

Clear Lake Riviera Community Association holds election

Contributed by Ray Perry
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CLEAR LAKE RIVIERA – This month, the Clear Lake Riviera Community Association will wrap up its election for new board members.

By now members of the Clear Lake Riviera community will have received ballots to fill four positions for the community association's board of directors. Ballots were mailed to homeowners on May 18 and the ballots need to be returned no later than June 24.

A correction in the instructions was also mailed informing members that they need to vote for four candidates, not just two.

The vacancies are available because of one vacant position and the term expiring for Sandra Orchid who served as secretary. President Alan Siegel and Vice President Sid Donell were appointed to the positions for the current term because no one ran for the position during the last election. At the last board meeting Siegel and Donell announced their intention to resign to leave room for new board members.

Because of the renewed interest in the health of the association, seven residents have thrown their hat into the ring to fill these positions. They are listed below in alphabetical order.

Denise Frane

Denise Frane is a business administrator affiliated with a Lake Co nonprofit corporation for 23 years. She supervises a staff and is involved with business meetings for the company. She has been involved with the company board during that time so she is aware of how boards and committees work.

Frane has lived in Lake county since 1960, graduated from Kelseyville High School and has lived in the Clear Lake Riviera since 1981.

"I think it's important that the board stay intact and incorporated to face the issues that concern members of the Clear Lake Riviera community," said Frane. "It needs to be stronger and more responsive to the community and encourage the members to take a more active part.

"Weed abatement is an important issue that needs to be addressed," she said. "Some property owners have diligently worked to maintain their lots while others have ignored warnings and have incurred fines. I propose to use the money generated by the fines to clear lots for those in hardship cases.

"When I first heard about the proposed road benefit zone I thought we pay our taxes they should do it for free," she continued. "Now that I heard all the issues involved, I think that it is fair that the county helps us repair our roads. I now think the benefit zone is a good idea."

Anthony Gniadek

There was no response from Anthony Gniadek. However based on his application filed at the association office he states, "A vote on the dissolution of the Community Association should be called for. It is time to bring kangaroo courts to an end, the perpetual pissing wars this association get into to an end, a surrogate County Government to an end. Dissolving the association will send a strong message to the Board of Supervisors."

Pat Howell

Pat and Jim Howell moved to the Kelseyville from Ventura County three years ago this coming August. Pat served on her local homeowner association as secretary for three years.

"One of the reasons we built a home here in the Riviera was because it has a homeowner's association," she said. "There are a number of areas around the lake that have nice homes among trailers with junked cars rusting in the yard. We didn't want to live in a place like that. The reason that the Clear Lake Riviera is such a nice place to live is because of the homeowners association.

"I would like to see the homeowners association protect the rights of the property owners, keeping the neighborhood free from fire hazards, from becoming congested with overbuilding on every open space such as the golf course," she said.

"I think we need to monitor the neighborhood to enforce and cite the violators, giving them plenty of opportunity to resolve it," she said. "Currently it is divisive to enforce the rules only when neighbors complain. It creates bad feelings between neighbors. I'm glad we currently have a paid employee that will do this.

"As far as the benefit zone, I think that this is a real good idea because it will increase property values and reduce required vehicle maintenance from driving on bad roads," she added. "I drove through a pothole in Clearlake that required me to replace two tires and a rim. From what is being charged to repair the roads is a pittance compared to the real cost involved."

Jim Irwin

Jim Irwin has spent the last six years being self-employed in construction management.

He has served two years on the Lakeport City Council, where he has gone through the budget process.

Irwin has a bachelor of science degree in engineering from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo as well as many courses in project management. He has spent his entire life in Lake County (except for four years at college in San Luis Obispo) and has owned property in Clear Lake Riviera since 2005.

"The homeowners association should continue in its mission to protect and promote the property values," Irwin said. "This would involve enforcement of the CC&Rs to ensure that the neighborhood remains clean, safe and secure.

"Fire is a definite safety hazard! I would encourage keeping the free bush chipping program open to members of

the association," he said. "I would also support proactive steps by the HOA/Code Enforcement to identify unsafe lots and have their owners notified. If property owners fail to correct the hazard then the HOA needs to step in and take the steps necessary to ensure compliance.

"I support the proposed road benefit zone," Irwin continued. "It is unfortunate that the county has not been able to manage their budget well enough to maintain what they agreed to maintain, but in the interest of actually getting the roads fixed, I would be in favor of the road benefit zone."

Donna Moeller

Donna Moeller has lived in Lake County 18 and a half years. Her husband Don is a former board member who was treasurer.

She is a retired mortgage broker and has served on the Clear Lake Performing Arts council for 14 years, where she held various positions including the presidency from 1998 to 2001. She is reported to be a good organizer who gets along well with people.

Her stated goal is, "Reestablishing community confidence in the benefit of the association, making a keeping the community as 'family friendly' as possible. To address the issues creating division and misunderstandings between board members and disgruntled property owners through communication and compromise."

Darrell Watkins

Darrell Watkins served two years as president of the Mount Konocti Mutual Water Co. here in the Riviera. He is a graduate of Pepperdine University's School of Education, an early retirement teacher and a successful businessman in Clearlake.

He has lived in Lake County 26 years and in the same house in the Clear Lake Riviera for 21 years.

"I see the Riviera more as an advisory and consultation entity than a police force, keeping the signs up and height limits to not block lake views with new homes," Watkins said. "Freedom, individuality and privacy are important.

"The association needs to get out of the business of brush cutting," he said. "It has no fire experts. The existing board's 100-foot-from-every-building rule is ridiculous.

"Fire isn't the only concern for Rivierians," he added. "Natural habitat, wildlife, erosion, money, privacy and freedom are also important concerns. The road benefit zone is a clever way to increase property taxes. It nullifies Proposition 13 which limited property taxes to one per cent of the purchase price."

Watkins is also running for a position on the Mount Konocti Mutual Water Co. Board of Directors.

Walter K. Zuercher

Walter K. Zuercher was born in Switzerland. He was raised, schooled and educated in electromechanical engineering in the same region.

He immigrated to the United States in 1974 and became a US citizen in 1986. From 1975 to 1990 he was employed as manager of corporate engineering for a major forms printing company in San Diego.

In 1991 he started a company in Dayton, Ohio, in the graphics arts industry, specializing in printing, paper and board converting. The position entailed responsibility for all technical aspects of the business. He sold the company with the contractual agreement to stay on for five years as technical director.

After retirement in 2005, he moved to Clear Lake Riviera where he now resides with his wife, Silvia.

"Even with the short time, or maybe because of it, we are well aware of the issues within our community and with the 'light baggage' we carry, I might well be able to inject some new thoughts that will benefit the unity and prosperity of the community," he said. "The well being of the community has to be the central focus point at all times.

For all of us, one of the largest, if not the largest, investment is our house. We need to protect and strive to improve that value at all times. For that to happen we must try to kindle the interest of the people to help each other."

Zuercher's vision of the future is:

- Street or block working parties a few times each year, to help the disabled and the elderly to comply with the CC&R.
- Organizing block parties to get to know the neighbors better and find some common grounds for actions.
- Lobby the county to be more active in tree maintenance along the streets, cleaning and maintaining the streets and supporting the work parties.
- Searching for ways to create useful open space for people of all ages, be it a playground for toddlers, ball fields for the young and young at heart, or just a covered gathering place for seniors, anything that will attract people and by that become a community-meeting place.
- Exploring the possibility of a park on the lake with launching facilities for the community.
- Lobbying the county and state, to prevent elderly people on fixed income from being forced out of their homes because of rising costs other than mortgages.

"(Fire Abatement) is a 'thorny' issue and much of the discontent I sense in the community stems from just that intrusion into the personal freedom," he said. "We have no choice but to comply with the fire departments request and guidelines. After the big fires, potential loss of insurance coverage has become a reality. For the good of the whole community, everybody with the necessary resources needs to tackle the task as soon as possible. What we should and can do, as a community is to guide people then find the voluntary manpower to help the elderly and disabled people to comply. We also have to put pressure on the fire department to get the surrounding property owners in compliance."

Concerning the proposed road benefit zone Zuecher said, "Personally, I'm very disappointment with the stance of the state and county government on the issue. Feeling strongly, like so many have expressed, that it is government's responsibility to maintain our streets. I also clearly see that waiting for the county or the state will

not help the community. Waiting will deteriorate our home values; play havoc with our cars suspension systems and tires, to the fact that we potentially may bring more money to the auto repair shop than the assessment will cost us.

“Inspecting the work done in other HOAs around the county, I truly believe that those homeowners have taken the right steps to maintain their home values. I’m also attuned to the fact that there are people living in our community on fixed income. To some of them, the assessment would create a hard ship. As a member of the board, or for that matter the community, I would feel obligated to find solutions for these people, either in form of relief from the County or possibly the community association,” he concluded.

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