

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

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NEWSLETTER TEAM

Writers – RTGA Board
 Editor – Nancy Bartell
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Annual RTGA meeting

Thursday, June 17, 2021
 6:30 p.m.

Location: TBD

DEPARTING PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In late January I asked vice president Robbie Robinson to take over as president of RTGA and he kindly accepted. Carolyn and I need to spend an extended period of time with our son Jim and his family in Australia. Our daughter will be staying in our home in our absence.

I've found my six-year stint as RTGA president interesting, rewarding and even fun. The best part has been the friends I've made both on the board and in the neighborhood, who I know will be lifelong friends. I've been fortunate to have a congenial and motivated board to work with, as well as neighbors to call on for assistance, and neighbors who just get out there and do stuff for the neighborhood without being asked or even seeking recognition for their efforts. I won't try to name you for fear of leaving someone out, but you know who you are.

RTGA has some exciting plans and challenges coming up and I plan to stay involved as best I can. Hope you will to, and thank you for your support.

– Bob Rice

NEW PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

I have served in many positions with RTGA over the years. I volunteer because of the wonderful and interesting people I have met involved in keeping our RTGA community an exceptional place to live. Bob Rice epitomizes such a person. I will take over his duties as President until the next election, but he cannot be replaced.

– Robbie Robinson

TREASURER'S REPORT

2020 had one good aspect to it in that we received dues from about 2/3 of our residents. However, it's hard from the standpoint of anyone serving on the Board to understand why we are not supported by everyone. With only \$100 being asked of each owner for the entire year and the efficiency with which we make that small sum make big returns, I feel you will be hard-pressed to find a better investment. Yes, essentially investing in where you live. Enclosed please find the dues return envelope. Put it to use! We gratefully accept additional funds if you're feeling generous. Many thanks!

– Mary Cushing, RTGA Treasurer

BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Our major plantings from last year along the fence at the entrance are surviving and starting to look presentable. It's an ongoing challenge because nature has other ideas like rock falls, poison oak, and genista, not to mention the high cost of Cal-Am water. We have a very helpful gardener who comes when we ask him and whose price is very reasonable. We hope to be able to eliminate more dead pines along the roadway but that must be done in coordination with the County as it is their property. We would like to encourage folks to stay aware of their road frontage, cleaning out the debris from the rain troughs. Also, there is always litter finding its way onto our roadsides. If you can help us stay pristine, we all benefit. Thank you!

— Nancy Bartell and Mary Cushing
Beautification co-chairs

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

The architectural review committee would like to remind everyone to be considerate of your neighbors when planning an outdoor remodel or new building. The Carmel Valley Master Plan states that development should minimize disruption of views from existing homes. This is of particular importance in our neighborhood as many homes are facing each other across canyons. Please be considerate of your neighbors' views. — Peggy Warren

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH/SAFETY

Please be aware that repeated vehicle break-ins at the Mid-Valley shopping center have been reported, so lock/arm your car and try to keep valuable items out of view. In the same vein, locking or arming your vehicle at night, even in your driveway, is recommended. Also, remember that in times of emergency, you can always sound your car alarm to help deter criminals anywhere in your immediate vicinity.

A growing number of residents walk our narrow streets during these work-from-home times. Please slow down when passing them and give them some room, even crossing the center line if traffic permits.

Many pets are skittish and can panic when vehicles come too close, go too fast, or make too much noise. They may attempt to bolt from their owners, so slow down when you see pets.

— Jeff Hawkins

COUNTY FUNDS FOR RTG

Rancho Tierra Grande and the Mercurio subdivisions fall within County Service Area 17 (CSA17). A small portion of our property taxes are set aside each year to fund CSA17 activities that focus on surface water and storm drainage such as culvert maintenance. CSA17 does NOT cover street and road repair, that should fall under Public Works. The county has in the past allowed us to use CSA17 funds to remove dead pine trees in the right of way when Public Works was unable to accommodate those requests.

CSA17 funding averaged ~ \$10k/year a decade ago, but now is ~ \$15k/year as houses are sold and assessed at the higher current values. However, gaining access to CSA17 balances and expenses has been nearly impossible in the past 12 months, thus we are enlisting Supervisor Adams' support. The county office handling CSA efforts was realigned after an independent review revealed significant management and operational problems. Fortunately, Public Works has been very responsive recently, re-striping the double yellow line down Tierra Grande Dr. and removing two large pavement tree root bumps on TG Dr. and Via Cicindela.

Conversations with the Quail Lodge Homeowners Association indicate they have similar county CSA issues. Their research reveals the potential to have the county adjust the percentage of our property taxes that go into CSA17, while NOT changing the property taxes themselves and we will work with them to ascertain what best serves our neighborhood.

— Jeff Hawkins



The annual RTG chipping program helps residents reduce fuel load

RTGA FIRE SAFETY COMMITTEE

Your RTGA Fire Safety Committee (RTGFSC) had a very busy 2020, managing to accomplish many of the objectives proposed for the year. As many know, battalion chief (ret.) Andoni Kastros, an RTG resident, helped guide our effort to formulate an evacuation plan for the community. The community was divided into sixteen divisions (see the RTG fire safety website for the map — link below). Three evacuation zones (branches) were created to help manage communications and establish evacuation routes at both the bottom, as well as the top of Tierra Grande.

Thirty-two residents volunteered to become captains; one to two captains for each division. In addition, among the thirty-two captains, three volunteered to take on the added responsibility as branch managers.

RTG became a beta test site for an early warning satellite company; Mayday.ai. We are hoping to be able to upload this system in the coming months.

Major News

Perhaps the biggest news which will affect all of us is that the RTGFSC put together and implemented plans to become a Firewise® “Recognized Community.” Firewise is a subsidiary of NFPA, a nationwide fire prevention organization. Through efforts from all captains and committee members, support from the MCFSC, MCRFD, MCRDC and others, all necessary data and description information for the Firewise application was organized, digitized and sent to Firewise. Our Firewise approval came January 5 with a paper certification received and dated January 11.

Rancho Tierra Grande was the first Monterey County neighborhood to become a Firewise-recognized community.

RTGFSC is working on many fronts with Monterey County, MCFSC, MCRFD and others to fulfill requirements to become a Firewise-certified community. This objective will require strategic planning, fire fuel management implementation and practices, and direct involvement of all residents of Tierra Grande. Certification means improved fire insurance rates (or reinstatement, if you’ve lost your homeowner’s insurance) as well as the benefit of knowing you live in a community that is

truly fire safe. RTGFSC has a three year “action plan” that, when completed and approved by Firewise®, will achieve our Certification goal.

The RTGFSC would like community member involvement. See our website: www.rtgfiresafetycommittee.org. Go to the contact page on that site to find contact information for the captain(s) in your division.

— Peter Stern

WELCOME/MEMBERSHIP

Since January 2020 eleven new residents were sent welcome packets to RTG. The packet includes a copy of the CC&Rs, a greeting from our president, a list of officers and chairpersons, a copy of the most recent newsletter and phone directory and invitation to join RTG. If I have missed anyone, please let me know and I’ll get right on it.

In addition, as the steward of the Little Free Library at the corner of Tierra Grande Dr. and Venado, I want to say I’m amazed at the support it has gotten this past year. I’m guessing that a lot of this comes from our being sheltered-in-place and that the local libraries have been closed. Our little library is almost self-sustaining and when I have put out requests for more books on Next Door you have really stepped up. It has been in existence for almost five years now and it’s been my pleasure to see it grow. As the motto says, “Take a book and leave a book.”

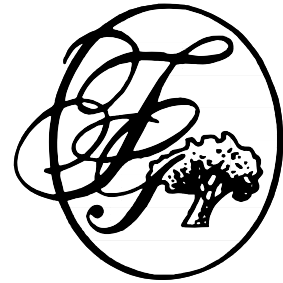
Keep reading!

— Nancy Bartell



RANCHO TIERRA GRANDE

P.O. BOX 22244
Carmel, CA 93922



Dues Envelope Enclosed!

RTGA BOARD & COMMITTEES

President – Robbie Robinson	626-3955
Vice President – (vacant)	
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
Member at Large—Dave Wisherd	620-1968

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

RTG Fire Safety Website
www.rtgfiresafetycommittee.org