

# The Sierra View

Mar 2022



## President's Message by Lori Potts

Greetings Sierra Community! It is a privilege to serve as your Sierra Country Club President. I have lived in the neighborhood since May of 2020 and am so delighted that I picked a good place! What do I appreciate most? Lovely neighbors, spectacular views of mountains, sea, forests, and wildlife. And the seafood? What's not to love?

As President, one of my priorities is to encourage community engagement and volunteerism within Sierra. There are many needs and opportunities for fulfilling them. A few examples include additional participants for the Emergency Committee, the Firewise Committee, the Events Committee, and also assistance with the annual yard sale, the annual clean-up day, and Wildfire Prevention Day. We are also looking for those willing to host the potlucks we sponsor throughout the year. Please see the Sierra website under the [Jobs & Volunteering](#) tab for more information and ways to participate, or contact Don Meehan, Community Activities Director.

Now that it is finally spring, I look forward to the mornings when the birds wake me, rather than the pounding rain or wind. Happy Spring!

### Mark your Calendars!

- **April 9 @ 11am: Firewise Lunch & Learn Event** (see details page 5)
- **April 7 and 14, 9am-5pm: Water system outage for flushing**
- **May 20-22: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training** (see details page 6)
- **June 4 @ 10am: Disaster Prep Educational Event** (see details page 6)

See more upcoming events on page 5.

## 2022 Annual Meeting Voting Results

Thank you to those of you who attended our 2022 virtual annual meeting and/or submitted your ballots. The results of the ballot items were as follows:

1. **Ballot Item #1: Election of members to fill four vacancies on the Board of Directors:** Mark Bernstein, Amy Carrigan, Don Meehan, and Ned Smith
2. **Ballot Item #2: External audit waiver passed** (78% agree, 22% opposed, based on 172 votes cast).
3. **Ballot Item #3: Budget ratification passed** (96% agree, 4% opposed, based on 590 eligible votes). Note: The budget ratification is based on the total number of eligible votes (590), regardless of the number of votes cast (per RCW 64.90.525).
4. **Ballot Item #4:** Bylaws amendment passed (77% agree, 23% opposed, based on 172 votes cast). Read the [amended bylaws](#) on the [Sierra website](#).

### IMPORTANT NOTICE: QUARTERLY NEWSLETTERS DISCONTINUING

In an effort to reduce costs and streamline our processes, this will be the last quarterly Sierra View newsletter. We'll continue with our email news updates, including through our new online system and website which is coming soon. Please be sure we have your email—contact us at [Sierra.mailbox@gmail.com](mailto:Sierra.mailbox@gmail.com). Water outage and other critical notices will continue to be mailed to members who do not have email access.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President**  
Lori Potts  
360-914-4167

**Architecture Director**  
Mark Bernstein  
714-331-3914

**Buildings & Grounds Director**  
Don Jaques  
360-672-5447

**Community Activities Director**  
Don Meehan  
360-914-0736

**Finance Director**  
Amy Carrigan  
815-830-8472

**Vice President**  
Ned Smith  
860-883-0092

**Water Director**  
Glen Kitzmann  
360-914-4290

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### STAFF

**Property Manager**  
Mark Lucero  
360-320-1898

**Secretary/ Administrator**  
Brenda Dewey  
[sccsecy@gmail.com](mailto:sccsecy@gmail.com)

**Sierra website:**  
[Sierracountryclub.net](http://Sierracountryclub.net)

## Finance Report by Amy Carrigan

Hello! Transitions seem to be the theme of this first quarter! New Volunteer Board Members, New Volunteer Job Assignments, and Covid restrictions easing up! Just wanted to let you know that my transition into the Treasurer's Role is going quite well!

A few of the things I have been busy doing are updating all the bank accounts. They have been successfully turned over to all the new board members. Taxes have been prepared by our CPA Dale Offret and are filed, with no taxes due! A few small changes appear on our Financial Reports (please find them posted on our [website](#)) which were made in hopes to help you keep track of our progress through the upcoming year. Our Balance Sheet now compares month-to-month amounts and the year-end report will compare to the prior year! I have also added the yearly budget amount to the Profit and Loss Report to help you see how the board is doing against our budget that all of you ratified at the annual meeting! I have also scheduled our Financial Review for April 26<sup>th</sup> at 10am. If you are able to volunteer a couple of hours to help fulfill our requirement of waiving the audit, please contact me at [amycarrigan.sierra@gmail.com](mailto:amycarrigan.sierra@gmail.com).

Overall, these last two months have been typical with our income and expenses not being out of the ordinary. I believe we are off to a great start! Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns! Don't forget that the HOA Dues deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup>! Happy Spring!

### **Learn all about Sierra's Finances!** **Participate in our Annual Internal Financial Review** **April 26 @ 10am**

As part of our efforts to ensure the transparency of Sierra's financial records and to prevent the need for a costly external audit, we are planning our annual internal financial review (aka internal audit) for Tuesday, April 26 at 10am.

We need three to five Sierra members to participate in the two-hour review. Volunteers do not need to have a financial background. This is a great opportunity to learn more and ask questions about Sierra's financial status and processes including:

- Our financial reports and records, including checking account transactions, balance sheet, and income statement
- Budget vs. actual expenses
- Budgeting process
- Reserve study
- Financial controls and practices
- Water system funding



If you would be willing to help us out, please contact Amy Carrigan (815-830-8472, [amycarrigan.sierra@gmail.com](mailto:amycarrigan.sierra@gmail.com)).

## What's New at Sierra's Little Free Library?



Sierra's LITTLE FREE LIBRARY, conveniently located on the east side of the clubhouse, is sponsoring a children's book section for the month of April. You'll find many well-loved favorites as well as some you'll be excited to discover. How does the Little Free Library work? Simple - just bring a book you're willing to donate, and take a book away to enjoy at home. If you don't have books to share, that's ok. We do! So feel free to take one.

## Water System Update by Glen Kitzmann



The water main replacement project on Ft. Ebey Rd between Balboa and San Juan St. was completed in February. The contractor replaced approximately 300 feet of old 4-inch steel piping with 6-inch C900 piping, which is the more up-to-date material. They also replaced four valves in the street, a fire hydrant and put in new meters in for four connections. The project took several weeks to complete. We also had this contractor

replace a feed line and install a blow off valve on El Sol while they were here. We were pleased with the work the contractor did.

The project to replace the treatment basin at the water plant is still in progress. The engineer is still working on the plans. I am hopeful that will be done soon so we can obtain approval from the State Department of Health and then go out to bid. We are still pushing to get this project done this year.

We are currently working with the hydrologist and the State Department of Ecology on the approval process for the water rights for the two new wells. When we have a better idea of when this might be completed, we will report it at a board meeting and let you know in a future news update.

The spring flushing of our water mains is scheduled for Thursday, April 7th and Thursday, April 14th. As usual, this will take place between 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. Please do not use water during that time. You can fill a couple of buckets to help you flush toilets during that time and put some soapy water in your sinks to wash hands. This flushing is needed as we have been getting some reports of occasional discolored water at a few residences in the past few weeks. This is in part do to some of the work that has been done on our system as well as the settling basin not working as efficiently as it should. We also recently had a valve on one of our water filters stick which did not allow it to function properly. These valves have been in the process of being replaced. There are about 25 of them so it takes some time to get that work done.

We were recently notified of a water leak on La Mesa. This was a significant leak that was repaired quickly when it was found. We do not know yet how long it had been leaking, but may have been a contributor to our large water loss numbers. We will have a better idea after the end of June meter readings.

Our water system is not cheap to run and maintain so your timely payments of your water bills are appreciated. Updates on all the projects are given at the monthly board meetings. You can either attend the board meetings or read the minutes posted on our [website](#) for updates.

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## Buildings & Grounds and Clubhouse Update by Don Jaques

### CLUBHOUSE IS AVAILABLE

At the March board meeting, a new procedure was approved making use of the clubhouse more accessible to community members. Want to lead a community interest group that is open to Sierra members? There is now NO COST to do so! There is now a lower cost for small private gatherings of 20 people or fewer (\$40) and the standard cost of \$100 remains for private gatherings of more than 20 people. We hope to see this community asset have much more use in the coming year! Go to the [CLUBHOUSE](#) page on our Sierra website for more details.

### POOL SEASON IS COMING!

We are actively seeking to hire 3 pool attendants for the 2022 pool season. This minimum wage job offers 15-25 hours a week and is a great job for students home on summer break. All training is provided and the positions begin in May and end in September. Go to the [JOBS and VOLUNTEERING](#) page on our website for full job description and application. Contact Property Manager Mark Lucero at 360-320-1989 for more information.



## Community Activities by Don Meehan

Hello Sierra residents. I was elected this year with an interest in helping the Sierra Board keep making this place we live a great place. As I came on board I was assigned the job of being Activities Director. Part of that job traditionally was to manage the use of the clubhouse. That was smartly changed to now fall under the guidance of the director of Buildings and Grounds, Don Jaques. So my new job got a lot easier.

As we move into a period of reducing worry about Covid infections and where our Sierra population tends towards being in the higher risk population I can see us all moving back to a more normal level of activity. So it's time to begin thinking about those active things we have always done here that help link us together and make our community vibrant, caring, and strong.

My plan is to begin planning for a reopening of our monthly potlucks. If weather cooperates we may have some outside. We also have a Firewise program offering a Lunch and Learn and Ladder Fuel event at the clubhouse on April 9th to participate in and learn how to protect your home. A fun event last year was an Ice cream Social tied to the 4th of July parade. We'll be doing that again!

Our development has always relied on these kinds of activities to get to know each other, meet new owners/members, and have fun together. Our most expensive activity here in Sierra is our pool and we hope the Covid wind down is going to see a lot more use of it this year, making the investment worthwhile.

A new activity, in the development stages as we begin the new year, is the addition of Pickleball courts. It is one of the most popular sports for seniors in America and just recently became the court game for Washington State. It was invented here in Washington. Plan is to begin with a low cost approach using a portable system and our parking lot at the clubhouse. If you are interested in that as an activity worth investing in for the future here let us know. You can email me at [dmeehan.sierra@gmail.com](mailto:dmeehan.sierra@gmail.com).



One of our most important activities in the past couple years has been enjoying a walk through our community where we get to visit with neighbors and get fresh air. Many of us walk with our dogs. Keep in mind to pay attention to them when visiting along the way as they all seem to love taking a dump when you are distracted. It's happened to me. Dang! Let's just make sure we clean up after them.

Disaster notification calls are being considered by the board to give advance warning through our calling system that we use for water repair shut downs. Concept is that we all might be sleeping when a key alert was given by National or State agencies. We might be lucky to notice it and use our system to let you know you need to pay attention to the local and national news.

As you think of other things that would be good activities for our Sierra family, let me know that too. Keep an eye out for our newsletter calendars as they keep you informed of upcoming events and activities. Ohhhh...I failed to mention: **I NEED HELP!!! Potluck Hosts, Pickleball court organizers, event helpers, 4th of July parade helpers and likely other events.**

## NEIGHBORHOOD PLEAS by Ned Smith

1. **PLEASE** do not speed - there is a 25 mph speed limit on all Sierra streets. Most of the speeding is done on the longest, major streets being La Mesa, Fort Ebey, and San Juan.
2. **PLEASE** think about how fast you're going AND if you would like someone going that fast on your street.
3. **PLEASE** pick up your dog's poop. The longer the poop lingers, it develops parasites and bacteria, putting all your dog's and neighborhood's dogs at risk for exposure to harmful bacteria. Do you notice how your dog smells the poop left behind?
4. **PLEASE** put your trash in bags, because the trash trucks have open bins, only packing down the trash away when the bin is full. Styrofoam packing material, the white material which breaks apart easily, easily blows out of the trucks bin and is very difficult to clean up.



## JOIN US APRIL 9 – FIREWISE LUNCH & LEARN EVENT

### Landscaping your Property with Wildfire Preparedness in Mind

### FREE tree and shrubbery cuttings chipping!



Mark your calendars for the April 9 Firewise Lunch and Learn Event, sponsored by the Sierra Firewise Team and the Pondilla Estates Firewise Team. See the flyer and more details on the [Sierra website](#).

**DATE: Saturday, April 9**

**START TIME: 11:00am**

**LOCATION: Sierra clubhouse**

**Agenda includes:**

- 11:00 a.m. - Intro and Welcome to Landscaping your Property with Wildfire Preparedness in Mind. Learn about “ladder fuels” and sign up for a FREE chipping service.
- 12:00 p.m. - Lunch (hot dogs and more).
- 12:30 p.m. - Presentations and information by Whidbey Island Conservation District, Sierra Disaster Prep Committee, Department of Natural Resources Firefighters, North Whidbey Fire and Rescue Team, and Fort Ebey State Park.

**Other highlights:**

- Prizes to be given away: Artwork by local artists, restaurant gift certificates, landscaping and home safety items, and others.
- Individual Residential Cleanup Saturday and Sunday the 9th and 10th with FREE chipping by the Department of Natural Resources beginning the week of April 11.

### More Mark your Calendars...

(continued from page 1)

- **May 7: Neighborhood clean-up day**
- **May 28: Memorial Day Picnic** - Bring your own picnic an outside event.
- **July 2: Red, White, and Blue Parade and Picnic** - with Hot Dogs provided.
- **July 16: Ragnar Race comes through Sierra**
- **July 30: Indoor Potluck**
- **August 20: Shifty Sailors outdoor concert**



**New! Each event will also include a fund-raising raffle/auction to raise funds for our community activities.**



## ARCHITECTURE by Mark Bernstein



Spring is here and about the time many of us start thinking about what projects we want to accomplish. Many projects such as exterior remodels, outbuildings, fences, etc., require the Project Completion Agreement (PCA) to be submitted to the board for approval at the monthly meeting. If you are considering a project, or just want to familiarize yourself with the process follow this link to the [Sierra Architecture webpage](#). Board meetings happen on the third Wednesday each month. It is advisable to get your PCA in early enough to be reviewed prior to the meeting, so as not to delay your project. Happy Planning!

# North Whidbey Fire and Rescue (NWFR) Wants Your Opinions

by John McClaine



You will soon be receiving some mail requesting that you participate in a short survey from the North Whidbey Fire and Rescue (NWFR) Citizens Advisory Committee. The mailing will also contain a short fact sheet on NWFR current operations. I'm hoping you will take the time to read through the fact sheet and fill out the survey.

NWFR serves the Sierra Neighborhood with Fire Suppression and Basic Life Support services. When you call 911 – personnel from NWFR are our First Responders. The district serves the unincorporated portions of North Whidbey Island – from the Deception Pass Bridge down to Fort Ebey State Park and Penn Cove. Within this territory, NWFR does not serve the City of Oak Harbor and the Naval Air Station.

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for NWFR is a small group of citizens living within the fire district to provide input and recommendations regarding their Capital Facilities Plan, Vehicle Replacement, Staffing, and Finance/Funding. The results of this survey will help focus our work and recommendations.

In November 2021, I joined the Citizens Advisory Committee for NWFR. If you have any questions or comments about the district or the survey – feel free to give me a call at 360 678-4303 or email me at [jlmclaine@wavecable.com](mailto:jlmclaine@wavecable.com).

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## Disaster Preparedness: Behind the Scenes and Save the Date

by Kristi Lovelady

The October 2021 Shake Out Drill was a success with 12 of our 13 Zones participating. From that event, volunteers stepped forward to form our first ever Volunteer Disaster First Aid Team. This team of four experienced health care workers will assist Sierra Zone Captains with basic first aid needs in the event of a disaster when Island County First Responders are overwhelmed. The talents of our neighbors are amazing!

The Disaster Preparedness Committee is excited to host its first educational event since the onset of Covid. You may recall the many compelling and well attended events held at the clubhouse in previous years. The Committee will continue this tradition of community preparedness by **offering an outdoor event on the lawn outside the clubhouse on June 4th at 10 am**. This event will include four short presentations on Stop the Bleed; Sierra communications, developing a "Go Bag"; and neighborhood, local, state and federal connectivity in the event of a disaster. Our feature speaker will be Eric Brooks who manages Island County Emergency Operations. Like our previous events, there will be refreshments and door prizes.

Island County is hosting a free, 20 hour CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training event in Oak Harbor on May 20th - 22nd. This training course contains excellent and essential information for island residents to help them respond more effectively in the event of a disaster when First Responders and government resources are overtaxed or unavailable. If you'd like more information on this class, please email me at [kristi.sierrahoa@gmail.com](mailto:kristi.sierrahoa@gmail.com) and I'll send you the registration materials.

One final note, we are still without a Zone Captain for Ebey South (the southwesterly corner of Sierra). If anyone can help us by filling this position, please email me at the address above. There is a tremendous amount of support that will get you up and running in no time. See you in June! Cheers!

### Disaster Prep Highlights:

- Sign up for **FREE** May 20-22 **Community Emergency Response Team Training (CERT)**
- **June 4 - Educational Event, refreshments & door prizes**
- **Zone Captain needed for Ebey South**



### Want to see Sierra's weather reports?

Sierra resident Ty Wernet posted his weather station on Weather Underground and wanted to share it with the neighborhood. Go to: <https://tinyurl.com/SierraWeather> and select KWACOUPE105.

## Curiosity Corner – Five Spring Things You Won't Want to Miss by Sandi Bumpus

Real estate ads often refer to Whidbey Island as “a little piece of paradise.” For those of us fortunate enough to live here, it is sometimes difficult to leave, if even briefly. Managing today's uncertainties may make it tempting to hunker down in the serenity of this place, however, the challenges we face can also serve as a reminder that we should never take for granted the amazing region we are privileged to call home.

Concerned about the astronomical cost of fuel as you contemplate a Sunday drive? Turn that necessary errand to Costco or Trader Joes into an adventure by taking the scenic route coming or going. Below are Five Spring Things that are detour-worthy.

### 1. Skagit Valley Tulip Festival - April 1-30, 2022 - Mount Vernon, WA

Englishman George Gibbs arrived on Orcas Island in 1892, and later settled in the Skagit Valley. Little did the apple farmer know that his would be a legacy of tulips and daffodils. After a small crop of bulbs was a success, he received advice from those partial to windmills and wooden shoes about the art and science of bulb farming. Gibbs then imported 15,000 bulbs from the Netherlands that he planted from Bellingham to Mount Vernon. Today, a trip through these historic farms and fields in and around Mount Vernon astound the visitor with over a million blooming tulips, daffodils, and irises. Visitors can walk through many of the fields, snap frame-worthy photos, buy fresh-cut flowers, and learn cultivation techniques to try to replicate at home. Hopefully, they will also advise how to discourage Bambi from making them a midnight snack...



### 2. Pacific Northwest Quilt and Fiber Arts Museum - 703 South Second St., La Conner, WA



Another Englishman named George Gaches made his own mark in the Skagit Valley. In 1871, the successful owner of the first mercantile in La Conner commissioned the construction of a three-story Tudor home with a grand turret on a property large enough to support the homes of both George and his brother, James. Known as the Gaches Mansion, this impressive structure has worn many hats; Victorian home, hospital, apartments, vacant eyesore, and now, an arts and education center. Today, its collection of textile arts draws artists, crafters, and thousands of annual visitors. Be one of them!

### 3. The Breadfarm - 5766 Cains Ct., Bow, WA

On a side street in the tiny town of Bow (originally called Brownsville) there is a tiny store that offers up comfort and kindness in their naturally leavened artisan breads using locally-sourced and milled grains. From their ability to innovate and survive during COVID with a walk-up window and curb-side pick-up to their “Adopt-a-Loaf” program where fresh bread is delivered to food banks, Breadfarm is true to its motto, “Creating goodness by committing to quality, community, people, and tradition.” See if you can get all the way home before taking a dive into that bread bag!

### 4. Eagle Spotting in Samish Flats - Edison, Bow, and Bay View (Winter into early Spring)

Once you pick up your bread in Bow, take some of the back roads in the Samish Flats area while working your way back to Highway 20 and keep your eyes peeled for the biggest cottonwood tree on the western horizon. It's not called “The Eagle Tree” by local birders for its chickadees, but for the multiple bald eagles that often perch there scanning for prey. It's said that short-eared owls and harriers can also be spotted where the Samish River dumps into the bay in this area. Tip: Stash your binoculars or spotting scope in the trunk before you go.



### 5. Mount Erie, Fidalgo Island

Beating Whidbey's high point of 520 feet at over 1,275 feet, the summit of Fidalgo Island's Mount Erie overlooks Pass Lake to the south and Anacortes and the San Juans to the north, with views of the Cascades and the Olympics from several viewpoints as the road winds up to the summit. Access the driving route on Mount Erie Road south of Anacortes or look for the trail markers near Pass Lake if you're up for a workout.

Enjoy your detour!