartell

## RTGA FIRE SAFETY COMMITTEE — BIG PLANS FOR 2020 FIRE SEASON

Andoni Kastros, who retired after thirty years as a Sacramento Fire Battalion Chief, joined our fire safety committee in 2019. Andoni brings extensive fire safety and prevention expertise to our group, and also has personal relationships with the top fire professionals in our area. He will be a tremendous asset to our community and has already provided planning guidelines for the upcoming fire season.

Our committee has developed a color-coded “division” map of Tierra Grande to help with the design and implementation of a new satellite wild-fire early warning system. Andoni found this technology, called Mayday.ai, and arranged for RTG to be the first community in northern California to evaluate and beta test the system. There is a Mayday.ai app which all of our neighbors will download to their mobile device when the system is ready and available later this year.

Over the next few weeks, the committee will be seeking volunteer “captains,” one or two for each division. We will be telephoning neighbors asking them to volunteer as captains. If you would like to volunteer, please call Peter Stern at 831-625-3848. This will be a valuable and rewarding opportunity.

The captains will be asked to gather information from their division neighbors to allow an early warning of fire from Mayday.ai, and to deliver evacuation information when it is needed. This information will include: the evacuation route; support for neighbors who have mobility problems; help for neighbors with animals; contact points; communication protocols, etc. We are planning a test evacuation drill in May. You will receive notification long in advance.

Here are the committee’s objectives prior to the fire season:

- 1) Find captain volunteers.
- 2) Train captains.
- 3) Support captains as they work to gather

information and inform their neighbors about Mayday.ai, evacuation protocols, and general fire safety and prevention.

- 4) Achieve Mayday.ai start-up no later than the end of March.
- 5) Coordinate with the county to complete RTG fire fuel management operations prior to the fire season.
- 6) Develop a YouTube site which contains helpful reference videos on fire safety subjects. Subjects will include: fire fuel management; evacuation procedures and protocols; planning for fire, etc.
- 7) Offer a fire extinguisher training opportunity for all RTG neighbors, possibly as part of our RTG Annual Meeting. A notification will go out to the neighborhood.

— Peter Stern

### Fire Safety Members

Peter Stern (Chair), Andoni Kastros, Paola Berthoin, Rob Robinson, Mike Sherwood

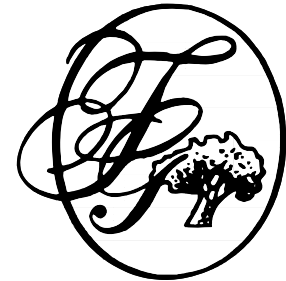
## SOCIAL EVENTS



Our annual fall mixer, last year at the DeWeese family home.

## RANCHO TIERRA GRANDE

P.O. BOX 22244  
Carmel, CA 93922



**Dues Envelope Enclosed!**

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CON'T)

*(Continued from page 1)*

matter of safety and security to get acquainted with your neighbor, plus who knows, you might make a friend. The Fire Safety Program announced in this newsletter will be an excellent opportunity to meet some neighbors, as is our annual fall social event.

- **Pay your dues.** When I tell people who live in developments similar to ours that our dues are \$100, the question I usually get is, "Is that per month or per week?" Well no, it's per year. Granted, we don't have a swimming pool or security guards to pay for, but we do have landscaping, watering, brush hauling, electric, admin, fire safety and other expenses. It's not nice to put this burden all on your neighbors.

There you have it, and thanks for reading this far. If you have ideas for improving our neighborhood, please share them with me or any RTGA board member.

— Bob Rice, President, RTGA

### NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH/SAFETY

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Please also note that during cold days we have multiple walkers, bikers, and joggers on Tierra Grande and they often wear dark clothes that can be very hard to see. Thus, if you are on the streets, please wear some reflective gear and/or brighter colors and if driving, please slow down and give pedestrians, pets, and bikers a wide berth.

— Jeff Hawkins, Neighborhood Watch

### RTGA BOARD & COMMITTEES

President — Bob Rice	625-1425
Vice President — Robbie Robinson	626-3955
Secretary — Mary Gale	626-3565
Treasurer — Mary Cushing	625-7155
Beatification — Mary Cushing	625-7155
Beatification — Nancy Bartell	915-2780
Architectural Review — Peggy Warren	595-1660
Fire Safety — Peter Stern	625-3848
Neighborhood Watch — Jeff Hawkins	622-0424
Welcome & Membership — Nancy Bartell	915-2780

Community website: [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com).  
It's free to join!