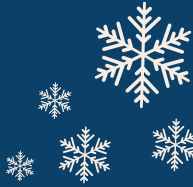




# HERON RIVER NEWSLETTER



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## HERON RIVER HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025



Photo courtesy of Krissy Stephenson

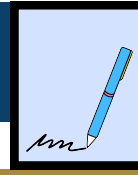
**Happy New Year!**

This year, the Board received several emails regarding the increase in HOA dues for 2025. When most of the current Board members began serving in 2024, we agreed that we needed a frugal approach and adhere to the existing contracts. However, as the year progressed, we identified several areas requiring attention, many of which had been deferred for a few years. These included maintenance and repairs around the clubhouse, addressing issues with trees, replacing the pumphouse filter, refurbishing the pool, and repairing fencing, among other needs.

In early 2024, the then-Treasurer assessed the financial situation and deemed the funds adequate. This assessment was echoed by the current Treasurer this last fall. However, as we began preparing the 2025 budget and considering the reserve funds needed for these projects, it became evident that a 10% dues increase—equivalent to \$160 per year—was necessary.

The HOA's financial position was severely lacking around 2016/2017, a situation the developer attributed to challenges stemming from the real estate downturn. Since then, Heron River has been gradually building its funds, though progress has been slower than ideal given the development's age. The decision to support the dues increase was based on several factors: the funding level the HOA should have achieved by now, the impact of inflation, the need for various repairs and maintenance, and necessary installations like a concrete slab and enclosure for the clubhouse garbage area.

I agree as a homeowner and Board member that the Board fell short and should have made the decision to raise dues and notify homeowners at the beginning of December for the upcoming increase. That was a learning lesson for us all.



There have been several recent inquiries regarding the water levels in the ponds and the reasons why water features are shut down for the winter months. The decision to shut down and winterize water features is based on several factors. Water levels in the ponds have been lower than in the past, both last year and this year. My understanding is our water supply primarily comes from the Little Pioneer Ditch Company, which provides irrigation water that feeds into some of the ponds. Additionally, we utilize an artesian well as a backup source when irrigation from the ditch company is unavailable.

The Little Pioneer Ditch Company typically shuts off irrigation water around mid-October, though we do not receive a specific notice of the exact date. Once the irrigation supply is stopped, the artesian well is activated; however, it must be turned off by November 15th. After that date, water levels in the ponds naturally begin to drop.

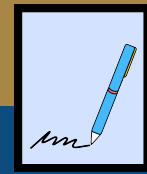
Several factors contribute to fluctuations in water levels during the winter months. The Boise River plays a significant role in influencing the rise and fall of water levels, but it is expected that the ponds will not remain completely full throughout the winter.

We consulted with our vendor regarding the water levels and the operation of water features during the winter months. Their recommendation was to shut down the waterfalls to help prevent potential damage to the pumps and avoid burning out their motors if water levels continue to drop over the winter. The Board concurred and made the decision to err on the side of caution.

Griswald Lighting encountered delays this year due to several electrical issues. We had an electrician replace two GFIs, two breakers, and install timers in place of solar components. Locating some of the electrical outlets proved challenging, and we appreciate Craig Groves for his assistance in resolving these issues.

Looking ahead, the Board plans to install additional electrical outlets in the spring to better support holiday lighting at the entrances to the Grove, Water View, Meadows, and the clubhouse. This will allow us to enhance lighting displays for the next holiday season. Once we signed the contract, Griswald squeezed us into their schedule for November this year. For the next two years, we are scheduled for installations in early November.

## President's Message Continued



Our current three-year contract with Griswold includes a provision to reduce costs by \$2,500 annually if no additional lighting is added. However, if more lighting is installed, the cost will remain consistent with the prior year.

The Board met with Craig Groves on November 14th, along with his attorney Matt Parks, the HOA attorney Abbey Germaine, and the Board of Directors, to discuss the ongoing topics surrounding the clubhouse/pool and lots 7 & 9. These issues have been a focus of discussion for nearly a year. Following the November meeting, Craig provided the Board with a proposal, which was reviewed in a subsequent meeting with Abbey Germaine on December 4th. The Board is currently working with Abbey to evaluate the terms of the proposal. We anticipate providing a more detailed update on the proposal during the meeting scheduled for January 9th.

I understand that there are always questions and concerns from homeowners in Heron River, and as a Board member, I share many of the same questions. However, as we approached December, I noticed an increase in frustrations, comments, and speculation about the Board's actions—particularly concerns about transparency.

The Board's goal is to share information as soon as it becomes available and once we have a clear understanding of its implications. There has never been a time when we intentionally withheld information from homeowners. That said, we are not perfect. Have we dropped the ball at times? Yes. Have we made mistakes? Absolutely, but we are committed to doing our best for the community.

I hope the New Year brings everyone health, happiness and peace.

Warm regards,

*Lori*

For Heron River HOA calendar and information check out our website

<https://heronriverhoa.com>

Reminder

January

HOA  
MEETING



**6:00 PM IN THE COMMUNITY CENTER**



# Holiday Recap



## Holiday Boutique



Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make Heron River's third Holiday Boutique a resounding success!

Shoppers from all over the Treasure Valley enjoyed a great variety of arts and crafts which made blowing your budget easy. We were able to fill 2 large baskets with donations from our generous community to raffle away to 2 lucky shoppers. We plan on having our 4th Holiday Boutique, again next year with a date soon to be revealed.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this event so special and classy.



## Ladies Luncheon



A great time was had by all at the December Holiday luncheon. Over 40 people enjoyed delectable brunch foods and a fun gift exchange.

Special thanks to hostesses (pictured above) Susan Smith, Shirley Anderson, Joan Wizner, Kathy Drapac and Kathy Engel.





# Holiday Recap Continued



## Heron River Adult Christmas Party



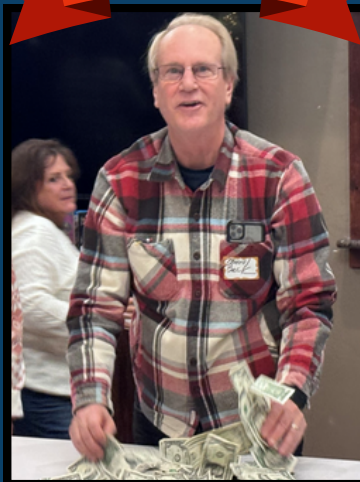
What a fun evening! Great Neighbors, Great Food and Fun Games equals another terrific event planned by the Heron River Social Committee.

Many thanks to Laurie Bertuleit, the Social Committee and her Set-up Committee - Carol Fenn, Susan and Lee Smith, Flo Wheeler, Tana Crance and Dan Bertuleit.

The White Elephant Gift Exchange got a little crazy with all of the steals from Barb West. Apparently Barb knows how to pick the best gifts to open!

Bob Gordon won the Ugly Sweater Contest - He was the only one entered!!!! But the BIG WINNER of the evening was our new neighbor, Merrill Beck! Merrill won the Right, Left, Center Game and took home ALL of the money!

**WINNER**





# Holiday Recap Continued



## Cookies, Cocoa & Crafts with Santa



Santa touched down from the North Pole to visit the Heron River kids on Saturday, December 7, at the Community Center. The kids welcomed him with open arms as they visited and posed for photo ops.

Delicious Christmas cookies donated by Heron River residents and hot cocoa with all the toppings were provided as the kids worked on a variety of Christmas crafts.

Deep appreciation to Michele Borgman and Melody Gordon for their hard work to make this a fun event for everyone.



## NEWS

### UPDATE

## Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee is comprised of four volunteers and a Board member. The volunteers take turns each week checking on the Community Center and putting out the trashcans for pickup. Occasionally, when we open the trash enclosure, we're met with an overflow of trash.

**The rules for the Community Center require homeowners to bring excess trash home when the trashcans cannot be closed.**



Please follow this rule when using the Community Center so our volunteers can do their job.

We are looking into building a bigger trash enclosure to accommodate our growing community.

Thank you, Stacey Camara





# HERON RIVER CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS



# Upcoming Events

## January

**Monday, January 6**  
**Tuesday, January 7**

All start at 6:00pm in the  
Community Center

## BUNCO



## February

**Monday February 3**  
**Tuesday, February 4**

All start at 6:00pm in the  
Community Center



## Money Matters



The operating account balance for Heron River varies greatly month to month, depending on when dues are collected and bills paid. Our operating account balance can range from \$80,000 to nearly \$300,000.

Our reserve money is held in a variety of accounts including checking, money market and CD accounts; these total over \$400,000 currently. The board is continuously researching options to earn more on our reserve investments and thus improve growth. We are currently discussing options with an Investment Broker to assist in making the best investments for our portfolio to maximize growth.

In September we contracted with Northstar Reserves to conduct a study to determine the appropriate amount of funds to be held in reserve for our community. The board is continuing to work with the analyst towards finalizing the study and once final it will be available to membership.

The Finance Committee has worked on various projects including the feasibility of conducting internal audits, developer transfer and set up fees and other developer fees. At the October 2024 HOA Meeting, the chairperson reported it was the committee's opinion there was insufficient historical data to conduct any sort of meaningful internal audits, thus they recommended discontinuing these projects.

The Finance Committee recommends rather than focusing on the past, they suggest focusing on reviewing active contracts, historical costs for budgeting, particularly for contracts as they come up for renewal. This approach aims to better serve the community by concentrating on future budgets, the reserve study, and maintaining financial stability.

# volunteers needed

SCAN ME



## HERON RIVER HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

We have numerous volunteer opportunities to serve our community and get to know other homeowners who may share the same interests.

### We need volunteers for:



#### **Newsletter Committee Chair & Members (2)**

Help create Heron Rivers monthly newsletter.



#### **Facilities Committee (1)**

Address maintenance needs, prioritize improvements, and uphold a pristine environment for the entire community.



#### **Landscape Captain - Rivershore**

Walk your neighborhood and report any maintenance and landscaping issues.



#### **Social Committee Chair & Members**

Help plan and coordinate events that bring our community together.



#### **Website Committee Member (2)**

Learn how to maintain the website.



updated Dec. 22, 2024

Please send an expression of interest through this [FORM](#) or email [info@campmid.com](mailto:info@campmid.com)