

RIVER'S EDGE ESTATES ASSOCIATION



OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2025

RIVER'S EDGE COMMUNITY NOTICES

BOARD MEETINGS

October 15, 2025*

November 19, 2025*

November 1, 2025-Annual Meeting

*Board Meetings are held at the HOA Office at **4:00 pm** on the 3rd Wednesday of each 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 you would rather read our newsletter on-line, please pull up our website at www.RiversEdgeofEllijay.com.

ANNUAL MEETING!

Yes, it is almost that time of year again! The River's Edge Estates Annual Association Meeting will be held November 1st at Victory Christian Center, 208 Victory Circle, Ellijay. An e-mail and your Information packet will go out sometime in October. This year there are two Board Members up for re-election, Tom Ostby and Dave Schmitt. (continued on page 2)

HOMEOWNERS RIVER'S EDGE

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

No short-term rentals allowed

OFFICE MANAGER

Jeannie Miller

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and message)
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Webmaster:

Penni McDaniel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Ratner, President

Tom Ostby, Vice President

And Water Manager

Jim Carr, Treasurer

Dave Schmitt, Secretary

Byron Trotter, Member at Large

DESIGN COMMITTEE

Dave Schmitt, Chairman

Esther Lax

Jim Carr

Firewise Coordinator

Byron Trotter

Newsletter Editor

Judy Carr

This newsletter is provided for Informational purposes only. Inclusion is neither an endorsement nor recommendation. Participation is a personal choice based on your own evaluation.

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TOM OSTBY, Vice President and Water Manager: Tom worked 42 years in Respiratory Care primarily in management, supervision and critical care. He helped develop training programs for therapists, worked on critical care policies and supervised over 25 employees on a daily basis. As a Respiratory Therapist, you are the second most visible person next to the nurse in provided patient care. In critical care, the therapist provides life support from neonatal to adults in a variety of settings including the nursery, open-heart recovery and emergency medicine. Being able to think quickly on your feet is a trademark of therapists. Retired from Piedmont Mountainside Hospital in Jasper.

Tom and his mother have been a part of River's Edge since the beginning. We were the first home owners back in 1996. Bobbie Ostby served on the board in the past and I have continued the vision and future of the development of River's Edge.

I have been serving as Water Service Manager for River's Edge since 2005. I have been diligent in providing safe water for our community and maintaining the integrity of our complete water system. I assumed the testing and maintenance of our well system and attended a water certification course so that I could be aware of testing procedures and general well system requirements. When I assumed the position in 2005, our water system was not in compliance with Georgia EPD. I was instrumental in negotiating with EPD to change our status from a public system to a private one so we then could become compliant with state guidelines.

Tom says It has been a privilege to serve on your Board of Directors for the past 14 years. Some of the areas where I have been involved include the re-paving of the roads, re-distribution of well delivery and drilling of new wells (for EPD compliance), overseeing of water distribution, water testing, the gate at Lazy River Lane entrance and improved camera security system. With your support, I will be honored to continue serving to accomplish the goals this board has set for River's Edge to continue being a great community to live in.

DAVE SCHMITT, Secretary and Chairman of the Architectural Committee: Dave and his wife Linda moved to River's Edge in August of 2020 from Dallas, Georgia. Dave worked for 43 years for a Fortune 100 company involved in the timber industry. Dave spent his years in forest lands and composite wood panels. His positions included product specialist, sales manager, national sales manager, plant manager and operations manager. Needless to say, Dave loves the woods, water, fishing, hunting, and woodworking. Dave and Linda were members of two yacht clubs over a 25-year period, serving 6 years as Chairman of the Architectural Committee and 4 years on the Board of Governors. Dave became a River's Edge Board Member in March of 2023. As our Board Member, Dave took on the Chairmanship of the Architectural Committee, the responsibility of the chipping projects, and used his expertise to help initiate the side of the road tree removal project.

In September of 2024, Dave resigned his position on the Board for personal reasons. Since that matter has been resolved, Dave was excited to come back on the Board when we needed him! He dug right in and set up the fall chipping event the day after resuming his position.

KEEPING UP WITH THE BOARD

PREPARATION OF THE 2025 BUDGET

Our Board has a multitude of responsibilities. At this time of the year, one of its major responsibilities is to prepare the coming year's budget. Most associations rely exclusively on homeowner assessments to pay their bills, as is the case with our association. You trust our board to develop realistic annual budgets. The Board bases the budget on past costs of repairs/replacements, current pricing, predictions of future pricing, projections of what may need to be replaced for the following year and also try to determine what income will be needed from assessments. Our budgetary obligations do not go away if our board does not collect enough revenue to pay our expenses. We need money for

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increased insurance premiums, salaries for association/office staff, spring/fall chipping, repair of security cameras, repair or replacement of gates, repair/additions to our mail area, 1/2 of any bridge repair, common grounds must still be maintained and mowed, well/water system regular maintenance, financial ability to fix the well/water system if a problem should arise, and reserve for future large obligations such as road repairs or replacement and water/well replacement. If we fall short for any given year, the required amount does not go into our reserve account for those big expenses that we will have sooner rather than later. Associations that do not adequately plan and budget for reserves often end up with deteriorating infrastructure that adversely affects property values. Our proposed budget will arrive with the Annual Meeting announcement in October. (Most of this article is taken from "Common Ground", a community association magazine)

FALL CHIPPING EVENT

The fall chipping process is scheduled to take place in River's Edge the week of October 6th. Carlos and his crew are scheduled to be here first thing that morning to clear our roadways of accumulated wood debris. He is asking we **DO NOT** include any material with a diameter of more than 10 inches (at the largest end) or with a length that exceeds 10 feet. Please place all debris (wood only) piled neatly along the side of the road. We want to be sure the roadway remains clear for traffic and pedestrians. These restrictions are due to equipment limitations and safety concerns for his crew and our community members. Any materials that exceed these parameters, will be left behind and will be the responsibility of the property owner to remove at their own expense. Likewise, any piles of debris left in view after the fall chipping event and before the next spring event will be the homeowner's responsibility to dispose of.

Fall is in the air! Did you get your chimney cleaned yet? You need to because it is time to have our cozy fall fires and hot chocolate! If you haven't done so, make that call now. Even clean-burning gas fireplaces need regular cleaning and inspection. Servicing a gas fireplace is less messy than cleaning a wood burning fireplace, but you may still want an experienced serviceman to do it. The steps necessary to service a gas fireplace are as follows:

***Inspect the exterior making sure the unit is properly mounted and there are no gaps or cracks in the framework. Check the glass for cracks, loose glass panels, make sure the door gaskets are airtight and clean with vinegar.

***Inspect the logs which can deteriorate over time.

***Check the gas ignition. Test the gas ignition under the logs and make sure it lights correctly. Turn off the gas and clean all the valves and ports under and amid the logs by gently rubbing with steel wool. Check for gas leaks by brushing with water and dish soap while looking for bubbles.

***Vacuum the interior. Dead bugs, dust bunnies and pet hair can accumulate and cause a fire.

***Check your carbon monoxide detectors! If you do not have one, get one.

***Inspect your chimney. With gas fireplaces, the biggest threat is condensation. Damp patches on the walls, ceiling stains, and white blotches on the exterior masonry are signs of a compromised chimney.

NEW PROJECT REMINDER!

Please allow 2 weeks **AFTER** your submission of a **COMPLETE** package for a new project approval or disapproval. This time is needed to review the project, gather any information and ask any questions that are required. One or two days for review is generally not enough time, nor is it appropriate to start the project and then submit your packet

FIREWISE by Byron Trotter Fall Fire/Wildfire Prevention Tips

Fall is here and the leaves on some trees are already turning and hitting the ground. The recent heavy winds and rain have knocked down both living and dead branches. Soon, tall grasses and weeds will turn brown. This all adds up to a lot of potential fuel for a fire. As the weather cools there will be an increase in fire pit and fireplace usage. If an active fire pit doesn't have a proper mesh screen covering it, the resulting embers can travel as far as a mile or even more before burning out. A dirty chimney can produce embers, as heat from the fireplace can ignite a buildup of creosote or some other debris such as an animal's nest. It's important to have an annual chimney inspection and if necessary, cleaning, particularly if you've burned 1½ face cords or more of wood since it was last cleaned.

While you can take steps to ensure that your chimney or fire pit won't emit significant embers, you can't depend on everyone to take those same steps. However, you can maintain your property in a way that will make it a little more resistant to fire that may come from an external source.

The following page is a Firewise USA® fact sheet copied from the NFPA® (National Fire Protection Association) website. I encourage you to read the whole article located at the link below. Quite a bit of the suggested preparation applies to and can be implemented by individual property owners. Other parts, such as tree spacing are somewhat impractical since we do live in the woods.

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

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HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WILDFIRES

WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION STEPS THAT CAN MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER DURING A WILDFIRE



■ VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

1. HOME IGNITION ZONES

To increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire, choose fire-resistant building materials and limit the amount of flammable vegetation in the three home ignition zones. The zones include the **Immediate Zone**: (0 to 5 feet around the house), the **Intermediate Zone** (5 to 30 feet), and the **Extended Zone** (30 to 100 feet).

2. LANDSCAPING AND MAINTENANCE

To reduce ember ignitions and fire spread, trim branches that overhang the home, porch, and deck and prune branches of large trees up to 6 to 10 feet (depending on their height) from the ground. Remove plants containing resins, oils, and waxes. Use crushed stone or gravel instead of flammable mulches in the **Immediate Zone** (0 to 5 feet around the house). Keep your landscape in good condition.

■ FIRE RESISTIVE CONSTRUCTION

3. ROOFING AND VENTS

Class A fire-rated roofing products, such as composite shingles, metal, concrete, and clay tiles, offer the best protection. Inspect shingles or roof tiles and replace or repair those that are loose or missing to prevent ember penetration. Box in eaves, but provide ventilation to prevent condensation and mildew. Roof and attic vents should be screened to prevent ember entry.

4. DECKS AND PORCHES

Never store flammable materials underneath decks or porches. Remove dead vegetation and debris from under decks and porches and between deck board joints.

5. SIDING AND WINDOWS

Embers can collect in small nooks and crannies and ignite combustible materials; radiant heat from flames can crack windows. Use fire-resistant siding such as brick, fiber-cement, plaster, or stucco, and use dual-pane tempered glass windows.

■ BE PREPARED

6. EMERGENCY RESPONDER ACCESS

Ensure your home and neighborhood have legible and clearly marked street names and numbers. Driveways should be at least 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet for emergency vehicle access.

- Develop, discuss, and practice an emergency action plan with everyone in your home. Include details for handling pets, large animals, and livestock.
- Know two ways out of your neighborhood and have a predesignated meeting place.
- Always evacuate if you feel it's unsafe to stay—don't wait to receive an emergency notification if you feel threatened from the fire.
- Conduct an annual insurance policy checkup to adjust for local building costs, codes, and new renovations.
- Create or update a home inventory to help settle claims faster.



**TALK TO YOUR LOCAL FORESTRY AGENCY
OR FIRE DEPARTMENT TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE SPECIFIC WILDFIRE RISK
WHERE YOU LIVE.**



FIREWISE USA
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

VISIT FIREWISE.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS

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Order a Reducing Wildfire Risks in the Home Ignition Zone checklist/poster at Firewise.org

A REMINDER THAT WHEN WE HAVE TOO MANY PACKAGES FOR THE MAILBOXES TO HOLD, OUR MAIL PERSON IS NOW DROPPING THE EXCESS OFF AT THE HOA OFFICE. SO, BEFORE YOU GO TO THE POST OFFICE. PLEASE CHECK WITH JEANNIE TO SEE IF THEY ARE AT THE OFFICE!



Most of you know that the Carr's have a lot of company—but this one was not technically invited! This is on our back deck which is 20 feet off the ground in the middle of August!

I hate to talk about it, but winter is approaching faster than we wish! It's time again for fires in our outdoor Fire pits. While that is one of the pleasures we have, the danger of embers escaping is always a risk. River's Edge mandates that you must use a wire cover over your wood burning fire pit. Please pay attention to the height of the flame, the size of the table/pit, availability of water in case embers escape, location of dry yard debris, nearby shrubs, trees, and of course, homes. Embers can travel a mile, so you are also exposing your neighbors to risk, should you fail to use a wire cover. 90% of wildfires are caused by human involvement. In 2021 in the US, a fire department responded to a fire every 23 seconds. A civilian was fatally injured by fire every 2 hours and 15 minutes

Don't make River's Edge a statistic.

Our gate repairman has asked me to remind you to change your clicker battery at least once a year.

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 Association!

FALLEN TREES

WHO'S RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO CLEAN UP

When a tree falls on your property, the immediate question is who is responsible for the clean-up and cost of repairs! The answer depends on several factors, including the tree's health and where it is located. This article clarifies the rules of liability and the steps you should take when faced with this situation.

Generally, the responsibility for a fallen tree lies where it lands. This principle is tied to the concept of an "Act of God" which applies to events outside of human control, like severe weather. The health of the tree before it fell is the determining factor. If a healthy tree is blown over by a storm, the owner of the property where the tree lands is responsible for the cleanup and any damage, even if the tree was rooted on a neighbor's property. If a healthy tree from a neighbor's yard falls onto your roof during a storm, you are responsible for removing the part of the tree on your property and for your own repairs. If a tree falls across property lines, each property owner is responsible for the part on their property.

A tree's owner can be held liable for damages if they knew, or should have known, that their tree was dead, diseased, or otherwise hazardous and failed to take action.

Signs of a Hazardous or Negligent Tree:

- 1) Large dead branches, also known as widow makers.
- 2) Visible signs of rot, fungus or disease on the trunk or major limbs.
- 3) A significant and worsening lean, especially towards another's property.
- 4) Deep cracks, cavities, or splits in the trunk.
- 5) Evidence of a damaged or compromised root system.
- 6) A tree that has been previously damaged by Lightning or a past storm.

A suggestion to eliminate major problems— Take an hour or two with your neighbor and look for any potential problems, then make a plan to correct them!



****Octoberfest in Helen, Daily, September 4th–November 2nd, Thursday thru Sunday each week. Monday –Thursday, 6pm – 10 pm, Friday 6–11 and Saturday 1pm – 11pm. The Helen Oktoberfest is the longest running Oktoberfest in the United States .

****Beware the House on Haunted Hill, Oct 2, at 6 pm, The classic 50s horror movie becomes a campy whodunnit in this charming stage adaptation – it’ll be a scream. Performances: [October 2nd](#) through 12th, 2025. Opening Night on [Thursday, October 2nd](#) will include a pre-show reception at the theater. [October 2nd](#) & 3rd will be 7pm. [October 4th](#) & 5th will be 2:30 matinee performances, [October 9th](#) & 10th will be 7pm performances and [October 11th](#) & 12th will be 2:30 matinee performances. [George Link Jr, Gilmer Arts Playhouse](#), 135 Dalton St., Ellijay, 706-635-5605

****Corn Maze – Cress Creeks Farm, 4708 Boardtown Rd. Ellijay, GA 30540, [October 2](#) @ 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, .

****Gilmer Rodders Cruise, [Saturday, October 11](#), 2025, 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM, Riverside on Main Street, 669 Main Street, Ellijay, GA 30540

Starting in November Shane’s Rib Shack –will be the new location for a monthly cruise-in gathering. Shane’s Rib Shack, in the back area, with overflow parking available at Captain D’s and Bojangles. [Second Friday](#) of each month, weather permitting. [Saturday, November 08](#), 2025, 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM

****14th Annual Fall Arts in the Park, Blue Ridge, October 11 & 12th, 10 am to 5 pm, \$5 admission.

****Cars & Coffee at Roo’s Vineyard every 3rd Saturday from 8am to 11am. The next one is October 21st.

**** Georgia Apple Festival, Ellijay, October 11 & 12, AND October 18 19. The Apple Festival Parade is October 11 at 10 am and the Apple Arts Festival is downtown Ellijay October 11 starting at 9am.

****Fall Festival at Vogel State Park Blairsville, [Saturday Oct 25](#), 2025, 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM EDT, 10:30 AM – Vendor Booths Open 11:00 PM – Food Trucks Open, 1:00 PM – Hayrides Start (Free), 2:00 PM – Cakewalk Starts (\$1/person/round), 4:30 PM – Rubber Duck Races Start (\$5/duck)

****56th Annual Mountain Moonshine Festival and Car Show, Friday, October 24 through Sunday the 26th from 8am to 5pm. The festival will take place at the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame and Dawsonville City Hall’s Main Street Park. Car Show 8am – 5pm all 3 days. Moonshine Run departs at 10am from Beardens Funeral Home.

****Fall Market Bash, [October 25](#), 10–3 , local vendors, food truck, music and a photo prop booth! Free event for everyone, provided by [Ellijay Farmers & Artisans Market](#), Sand Street (behind Dalton College)!