

Spanish Lakes News

A Publication of the Spanish Lakes Homeowners' Association

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Spanish Lakes Homeowners' Association Board of Directors

Lynn Crawford — President

Craig Thomas — Treasurer

John van de Wouw — At Large Member

Jim Hagen — At Large Member

Roger Zolldan — At Large Member

Bill Crawford — Editor

February 10 Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by President Lynn Crawford. Board members John Van de Wouw, Craig Thomas, Roger Zolldan, Jim Hagen were also present. Michael Croft represented MARK IV Property Management Systems.

President's Report

The first meeting of the new Board of Directors has taken place and the following information regarding the state of the complex was reviewed:

- The River Road monument sign was repainted to its original colors. We do not know who painted the letters white, but would tell the perpetrator to follow the standing procedures.
- The significant drainage issue on Calle Los Charros has been rectified. Other drainage issues have also been addressed—the one on Rancho Caro is still pending.
- The dam between the upper and middle lake has been repaired and seems to be holding. There are jacks in place which are slowly being covered with vegetation. The more-expensive

previously-authorized ideal solution was abandoned because of time and cost to obtain approvals and permits from County agencies.

- Vigorous attempts to collect unpaid assessments have been and continue to be pursued. These include use of collection agencies, small claims actions, judgments, and liens on properties.
- John Van de Wouw is to be commended for his time researching the history of the area, and that information is now on the website (www.spanishlakes.org).
- Various CC&R complaint issues can be called in directly to MARK IV. The complainer needs to be identified, but the letter to be sent out to the complainant will not reference the complainer. When the Board is notified first, we will try to resolve the issue before letters are sent. Sometimes, but not always, we are successful. Visibility of trailers on properties is the CC&R complaint that occupies most of the Board's and MARK IV's time.
- At this meeting we authorized the expenditure of \$737.88 for landscaping bark at the River Road and Creston gates. Tom Lawson and his homeowner volunteers will spread the bark.
- The new election procedures in accordance with the California Civil Code

are now adopted and posted on the website. Voting now will be by written ballot; results will be announced at the Annual Meeting. Our next Board meeting will be in early June. It will be held at the park in concert with volunteer Work Day and the Water Board Meeting. June 6 is the tentative date; this will be confirmed or changed soon.

- Future plans include slurry sealing the main roads and/or all roads depending on the recommendation of the professionals doing the work.
- We had a request to get the Creston Road gate repaired. We regret that some had to drive around to enter. There is an order back-up by repair vendor that delays the repairs. In the meantime you might try getting out of the car and gently pushing the gate. Do not force it with your car, please.
- Roger Zolldan has been appointed to the Architectural Review Committee.
- MARK IV distributed monthly assessment coupons and return envelopes. Since there will be no additional billing statements, it is recommended that we all note the coupon due dates on our calendars. The next due date is April 1st.
- We would like to welcome two new homeowners and are gratified that

three more escrows are closing soon. This is truly a great place to live, and we are glad that others are also recognizing the uniqueness of Spanish Lakes.

Budget Report

- As of 12/31/08 reserve funding at 115% (+/-).
- 2009 balanced operating budget.
- Potential expense to slurry seal some/all roads.
- Potential expense for further dam improvements.
- Potential purchase of picnic tables.
- Michael Croft reported current bank account balances.

Craig Thomas, Treasurer

Architectural Review Committee

As a reminder to all property owners a formal request and Architectural review is required for any new and/or enhancing types of projects. Projects might include but are not limited to: fencing, storage structures, detached and/or attached building extensions, major landscaping additions or changes, play structures, free standing solar cell structures, etc.

All formal request for review should include a detailed project description, material of construction and proposed colors, a plot plan noting the location of the project in relation to property lines, the streets and the neighbors if applicable. If landscaping is involved, a landscaping plan will also need to be submitted for review.

Our committees goal is to process all requests in a timely manner such that we will not interfere with the property owners preferred schedule for construction. It is always best if the property owner will get together with the review committee as soon as the planning starts for these projects such that we can work together to resolve any questions and concerns as early as possible.

Craig Thomas, Chairman

Landscape Advisor

- Improvements have been made to both entrances and to the park.
- Request Board to pursue the ground squirrel problem.
- Requested expense of \$737.88 for additional bark (Board approved, 5-0).

Tom Lawson, Advisor

Water Company

In spite of the recent rains, it is easy to forget the need for water conservation. Please check automatic sprinklers to make sure they are not operating in a downpour. Water levels in our wells have dropped significantly since 2007. It is imperative that we are all proactive in conserving this vital natural resource. If the drought continues, and we continue to use the same amount of water, we will reach our deepest well pumps by 2014. We need to take this drought seriously. Let's all do our part!

Pat Munks, President

Focus On Our Wildlife

Very recently Jeff Lewis shared several photographs of a large bird wading in one of our lakes. He correctly identified the creature as a Great Blue Heron. Subsequently I examined, once again, the spectacular website photographs of this bird taken by the Munks. The profile shot shows the features of this heron in exquisite detail.



The Great Blue Heron is the largest and most widespread heron. It is found in most of North and Central America. It stands about four feet tall and has a wingspan of almost seven feet. Its size and bluish body tinge, of course, is the origin of its "Great" and "Blue" moniker. This heron has a pale head, a rust-grey neck, a white streak running down the front of its neck, black flight feathers, and black head plumes, features seen in the Lewis' and Munks' photographs. It flies with its head folded back;



its flight speed has been clocked at 28 mph. One tagged specimen lived 21 years.

The Great Blue Heron eats fish, rodents, snakes, lizards, frogs, and insects. It forages in marshes, ponds, and, like here, in dry fields. It swallows its prey whole and has been known to choke and suffocate on prey that is too large. I once saw one of these birds foraging between the Lawson and Stark properties; it caught and swallowed a field mouse.

We are indeed fortunate to have such a majestic and helpful bird visit us

Bill Crawford

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Blue_Heron
 Audubon Society: Encyclopedia of North American Birds
 Photos by Jeff Lewis and DAnna Lawson

Note from a parent to the school:

"My son is under a doctor's care and should not take P.E. today. Please execute him."