

RIVER'S EDGE ESTATES ASSOCIATION



FEBRUARY-MARCH 2026

RIVER'S EDGE COMMUNITY NOTICES

BOARD MEETINGS

March 18, 2026* July 15, 2026*
May 20, 2026* September 16, 2026*
November 18, 2026*
November 7, 2026-Annual Meeting

Before October 2022, our Board Meetings were held every other month. The Board has decided to go back to that schedule. If an additional meeting is required, the Board will notify the community. Board Meetings are held at the HOA Office at **4:00 pm** on the 3rd Wednesday of month unless otherwise notified. Please call the HOA office if you plan to attend a meeting to allow Jeannie time to add additional seating if necessary.



If it is easier for you to read this on the website, Penni McDaniel puts every new edition on our website.

KEEPING UP WITH THE BOARD

OUR RESERVE FUNDS and IMPACT FEES AT WORK!! Road Maintenance Update

Hi Neighbors! Allow me to take a moment to introduce myself to those of you I haven't had the honor of meeting yet. My name is Brandon Bridges, and my background is in road construction and streetscape project management. Unfortunately, word got out to the HOA board (thanks David!) that I've got a little knowledge in that department and I was subsequently hog tied (turns out Jim's quite the cowboy!) and unceremoniously (continued)

HOMEOWNERS RIVER'S EDGE

25 Blackberry Mtn. Dr, #8101
Ellijay, Georgia 30536

No short-term rentals allowed

OFFICE MANAGER

Jeannie Miller
Phone 706-273-3100
After Hours Water and
Gate Systems Emergencies
(leave name, phone #
and message)
706-273-3100

EMAIL

riversedge@ellijay.com

WEBSITE

Webmaster:
Penni McDaniel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Ratner, President
Tom Ostby, Vice President
And Water Manager
Jim Carr, Treasurer
David Schmitt, Secretary
Member at Large

DESIGN COMMITTEE

David Schmitt, Chairman
Esther Lax
Jim Carr

Firewise Coordinator

Newsletter Editor
Judy Carr

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is a personal choice based on your
own evaluation.

Deposited on the conference room floor at a board meeting...where I was then informed that I had "happily volunteered" to assist in forming a plan to help keep our roads in good condition.

OK, maybe that's not exactly how it went, but my Grandfather once told me to never let the truth interfere with a good story!

Anyway, let's talk about our roads a bit. If we were to attempt to make all the necessary repairs at once, it would wipe out the reserves and end up costing "we the people" a significant special assessment...something none of us want. So, we began forming a plan for ongoing annual maintenance of the roads...thereby spreading the cost of initial repairs over several years. The board determined a budget for 2025 that the reserves could sustain, and I began the arduous task of finding a paving contractor who would provide clean, professional, and reliable work. Ben Hopkins Paving stepped in, and I was immediately impressed with his knowledge, professionalism, and the pride he takes in his work.

The board chose to concentrate on the two most heavily traveled roads first...Lazy River Lane and Estates Dr. You've all seen the results of that. The worst of the root intrusions have been mitigated, and we can now use the full width of the road without risking damage to our vehicles...or our spines! We will also deal with some cracking areas in the future using a process called sealcoating...a relatively inexpensive process that will add years of longevity before resurfacing is required.

In 2026 and beyond, once the board has determined an acceptable budget, we will begin addressing the damaged areas of the side streets. We will concentrate on the worst areas first, stretching our HOA fees as far as they will go each year without depleting the reserves to an unacceptable level. Over the next 2-3 years we will have positioned our community to much more easily maintain the condition of the roads moving forward.

I would like to say this, as well. I'm not a board member...just a neighbor volunteering where I can. I have, however, attended several meetings, and the board members who are currently serving this community have truly impressed me with their stewardship of our funds. They have the annual budget locked in tight and discuss every dollar that is spent with care. Our ability to even think about road maintenance...a VERY expensive endeavor...is a direct result of their efforts to manage our contributions with integrity! THANKS, Board Members!

SPRING PROJECTS

Now that we have survived the Christmas Season, many of us are thinking about projects that need to be done around the house! Some of these could be large projects. Please remember that new construction, additions/changes to existing homes and garages, large landscaping projects and changing the color of your home needs to be approved by the Architectural Committee consisting of Dave Schmitt, Jim Carr and Esther Lax. For all questions as to whether you need approval or how to fill out the forms, please contact one of the committee members and they will be glad to help you. For the approval forms that need to be filled out, please contact Jeannie Miller at the HOA office.

ROAD IMPACT FEES

Just a reminder when evaluating your spring projects, as of January 1, 2022, the road impact fee was updated to include large renovations and other improvements to your property. This includes the addition of a garage or additional space to your existing garage, addition to your home and it could include large yard work if heavy trucks and equipment come in with supplies and/or do the work. The purpose of the impact fee is an effort to put aside the money for road improvements when they are needed. Our impact fees increased in late 2025: New Construction is now \$5,000 and /Architectural Projects including garages and additions, etc. are now \$2500.



Winter/ Spring Wildfire Prevention Tips

The recent rainfall over the past couple of weeks have somewhat lessened the overall dry conditions experienced over the winter season. However, anticipated moderate to strong, late winter breezes will be evaporating some of that humidity putting us once again at risk of wildfire. High winds and heavy rains have also knocked down a greater than usual amount of tree limbs and branches that provide fuel for fires around your homes. Here are a few tips to help make your property less vulnerable to external fires.

- **Clear as much tree debris from your property as possible. Chipping will occur some-time in the early spring so once a definitive date is announced get as many limbs, branches or downed small trees (not to exceed 8 inches in diameter or 10 feet in length) as possible out to the side of the road for disposal.**
- **Clear late fall leaves and debris from around the house.**
- **Check your gutters and roof seams for leaves, twigs and pine needles and clear as necessary.**
- **Do a visual inspection of your roof's shingles to see if any blew off during the high winds.**
- **If planting new bushes or shrubbery make sure that they are planted far enough away from your home so that the growth won't encroach on the "immediate zone" that is within 5 feet of your home.**
- **Always keep unnecessary flammable items away from your porches, decks, etc.**
- **Avoid using your fire pit (even if screened) during high winds or low relative humidity.**

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Preparing-homes-for-wildfire>

MAIL DELIVERY UPDATE

The Post Office has hired a new postmaster who is working hard to correct the county's mail problems. We have heard that he digs right in and is working as many hours as our dedicated mail carriers. As most of you know, it was our mail carrier that had the stroke while she was working. She did not make her regular check in calls and no one could get a hold of her, so they drove her mail route, found her face down on the road and she was life flighted to the hospital. She is home now, but struggling. Prayers for a full recovery are welcomed.

WINTER MAY NOT BE OVER YET!!!! Please continue to be diligent about protecting your outside spigots and pipes. Make sure your heating system continues to be in good working condition and that you have adequate propane for your generator should we lose power. Set your thermostat to 50 degrees if you are going away for a few days and open your cupboard doors where your water pipes are located.

BEST LOCAL WALKS THIS WINTER

Winter's here but that doesn't mean we have to hibernate! The frosty season brings quiet beauty away from the tourist hustle around our city. Here are some nearby scenic walks perfect for refreshing outings.

1) **Project Chimp Trail System.** 1.3 miles. The Project Chimps hiking trails in Blue Ridge, offer a rewarding experience for animal lovers, eco-tourists, and nature enthusiasts alike. There are 3 trails to choose from. the most difficult trail: the **White Trail** at 2.5 miles long and with an elevation gain of 469 feet. A relaxing evening stroll on the **Green Nature Walk.** Consists of a 1.2-mile trail took about 20 minutes and was perfect for winding down. The **Yellow Trail,** is a 2.5-mile trail features a 561-foot elevation gain and is rated moderate with a few rest stops on the benches scattered throughout. These scenic trails have a requested \$2 donation for entry, with all proceeds supporting **Project Chimps,** a nonprofit sanctuary for retired research chimpanzees. If you're lucky, you might hear or even spot the chimps during your hike.

2) **Mineral Springs Walking Trail.** 0.5 miles. Take your time and enjoy the scenery and peace of the North Georgia Mountains. It's an easy route to stretch your legs. Mineral Springs Walking Trail is just minutes from downtown Blue Ridge — off Mineral Springs Road, which turns into Industrial Boulevard.

3) **Carter's Lake Tumbling Waters Nature Trail.** A lush forest filled with fern and pine. Sweet-scented forest air. A towering bridge with great views of Carters Lake, and a set of spilling waterfalls. There's a whole lot of beauty packed into this relatively short, and easy, hike on the Tumbling Waters Nature Trail. At one mile, round trip, bursting with scenic beauty with gently rolling terrain, it's a great hike for beginners and families with kids, and it's dog-friendly.

4) **Fort Mountain State Park- Old Fort Trails** is a set of color-coded interconnected trails that lead to the stone wall, the lookout tower, and the overlook deck. There are three trails. The yellow trail is a loop around the top of Fort Mountain. The red trail begins about a half-mile up the yellow trail and goes straight from one side of the yellow loop to the other, cutting a generous third out of the top of the loop, rejoining the yellow at the tower. About halfway down the red trail the blue trail begins. The blue trail leads to, then parallels, the rock wall before coming to an end at the yellow trail. Continuing on the yellow trail from where the red trail splits off, hikers are led around the north rim of the mountain, and a short spur trail heads down to the observation deck for breathtaking views of the valleys. The yellow trail continues on to the Old Stone Tower, then back to the parking lot.

PROTECT YOUR PLANTS FROM OUR DEER!

Even though 2025 produced a bumper crop of acorns, by the mid to end of January, those nuts are gone! And where do the deer turn for food—yep! Our yards! From February through April, deer turn their attention to our holly, azalea and rhododendron plants. Even the closed buds aren't safe! At ground level, they are watching for the crowns of black eyed susans, daylilies, daisies, trilliums, and anemone to pop through the ground so they can have a delicious brunch!

PRO TIP-Milorganite, a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer, is ideal to promote healthy growth in trees, flowers and shrubs And the deer HATE the smell, so it is a good choice for tender spring growth.

PRO TIP-Apply a Systemic repellent to the soil in late winter, then follow up with a contact repellent when shoots first appear. Systemic pesticides are absorbed by the plant or pest, providing long-lasting protection from the inside out, while contact pesticides act on the surface of the plant or pest, immediately killing them upon contact. Systemic pesticides are advantages because they can provide protection to the entire plant, including hard-to-reach areas such as the underside of leaves. They are ideal for controlling pests that are difficult to reach with contact pesticides. Contact pesticides, on the other hand, are chemicals that remain on the surface of the plant and are only effective when they come into direct contact with the pest.

(Information for this article was taken from Big Canoe's Smoke Signals newspaper)



****Gilmer Arts is proud to offer classes in Stained Glass Art. The instructor is Warren Acree. He began creating in stained glass in 2008 and has been teaching for Gilmer Arts since the summer of 2018. The courses are designed to give the student a chance to learn the art of making stained glass designs without having to purchase any equipment or supplies. In February, Warren will schedule with the student so that each person gets the time they need on the schedule. Classes are Monday and Tuesday, primarily. Start: February 2 @ 12:00 pm
End: February 24 @ 3:00 pm Cost: \$130.00 (includes supplies) Phone [706-635-5605](tel:706-635-5605)

****NE Georgia Swap Meet, February 7, 2026 (March 7, and April 4) from 8am to 1pm, at the Habersham County Fairgrounds, 4235 Toccoa Hwy, Clarksville, GA Website/map: <https://www.facebook.com/NEGA>

The Event, swap, meet, car, show, cruise, is organized by: NE Georgia Swap Meet

****14th Annual Fire & Ice Chili Cook-Off and Craft Beer Festival. February 14th, 2026, 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm. 790 Block of East Main St & Downtown City Park. Live music, ice sculptures, amazing chili, and craft beer! Tasting cards are \$10. Chili tasting will begin at noon and go until the chili is gone! Music will go from noon to 4 pm.\

****Smoke on the Mountain, February 26 - March 22, Thursday - Saturday at 7:00 pm, Sunday at 2 pm Blue Ridge Theater, 2591 East First St, Blue Ridge. Smoke on the Mountain is a joyous, toe-tapping musical comedy set in a small North Carolina Baptist church in 1938. The Sanders Family has come to Mount Pleasant Baptist to share their music and their stories, bringing gospel classics, bluegrass charm, and heartfelt humor to the congregation. As they sing and testify, secrets slip out, laughter mingles with faith, and the family's imperfections shine as brightly as their love and devotion. Packed with over two dozen bluegrass and gospel favorites. Buy tickets on line @ Blue Ridge Community Theater

****Project Chimps Easter Egg Hunt. Saturday, March 28, 2026, (rain date: Saturday, April 4) Check-In opens at 9:30 am, Event starts at 10:00 am Location: Project Chimps, Morganton. FREE! (with RSVP), Add on a tour after the hunt! \$35 per adult, children are free. There will be three fields this year. Children aged 2-5 will be able to hunt for their own eggs in a dedicated space by the ropes course, ages 6-9 will be able to hunt behind the historic cabin and 10-12 will be able to hunt by the koi pond.

It has come to the Board's attention that people in our community think we have a River's Edge Facebook page. We do not, nor have we been approached by anyone to ask if we should have one. So, whatever is out there, is totally the opinions of whomever posted on the site and is not sanctioned by the Board