

# ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026

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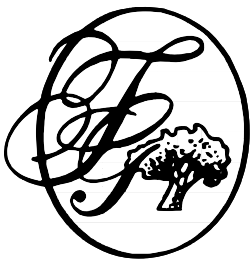
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**NEWSLETTER TEAM**

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**RTG REPAVING PROJECT**

One of our most significant accomplishments this past year was securing a full reconstruction of Tierra Grande Drive and all side streets after more than sixty years of deterioration. We successfully demonstrated to Monterey County that the roadway had reached the point where patching and temporary repairs were no longer viable, and that complete repaving was the only responsible solution.

After more than a decade of persistent advocacy, working through three County Supervisors and multiple Public Works Directors, the project was approved and completed. Our subdivision now has fully rehabilitated streets!

The scope of work included grinding the existing pavement, installing a new four-inch layer of hot-mix asphalt, repairing damaged concrete gutters, and restriping the roadway in accordance with updated Caltrans standards. The total project cost was approximately \$3.5 million, funded through a combination of County resources and state and federal grants.

With upgraded materials and a thicker asphalt application, the expected lifespan of the roadway before a slurry seal is necessary is approximately ten years.

In addition, at our urging, Monterey County has implemented a five-year moratorium on digging up the pavement. During this period, utilities must use directional boring beneath the roadway, with exceptions granted only for emergency safety situations such as gas leaks. — Mike Raydo

**SHORT TERM RENTALS**

As a reminder, short-term rentals (STRs) are not permitted within Rancho Tierra Grande (RTG), consistent with guidance from Monterey County legal counsel and the provisions outlined in our CC&Rs.

Our CC&Rs prohibit operating STR businesses from residential homes as they require a county permit, associated fees, and the payment of Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) by the homeowner. Additionally, STRs involve guests coming and going for lodging purposes, which constitutes a business use of the home. Remote teleworking from home remains fully permitted. We appreciate everyone's cooperation in helping preserve the residential character of our community. — Jeff Hawkins

**ANNUAL RTG GENERAL MEETING**

We encourage everyone to attend the annual RTG General Meeting at 5:00 p.m. on April 2nd at St. Philip's Church. Supervisor Kate Daniels will address County funding issues for road and storm drain maintenance, plus wildfire mitigation in RTG. These are all currently grossly underfunded. We hope to see you there!

— Meredith Contreras

## TIERRA GRANDE WILDLIFE



Our rural community is rich with wildlife to enjoy. Over the years, some animals have been steady neighbors, while others make only the occasional appearance. Remember the bear spotted a few years ago on Via Crotalo? It was caught browsing through trash cans before a

few vigilant dogs encouraged it to move along in the early morning hours.

Our regular visitors include deer, turkeys, bunnies, tree and ground squirrels, rodents, gophers, snakes, foxes, skunks, and a wide variety of birds. This past year, we've also had sightings of coyotes and bobcats. Nature is never far away here. What's been visiting your backyard? — Meredith Contreras

## NEXTDOOR NEIGHBORHOOD APP

In addition to our annual neighborhood street party, yearly newsletter, and the Rancho Tierra Grande website, you can stay even more connected through the Nextdoor app on your smart device. Many neighbors are already sharing photos, posting updates about street delays, and exchanging recommendations for local services.

Stay in the loop and see what's happening around the neighborhood. Download the Nextdoor app and join the conversation. — Meredith Contreras

## STREET PARTY FEEDBACK

Each year, our neighborhood street party brings neighbors together to relax, laugh, enjoy great company, and eat great tacos, it's always a highlight.

We'd love your ideas on how to make this annual event better, Interactive games? How about a new food option? (Although let's be honest, it's hard to beat tacos!)

Share your thoughts with us! Visit our neighborhood website at [rtghoa.org](http://rtghoa.org) and click on "Contact RTG" to send your feedback (or use this QR code to go directly to the feedback page). Your ideas help shape the fun!



## BOB RICE

Our community lost a truly wonderful neighbor and friend on November 4, 2025. Bob Rice was a cherished member of RTG for more than fifty years and gave generously of his time, skills, and steady presence. He was often the first to step forward, chainsaw in hand, to



clear a fallen tree from the road, and he offered calm, Midwestern common-sense leadership during his six years as President of the RTG Homeowners Association, continuing to serve as a dedicated officer for

many years thereafter. Beyond his volunteer service, Bob was always ready to lend a hand with handyman projects, helping neighbors and friends whenever he could. He found his greatest joy in helping others, and his kindness and generosity will be deeply missed by all who knew him. — Meredith Contreras

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

### Please Drive Safely

Our smooth, newly paved roads can sometimes encourage higher speeds. Also, we're seeing more neighbors out walking and enjoying the area. However, our roads are hilly and curvy, which can limit visibility and reaction time. Please slow down and drive with extra caution. If you're walking, wear highly visible clothing, keep pets on a short leash, and avoid distractions such as cell phones so you can stay alert.

### Dead Tree Removal

If you have dead trees on your property (not in the county right-of-way) that could pose a fire or safety hazard, especially those that could fall into the street, please arrange for their prompt removal. We have a list of local licensed vendors available if needed.

### Reporting Safety Concerns

While we continue to enjoy a very safe neighborhood, please let us know if you experience an incident that results in a police report. Notifying Jeff Hawkins allows us to share appropriate information with residents regarding issues such as stolen mail or packages, scams, or suspicious vehicles. — Jeff Hawkins

## FIRE SAFETY

2025 was another successful year for the RTG Firewise team, thanks to the incredible participation of our community. We were once again certified as Firewise Compliant, with 145 homeowners taking part by submitting their Firewise Home Wildfire Ready documents. An average of eighteen hours of personal labor and \$4,030 for services was spent by each owner. Our two Chipper runs removed more than ninety cubic yards of hazardous fuel, which is an important step in reducing wildfire risk for everyone. A heartfelt thank-you goes to the volunteer Captains serving our sixteen RTG Firewise Neighborhood Divisions for their continued leadership and dedication.

One area of growing importance is clearing the first five feet around our homes, known as Fire Zone 0, of all combustible materials, including plants (even succulents), wood chips, lumber, and similar items. During the 2024 Los Angeles fires, homes with significant vegetation close to structures were found to be twice as likely to be lost. Clearing Zone 0 is increasingly viewed as essential and may soon become a legal and insurance requirement in California.

Looking ahead, RTG Firewise is setting up text communication groups for each Neighborhood Division to improve emergency communications. Please reach out to your Neighborhood Captain for details. We also highly recommend the Watch Duty app for real-time wildfire information. QR codes for smartphones can be found on our website in the RTG Fire Safety section under Real Time Fire Information: <https://rtghoa.org/fire/>. You can go directly there using this QR code.

— Dave Wisherd



## RTG WEB SITE

Have you visited the RTG website lately? It's a great resource for staying connected and informed about everything happening in our community! You'll find the latest community news, Firewise safety information, property maps, current Property Restrictions, color versions of both current and past newsletters, updates on RTGA activities, information on current Monterey County issues, and much more.

We encourage you to explore our website at <https://rtghoa.org> or simply scan the QR code to get started! — Dave Wisherd



## ENHANCING THE RTG ENTRANCE

Over the past year, we've continued to improve and maintain the RTG entrance. We must select plants which can thrive in our tough soil and rodent-prone environment, and ensure adequate irrigation during our long 7+ month dry season.

Despite these challenges, several important improvements have been completed:

- In June, a significant irrigation leak was discovered in the valve box. This led to a large effort to repair the manifold and several valves, along with an upgrade to the box that houses these key components (approximately \$2,400). After the repairs were completed and documented, CalAm graciously forgave a \$14,000 water bill related to the leak.
- The older plants and weeds on the right side of the entrance were removed (\$1,100), and new plants were installed along with updated irrigation lines and a timer (\$1,500).
- A damaged underground electrical cable was repaired, and the RTG sign lighting was upgraded to a new LED system (approximately \$525), improving both visibility and energy efficiency.
- Dead hardenbergia vines, which had been damaged by gophers and moles, were removed.
- Plumbago shrubs along the cyclone fence were revitalized with fertilizer and watering.

These are our future near-term plans.

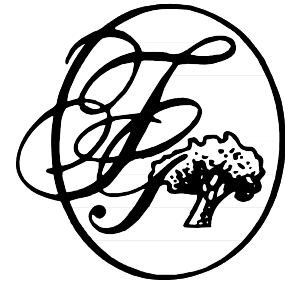
- Purchase and plant new plumbago shrubs and honeysuckle vines behind the cyclone fence.
- Install weed barrier fabric around the plants west of the AT&T box and cover the area with decorative rocks for a cleaner look (not wood chips).

Your annual dues contributions help support these efforts. With continued care and thoughtful improvements, the entrance will remain a welcoming feature of our community.

— Jeff Hawkins, Mary Cushing

## RANCHO TIERRA GRANDE

P.O. BOX 22244  
Carmel, CA 93922



**Dues Envelope Enclosed!**

### TREASURER'S REPORT

In 2025, we received dues from two-thirds of our homeowners, and the Board sincerely appreciates your continued support. Year-end financial summaries are available for review on our website.

As in past years, our largest expense was the chipping service, which totaled \$9,437 this year. We also made thoughtful investments in RTG entrance landscaping improvements and in increasing the efficiency of our irrigation system, our second and third largest cost areas. Thanks to careful planning and spending, the year closed with a surplus of just under \$6,000, a very welcome change from the deficits of previous years.

The Board remains committed to using all funds prudently and efficiently for the benefit of our community. If you have not yet submitted your tax deductible annual dues, please use the enclosed envelope to send your \$200 payment, or you may contribute via Zelle at [rtgacv@gmail.com](mailto:rtgacv@gmail.com). Every dollar stays in our community helping maintain our beautiful neighborhood while supporting services we all enjoy.

— Mary Cushing, RTGA Treasurer

### DECK THE SIGN

We invite you, as a community, to decorate the Rancho Tierra Grande sign at the front entrance for the holidays. Creative community members have voluntarily decorated it in the past, and we encourage everyone who is interested to participate. Please keep in mind that our weather can sometimes have its own decorating ideas, so plan accordingly. Also, remember to remove your decorations once the holidays have wrapped up. — Meredith Contreras

### RTGA BOARD & COMMITTEES

Co-Presidents	
Jeff Hawkins	831-277-3224
Dave Wisherd	408-838-0077
Vice President, Robbie Robinson	831-620-5569
Secretary (vacant)	
Treasurer, Mary Cushing	831-238-1829
Beautification, Jeff Hawkins	831-277-3224
Architectural Review (vacant)	
Fire Safety, Website Dave Wisherd	408-838-0077
Safety/Neighborhood Watch	
Jeff Hawkins	831-277-3224
Welcome/Membership	Vacant
Community website:	<a href="http://www.nextdoor.com">www.nextdoor.com</a>