

# *James River Retreat*

## NEWSLETTER



**September 20, 2023 [ # 1-2023]**

### PRESIDENT' S MESSAGE

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## *Hello fellow JRR neighbours!*

You will notice as you read this that we are trying something new format wise to help keep you up to date. We are looking for a mechanism to share information, ideas and ensure you have access to everything you need from the Board. As always, we welcome your input, energy and ideas – does this work, does it need to be updated or do you have other ideas. We want this document to be a great resource for our wonderful community. All feedback is always welcomed!

As I write this president's message, I am (again) in awe of the great neighbors we have here at JRR. In addition to maintaining our own properties, so many neighbors have stepped-up recently to help with the community tasks around the Retreat. A few such instances were brought to the Board's attention, and we wanted to pass on our thanks for your extra efforts!

### **Thank-you...**

- Greg and Karen Filazek for filling potholes around the community.
- Bob and Liz Moore, Karen Filazek and Donna Lohnes refreshing the gate and fence painting.
- Rob Toews and Jim Lank for securing Fall Road maintenance and having the bridge deck checked.
- Court Deedo for helping keep gravel off the bridge.
- To all our other neighbors who quietly help out when they can, make that extra effort and silently help each other out.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> July, JRR hosted its annual community **Friends and Family picnic**. It was a fantastic event filled with great food, wonderful company, and lots of laughter. The weather was great, and we had a fantastic turnout. I can tell you that, this annual event is one of the anticipated social events of the year in our family! Thank-you to everyone for your attendance, great food, and warm company.

I would like to close with a very special recognition to our wonderful **social committee** for all the hard work in the background before, during and after the event. Well done and Congratulations!

- A special thank-you to: Ceilidh Price, Liz Moore, Sarah Bhola, Donna Hughes, Christine Principalli, Trina Radcliffe, Karen Filazek and Gary McDonald and Greg Filazek - the master burger flippers!

Until next time,

Rhian

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## **JRR CONDOMINIUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIORITIES**

Your Condominium Board of Directors are responsible to serve all owners and fulfill the legal responsibilities and ethical duties stipulated in the Alberta Condominium Property Act, Clearwater County Municipal Bylaws, JRR Retreat condominium bylaws.

We have identified four priorities for our term are:

1. Fiscal management and reserve fund structure
2. General Bylaw review to ensure compliance with the Condominium Property Act (AB), new and existing Clearwater County (CWC) Bylaws, updated JRR RETREAT Bylaws. The Bylaws have not been revised since inception, thus requires a full review and update.
3. Governance and Record Keeping
4. Community Safety / Emergency / fire and safety preparedness /evacuation planning.

#### **JRR BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2025**

**President:** Rhian Haynes: lot 33, 117 James River Landing

**Vice-president:** vacant

**Secretary:** Trina Radcliffe: lot 21, 200 James River Ridge.

**Treasurer:** Olesya Afanasyeva: lot 14, 222 James River Ridge.

**Member at Large:** Donna Hughes, lot 19, 213 James River Ridge

**Member at Large:** Jim Lank: lot 20, 215 James River Ridge.

**Member at Large:** Liz Moore: lot 3, 9 James River Crossing

Have a question or concern / development application? Please send it forward in this way:

1. Envision Property Manager: Rod Pittman/ [rod@envisionproperty.ca](mailto:rod@envisionproperty.ca)
2. [jrrboard@gmail.com](mailto:jrrboard@gmail.com)

***IF the matter is 'sensitive' and you are not sure about sending it to the board, then please send it directly to Rod at Envision as he is required to follow the PIPA/ privacy policy.***

***We kindly ask that you please do not email individual board members with concerns as they will just redirect to the whole board. This process will help ensure open communication, record keeping and accuracy with information exchange. You will get a response as soon as possible.***

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## **COMMITTEES AND UPDATES**

1. **Design committee** - submit all requests/ applications for any new builds or lot developments, and volunteer interest.
2. **Pond committee** - submit ideas, suggestions, and volunteer interest.
3. **Bylaw Committee** - submit suggestions, questions, concerns, and volunteer interest.
4. **Emergency and safety committee**- submit suggestions, concerns and volunteer interest.
5. **Social committee** – submit suggestions and volunteer interest.

*If you have interest and expertise in any of the areas the committees manage, please reach out to the board advising of your interest and we would welcome help and participation.*

## **2022/2023 FINANCIALS UPDATE**

At the June 2023 AGM for the 2022/2023 fiscal year, the community deferred approving the annual financial statements pending a review/update by the next Board of Directors. The new Board has reviewed the issue, adjusted and finalized the yearend statements. A summary of the findings is below:

**ISSUE:** There was a large cost of ~\$10.9k for replacing and upgrading the pump for the JRR pond waterfall. These costs were not clear in the Operating Income of the community, compounded further by a partial recovery of costs from an insurance claim.

**CAPITAL:** The pump replacement is considered a capital item replacing the original pump. As a result, this should be funded by the reserve fund as a capital replacement.

**SOLUTION:** The full ~\$10.9k cost of the pond repairs was moved to a reserve fund as an expenses item. This was partially offset by the ~\$6.4k insurance recovery which reduced the pump expense to \$4.5k.

**BEST PRACTICE:** The solution is aligned with best practice where reserve fund activity should NOT be booked into to the condo's operating account.

**OUTCOME:** Operating Income increased by \$4.5k (the amount of the net reserve fund expenses for the pump) and the reserve fund reduced by the same amount.

I am pleased to share that the Board has now unanimously approved the 2022/2023 financials.

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## BYLAW COMMITTEE UPDATE

We have launched the task of doing a full revision of the JRR Bylaws [which have not been fully revised since inception], to ensure we are legally following all the regulations of the Condominium Property Act of Alberta and to address the changes that have evolved within the community over the past decade or more. The task requires planning, focus, expert consultation, time commitment, and a budget. I welcome anyone with interest, expertise, and time to reach out. I would be pleased to discuss the project. Donna Hughes

### SEASONAL REMINDERS

#### *How well do you know your Culvert?*



Have you gotten to know your culvert, or have you visited recently to make sure it is OK? All joking aside, please remember to perform some annual maintenance on your culverts at the tops of your drive. Top tips would include:

- Keep all foreign material, debris or garbage out of your culvert openings.
- Clear all vegetation and accumulated soil/gravel from around the culvert openings.
- Inspect for damage inside the culvert, collapsed walls or a crushed corrugated pipe.
- Before working around your culvert, be sure to careful look for animals who may have made a home in your culvert – especially skunks!

### SNOW PLOWING

As in years past, plowing is contracted out to a local contractor who lives in the area and makes a judgement call to maintain the roads after a snowfall. **Driveway and obstacle markers** are very helpful, and in the event, **you do NOT want your drive plowed**, it is best to **rope or barricade the entrance**. A modest signage at the end of the drive is acceptable.

### **GENTLE - BYLAW REMINDERS**

There has been a lot of new owners and changes in the culture of the Retreat over the past several years. We think a section with general reminders help us all. Good neighbours respect the bylaws and policies of the Retreat. It is hoped everyone would abide by the bylaws and not create hard feelings by requiring your neighbours to ask you or have to raise the issue to the board for compliance and enforcement. There is a process to follow should you wish to have the condominium address a policy or bylaw. Yes, it takes time, involves the board and possibly our owner's community, but that is why we chose to live in a condominium folks! for the peace, comfort, and security of living in the rural area we do.

#### **ATV AND OHV (off road vehicle) USE**

A routine conversation at Board meetings is the use of OHV, such as quads, side-by-sides, and snowmobiles. The bylaws do not permit their operation anywhere on the property, but respectful use to enter and exit the property is generally tolerated by the community. Please be respectful of the noise they create, observe the posted 30K speed limit, and under no circumstances transit any lot other than your own.

#### **USE AND OCCUPANCY RESTRICTIONS**

61. (a) An owner SHALL NOT:

(iii) keep or allow any animal, livestock, fowl or pet of any kind at any time to be within his unit or on the common property without the specific approval in writing of the Board, which approval the Board may arbitrarily withhold and may, if given, be withdrawn anytime on seven (7) days' notice to that effect. All pets must be kept under control at all times. No more than one dog over six (6) months of age will be allowed on one unit. No pets are to be left outside overnight and noisy pets will be excluded. All dogs approved must be kept under control as defined by the Board and in the custody of a responsible person at all times\* who shall not allow the animal to befoul or defecate on any landscaped area of the project. Any County By-Law in effect in the municipality with regard to pets at any point in time shall have effect within the common property and municipal officers are hereby authorized and are permitted to enforce County By-Laws on the common property.

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## **'GOOD NEIGHBOUR' POLICIES**

### **'EMBRACE THE DARK SIDE- OUTDOOR LIGHTS '** From the JRR Blog

One of the most beautiful views available to anyone in rural Alberta comes from stepping outside on a dark sky night and looking up at thousands of stars and the arc of the Milky Way. In cities and towns across Alberta, light pollution and trespass make a dark sky experience more and more rare. By becoming more mindful of the effect of light trespass\* on our neighbours' houses and cabins and taking three simple steps to reduce it, we can contribute to a better night sky viewing opportunity for everyone at James River Retreat.

- When outdoors after dark, keep the use of artificial lights to a minimum. Do your exterior lights need to be on or is it just habit? They may interfere with your neighbour's enjoyment of time away from the hustle and lights of the city and the glow of your campfire may be all that's needed for your friends and family to enjoy the evening.
- When exterior lights *are* needed, choose fixtures that limit light trespass as a courtesy to your neighbours. Use the lowest watt bulbs that will get the job done and covered fixtures that direct the light precisely where it needs to go be effective. It's the neighbourly thing to do and it's a requirement of our James River Retreat Design Guidelines (see below). Check out [Good Neighbour Outdoor Lighting](#), a great reference for choosing appropriate outdoor fixtures.
- When tucked inside your house or cabin for the night, turn off exterior lights and unnecessary interior lights. Maybe even consider drawing curtains on windows that spill particularly bright light in the direction of your neighbours.

Some of you may be wondering by now if all this is really necessary. Well, we all know what it's like to step outside in the dark, switch off a flashlight and let our eyes adjust, gradually taking in more and more detail of our surroundings and the sky above us. Now imagine your neighbours doing the same but your bright cabin lights are a giant flashlight they just can't turn off. It only takes a little bit of thinking and tinkering to preserve the dark sky experience over the James River Retreat. Tone down the lights wherever reasonable then step outside, look up and enjoy that infinite view.

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\*Insufficient control of outdoor lighting to the extent that it crosses over to your neighbours' property and affects their quality of life.

\*\*From the [\*James River Retreat Design Guidelines\*](#):

*Outdoor lighting should provide subtle illumination for safety and highlighting of special architectural or landscape elements. In a natural setting without streetlamps even a 50-watt light source seen from an adjacent lot can become an irritating distraction.*

- *Exterior fixtures must not have bright light sources.*
- *Care must be taken to minimize the visibility of exterior light fixtures to neighbors; preferably choose fixtures that are opaque and shine primarily downward.*

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

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1. GATE CODE: 7991
2. Mailing Address:  
James River Retreat Condo Association  
c/o Envision Property Management  
3907 3A ST NE Calgary, AB T2E 6S7
3. *NEWSLETTER input: please contact Donna Hughes ([donna.hughes1@shaw.ca](mailto:donna.hughes1@shaw.ca)) or Rhian Haynes ([rhian.haynes0612@gmail.com](mailto:rhian.haynes0612@gmail.com)) who welcome your support in making this effort useful.*

#### WEBSITES OF INTEREST

<https://www.clearwatercounty.ca/p/county-highlights-newsletter>

<https://jamesriverretreat.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com>

#### HUMOR & WISDOM

A man goes to an old woodsman to learn the secrets of tracking animals. The woodsman agrees to teach him and takes him out into the forest.  
A short ways in, the woodsman stops and crouches down to the ground. After a moment, he says, "A wolf came through here. An older male. Hunting alone." "Wow!" says the man, "That's amazing!" "It's easy when you know what to look for," the woodsman replies.  
The two continue further into the forest. After another short while, again the woodsman stops and crouches. "A young deer. Injured. Probably by the wolf." "Just incredible!" says the man. "It's easy when you know what to look for," replies the woodsman again.  
They continue on... Once more, the woodsman stops and crouches. "A man came through here. Short. Heavyset. Poor eyesight. His name is Kevin."  
"You can tell all that just from his tracks!?"  
"Found his wallet. Has his driver's license inside."

#### RECIPES and MOONSHINE

#### CREAM OF TARTAR BISCUITS

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2 cups flour  
2 tsp. cream of tartar  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1 tsp. salt  
4 Tbsp. butter (or shortening)  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  - 1 cup milk

Sift together flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt. Cut in, or work in with fingers, the butter. Add the milk all at once, and stir quickly to blend, using as few motions as possible. Toss out onto a lightly on a floured board; pat or roll gently to desired thickness, cut with a floured biscuit cutter and mold into shape with the hands (using tender loving care)!

Bake @ 425- 450 degrees F for 12 – 15 min.