

2017 Board of Directors

President

Mitch Cipriano: 408.206.8862

Vice President

Jared Beck: 408.499.2223

Treasurer

Dave Klenske: 408.829.3283

Secretary

Thomas Martin: 408.656.4017

Directors

Lisa Goldberg: 408.410.0448

Lloyd Grant: 408.358.4956

Scott House: 408.655.3691

Daniel Saban: 408.799.6380

Janine Paniagua: 925.577.7015

Facilities Manager

Gina Wagner: 408.358.2229

cabana@belwoodhomes.org

Belringer Editor

Bent T. Jensen: 408.455.2449

bentjensen@yahoo.com

President's Message

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to the fun year we all enjoyed at the Cabana in 2016. The Belwood Dolphins had another good year, our lifeguards put on a fantastic Fourth of July party, Debbie Sy and her team of volunteers hosted a very successful Halloween party, we enjoyed several movie nights hosted by Rich Dobner, AKA Bingo Rich, and the facilities were leveraged for literally dozens of other activities by the membership.

In addition to all the events and parties, we were busy with improvements and needed maintenance to the facility. We completed the remodel in the ladies locker room, gave the clubhouse an impressive face lift, added a bocce ball court and replaced the pool heater and filter system in addition to the smaller, but important day-to-day tasks of operating the facility. All this took place and at the end of the year we were able to exceed our target contribution to the reserves to maintain a healthy fund for upcoming repairs.

We are planning another busy year for 2017. We are looking at giving some needed attention to our basketball courts and fire pits as well as some general landscape improvements. Possibly the biggest project for 2017 will be the update to our bylaws. We are currently operating with bylaws that no longer reflect the best practices for HOA management and in some cases are no longer in compliance to current regulations. To remedy this, we have been working with our attorneys to draft a new set of bylaws that will better reflect current best practices and regulations and will be more easily adapted to changes in the future, when needed. Once the proposed new bylaws are complete, we will distribute them to the membership for review, comment and vote for acceptance. Please be on the lookout for this later in the year.

As many of you know, I am new to the role of president. I was the vice president when our long term board member and president moved out of the neighborhood. My goal for the cabana club is to foster more use by the membership by a wider range of the members. To help me with this, if you have any ideas for events, programs or other items you believe would make the facilities more attractive to your family, please reach out and let me know. I will do my best to get represent your ideas to the board.

The cabana organization is a volunteer organization. Almost everything that happens at the clubhouse comes from the efforts of members who want to contribute their time to make our club better and, more useful and fun for the members. In fact, our bocce ball court was the result of member volunteered labor and could not have happened without it.

I want to personally thank everyone who contributed to the successful 2016 we all enjoyed and I want to ask for even more involvement in 2017.

Finally, I want to thank my fellow Belwood Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication, and want the HOA membership to know you have a great group of individuals providing stewardship for our facility.

- Mitch Cipriano, President

Email us:

hoa@belwoodhomes.org

HOA Mailing Address:

Belwood HOA
P.O. Box 1372
Los Gatos CA 95031

Treasurer Report

Thankfully, we have had some volunteers step up and offer to assist with the Belringer. Great news is that we hope to have it on a regular schedule going forward.

2016 Finances in Review (through Nov 30, 2016)

We had a number of projects this year, including a number of items which hit the reserve budget (approx. \$66K) and some that did not (\$5K for Bocce Ball court materials). Water expense were up 80% year over year (I know my home bill has skyrocketed, despite major reductions in usage) and we had higher than expected repair and landscaping expenses.

Fortunately, income was a bit higher and through careful spending controls and end of year money management, we were able to add \$45K to the reserve budget. In October, we assumed our end of year reserves would be about \$150K, and I'm pleased that it will be over \$158K. Always happy to wind up better than expected. Our total assets should wind up in the \$165K range.

By-Laws Update

My 2017 goal is to finally get our by-laws updated. They will be much longer and have lots more 'stuff' in there (along with removing 'stuff'). While the list is not complete, here are some obvious changes that we will be making:

Compliance with current HOA law- This is a big one. It really modernizes our by-laws and makes sure we are compliant with California HOA law. We have inconsistencies today which need to be rectified.

Swim Team Committee- We will be codifying the Belwood Dolphins Swim Team as a committee of the HOA. It helps with liability, role clarity, and general operational efficiency. There should be no change to how the swim team operates today, but it just makes sure

that it's correctly documented.

Board reduction from 9 directors to 7- Our lawyer advised us our board is bigger than most and given the challenge we have recruiting new board members, we feel it will be more effective this way

Ability to have the board modify portions of the by-laws without a homeowner vote- Another best practice. Our other governing documents provide boundary conditions, and since by-law changes can be very expensive and time consuming this greatly helps the board with operational and governing efficiency. But it makes sure that you, the owners, vote on significant changes.

Better defining Quorum- Again, a best practice. Eliminates the need to go door to door begging for votes for minor things, but maintains owner control over major items.

Better Membership Definition- We will be listing, by address, each Class A unit of the 279 members along with the Class D addresses. It eliminates all confusion for this board and boards moving forward.

Eliminates Annual Meeting Requirements- In the many years I've been on the board, we've had about a handful of residents show up to the annual meetings, and typically nobody does. While we can optionally have one, it eliminates the need to do so. Everything that would be discussed is already provided in the October election mailing or can be addressed at any board meeting.

Eliminates mandatory audits by a CPA- Our current by-laws mandate we have an audit very three years. This is an expensive, time consuming process that is not necessary nor required by CA law. We already have an annual review by a CPA, so this eliminates excessive requirements.

Allows recovery of expenses in lawsuits- I've mentioned before that we were involved in litigation trying to get a member to pay their annual dues. This resulted in significant HOA legal expenses that we were NOT able to recover. Hopefully we'll never need it again but in the case that we do we need to be protected.

Proper Signatures- Believe it or not, we do not have a signed copy of our current by-laws certifying ratification. This is a legal problem, and we will ensure this gets fixed.

Bank payments

We will be testing electronic transfers of money for this year's dues payments. It's completely optional, but if you'd like to try it you might find it a timesaver and cost saver (have you seen the price of postage these days???)

That's it for now. I encourage you to attend a board meeting or contact me with any questions or concerns.

- **Dave Klenske, Treasurer** _____

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.belwoodhomes.org

Secretary Report

Election Results

The election for the 2017 Belwood of Los Gatos Homes Association Board of Directors is now completed. Your 2017 Board of Directors will be:

Jared Beck
Mitchell Cipriano
Lisa Goldberg
Lloyd Grant
Scott House
David Klenske
Tom Martin
Janine Paniagua
Daniel Saban

At its January 17 meeting, the Board elected the following officers:

President	Mitchell Cipriano
Vice President	Jared Beck
Treasurer	David Klenske
Secretary	Thomas Martin

Reflections

a. For Board elections, the By-Laws require at least a 20% participation rate for a quorum. Of the 279 ballots mailed out, we received 93 back, for a participation rate of exactly 33.3%, well in excess of the quorum requirements.

b. The Board is always looking for ways to increase voter participation. During one discussion, we speculated that it might be common for the envelopes to be mistaken for a bill or solicitation, and either set aside or discarded. In consideration of this, I took the initiative and ordered the stamp that I used in the lower left-hand corner of the outside envelope to make it clear this mailing was a ballot for the election. You might have noticed the stamp which said, "Ballot enclosed. Thanks for voting."

Additionally, one week before the ballots were due, we sent out an Email blast reminding residents to vote, including a restatement of the procedure to follow in order for a ballot to be counted.

These were the two variables between how we ran last year and this year's elections. Comparing the two years, participation increased minimally, from 91 to 93. An improvement, but not statistically significant.

c. Of concern is that 16 of the ballots received this year (and 13 of those received last year) could not be counted because they lacked signature on the return envelope. As you will recall, we mail out two envelopes with the ballots: one small and blank; the other larger, pre-addressed to the HOA and including a return address label in the

Facebook:

Belwood Area Residents
(closed group)

Belwood Cabana

The board meets every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30PM in the cabana club.

upper left-hand corner. The requirements are that the ballot be sealed in the smaller envelope, which is to be left blank and put inside the pre-addressed larger return envelope.

it must be signed just below the return address label. It is this signature that was missing on these 16 ballots, meaning that they could not be counted.

In consideration of this, for next year, I will order another stamp that next year's Secretary will use to stamp in red, "Signature _____" just below the return address label to make it clear and serve as a reminder that this is where to sign the envelope.

d. The Board also received feedback that the names on the hard-copy ballot were not enough. The candidate statements were requested to help decide among the candidates. Residents did not know where to look for the statements on the Web, and they did not want to walk down to the Cabana Club to read the hard copy statements posted on the bulletin board. Copying and postage costs prohibit including hard copies of the candidate statements in the mailing. As a compromise, next year's ballot will include a URL that will send a browser to the web page with the candidate statements. This URL will have to be typed into the browser. Additionally, within a week of the ballots being mailed out, the Board will send an Email blast with a live link to the same page. This live link will make it easier for folks who don't want to type in the URL.

Perhaps this was more of an autopsy than a reflection, with a lot more detail than necessary; however, these elections take a lot of time, money, and effort to execute. Admittedly, the legal requirements for these elections are quite detailed and can be cumbersome to follow. That is beyond our control. Regardless, your Board will continue to experiment with different ways to make the voting process easier and more straightforward in the hopes of increasing participation rates. We want you to vote, and we want your votes to count. After all, elections have consequences.

- Tom Martin, HOA Board Secretary

Belwood Facility Key- an OPTIONAL element

One of the most popular questions we receive from members, especially new homeowners, is "do I need a key," and "how do I get one." Right after the, the question is why we charge \$75.00 for an after-hours access key. After all, it doesn't cost \$75.00 to duplicate a key. We review the key fee every year as we discuss the budget, and the key is value based, not cost based. The key has been used for as long as I have lived in Belwood (>14 years) and we probably have a few owners who remember when it started.

Your annual HOA dues provide the following basic benefits:

1. Class A members (i.e. anyone owning a home in Belwood who must pay the annual dues and is automatically a member) may use the pool, basketball court, bocce ball court, and BBQ/picnic area when lifeguards are on duty, currently between the hours of 1:00p and 7:00p during the Summer months.
2. Class A members may rent the facilities throughout the year for private parties.
3. Class A members may vote in elections and serve on the Board of Directors.
4. Even if you never visit the facility, its presence adds positively to the character and value of the neighborhood; your neighborhood.

With an after-hours key, members may access and use the bocce ball courts, BBQ, basketball courts and general grounds from 6:00am to 10:00pm year-round, including use of the pool during the Summer months. There is significant added value in this extra access. Because after-hours key users can be expected to make significantly more use of the facilities, the key fee in part covers the extra wear and tear on the facilities of that use. At present, approximately 1/3 of our members purchase after-hours access keys. Note that it is 100% optional. If you are happy using the facility during the lifeguarded hours, then you've just saved yourself \$75.

There are a few limitations with key ownership. You don't have access to the cabana building, except for the bathrooms. Also, the facility key can only be used by the family purchasing it. You and two neighbors can't each kick in \$25 and split the key. Nor can you buy a key and then invite all of your non-key holding friends to join you at the club whenever you go. Violation of the rules will result in your key being revoked. I think everyone here wants to be a good neighbor, so this has seldom been a problem. Note that you also have the responsibility to lock up when you leave, and to make sure the gate is not left open for others to enter while you are there.

Class D members can also purchase a key, and have all the same

usage rights as Class A members. Without purchasing a key, Class D members may only use the facility during lifeguarded hours.

Over 10 years ago, the board surveyed all of the HOA members to provide governing guidance on what members wanted. Some members never use the cabana, and don't want to pay anything. Others use the cabana all the time. The general direction the Board of Directors took at that time and continuing to today is to have the dues cover the existence and basic maintenance of the Cabana Club, and to charge usage fees for any use above the baseline. In addition to the after-hours access key fee, other fees include: guest fees, facility rental fees, swim team pool use fees, Class D fees, etc. The intent is not to nickel-and-dime users of our Cabana Club. Instead, the intent is to keep the dues at a reasonable level commensurate with the benefits that all Class A members receive, and to cover the heavier wear-and-tear expenses with usage fees paid by those who use the facilities more. For 2017, the annual dues cover about 80% of our income, and most of the rest is in "usage" fees.

If a facility key is right for you, simply fill out the form (which comes in your annual dues mailing, or download from the website), and pay the fee. Keys are distributed to your house in April before we open the pool.

- **Dave Klenske, Treasurer**

Belwood Dolphins Swim Team



Come Swim with the Belwood Dolphins!

The 2017 Belwood Dolphin swim season is just around the corner and we look forward to continuing our success after a great 4- 1 season last year. We had some great memories as you can see from Garvin Snell's awesome video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3 Wz Teidm4>

Registration this year begins February 1st and closes on February 28th and is open to all swimmers ages 4-18. Swim season begins late April and lasts through July 23rd, with practices Monday through Friday and meets on Saturdays. Please see the Belwood Team page for more information including registering online, season calendar and more.

Please register at: belwooddolphins.com.

Belwood is a fun, recreational swim club that takes swimmers of all abilities, where everyone can contribute to the team's success regardless of their current swimming skills. Belwood residents have priority registration, but the team consists of many great friends and families from around the surrounding neighborhood. Feel free to tell your friends who like to swim because the Dolphins are open to neighboring communities. We are always looking for those club swimmers who want the fun of a cabana club experience or new swimmers who like to challenge their abilities and help out the team.

- **Lisa Goldberg, HOA Board Member**

Belwood Events

Mark your calendar for the upcoming Belwood neighborhood events!

Easter Egg Hunt :	Sunday, April 9 th
Summer Kick-Off:	Sunday, May 21 st
July Fourth Celebration:	Tuesday, July 4 th
Halloween Party:	Sunday, October 29 th

More information will be available in the coming months about our annual movie and bingo nights. If you have any interest in volunteering for one of these events or have any comments/suggestions, please email me janinepaniagua@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you there!

- Janine Paniagua

Community Board

Monthly Events

Belwood Homeowners Board Meeting

Open to all Belwood members - Cabana Club - 7:30 pm, third Tuesday of the month unless a **change** is posted on the bulletin board.

Santa Clara Valley Mineral /Gem Society:

Fourth Tuesday of the month.
Please call Kathy McChristian (Junior Program) 408.258.8400 or Frank Mullaney 408.266.1791

Cabana Club Schedule

Gina Wagner: 408.358.2229

Community Ads

DJ Cameron

Want more than just Pandora streaming into your Bluetooth speakers? Contact DJ Cam for your next event - birthdays, house parties, anniversaries, graduations, etc. Text or Call 408.348.8296 for more info.

Gutters, Roof, Plumbing, Tree Trimming

You name it! I have a list of workmen who can help you. Call Gail Bordi, 408.356.4624 or email gailbordi@yahoo.com

Guest Speaker

Betty Auchard is an author and speaker. She lives in the Belwood neighborhood and is available as a guest speaker. You can email her at btauchard@aol.com or check out her website or current blog: <http://bettyauchard.com/>.

Middle School/High School Math Tutor

California Mathematics Single-Subject Teaching Credential
Belwood Resident since 1984
Tom Martin: 408.656.4017

Rentals

BEACH HOUSE:

Aptos Beach House, spacious 3BR/2 bath, short walk to Rio Del Mar/Seacliff Beach. Available year-round for monthly, weekly, mid-week, weekend rental. Call Sheryl at 408.348.3237.

OAHU LUXURY TOWNHOME:

Fabulous, luxuriously furnished Oahu townhome for rent. 3 BR, 3 BA + den, 1700+ square feet, 5 min walk to beach in the luxurious Coconut Plantation in Ko Olina. Perfect for families. See our website for pictures, details and contact info: <http://www.koolinahome.com>.

TAHOE DONNER RENTAL

Beautiful, spacious home in Tahoe Donner available for rent: 3 bedrooms, 2 bath & large loft (sleeps 6-11). The home is also available for ski lease. Corner lot amongst pine trees, green belt behind & 700+ sq ft decking. Amenities: premiere golf course, fitness club/pools, tennis courts & more. Info & pictures go to: VRBO.com # 323668, or call Sue Ahmadian at 408.356.5276.

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE RENTAL

Beautiful home for rent: 2 BR + Den, 2 BA, 1600 sq ft, sleeps 6. Large open concept living/dining room, fabulous views, spa tub, fireplace, wifi, close to lake, heavenly, casinos. Pets considered. For details go to: <http://www.vrbo.com/451904>.

Editor's Note

The purpose of a newsletter is to inform the Belwood neighborhood about board news, community events, offer free advice, and advertise skills and rental postings. **Article submissions**

for the Belringer from the community are very much encouraged. The spring edition of this newsletter will be published in March 2017 Please send your contributions or ideas to Bent Jensen at

bentjensen@yahoo.com by **March 1, 2017**

Thank you!