



# Coosawattee CONNECTION

The Official Newsletter of Coosawattee River Resort Association



Inside

Who & What is on  
the Ballot

3-6

Letter from the  
President

2

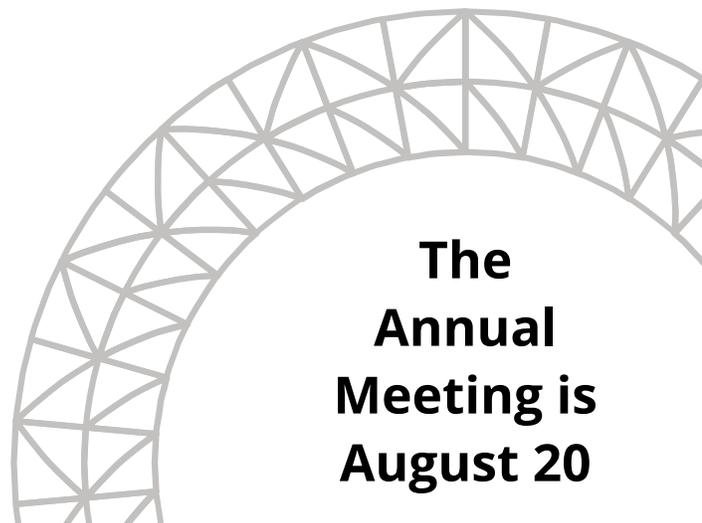
Are You Fire Wise?

7

## Get ready to vote!

July is the month at CRRA when property owners in good standing – meaning all annual dues and fees are paid – get to exercise their rights to vote for Board of Director Candidates as well as vote yes or no on By-Laws changes. Your vote counts! Like last year, you have the easy option to E-Vote. Flip to the next page for voting information.

Continue to p. 3



**The  
Annual  
Meeting is  
August 20**



## Letter From the President

Dear friends and neighbors:

I'll begin by saying the Build an Ark saga is behind us. The property has reverted to the control of Coosawattee POA. We have mowed and made some improvement to the grounds and the General Manager's team is obtaining bids for sorting and removing debris within the buildings. I want to pause and offer a great deal of thanks to the volunteers past and present at Build an Ark; both those who helped rebuild the barn and assisted the former tenant, and those who helped remove and relocate animals recently. We know that people are calling now wanting to volunteer to clean up the site, but at this time, we ask that you stay away and leave things to the professionals. There might be hazardous conditions or materials there, and that is why we have not yet opened the field to parking for Pickin' on the Porch.

The Environmental Conservation Committee has told us that some of the rescue organizations that helped with relocating the animals have expressed an interest in cages and fencing they saw on the site. After the initial clean up, our staff will identify things of potential value or use and set them aside.

An Ad Hoc committee that was formed last spring to address the problems at the facility will next begin to develop options for what to do with the 18.5-acre site.

The committee already had a zoom call with Georgia Tourism and is in contact with the Gilmer Chamber of Commerce. I understand they will also be in touch with the Small Business Development Council to learn what resources are available. Whatever we do with the property, I want to make sure we have a buy-in from the Environmental Conservation Committee and, of course, our property owners.

There is more information in this newsletter about the upcoming election for the Board of Director positions, however, I want to point out how important it is to consider attending the Annual Meeting on August 20, and if you are not able to attend, to please submit your proxy for voting on amendments. Several amendments offering changes to the by-laws need ratification by the majority of owners. That means we need response from property owners amounting to the high 700s at least! [Each lot, or combined lot, equals one vote.] You can direct your proxy to give your vote to the Secretary of the Board, or anyone you designate, or perhaps to a neighbor who is going to attend the meeting. We have not had meetings for two years due to Covid and I am worried that owners will have forgotten how important it is that we have a quorum to vote. [The annual meeting will be held at the Victory Center on Maddox Drive with registration at 9 a.m.]

We are working on a plan to address speeding on some of the main thoroughfares in Coosawattee. Assistant General Manager Racey Cave has been in charge of this and meeting with traffic engineers and vendors of equipment designed to slow traffic and monitor speeders. At the May Board of Directors' meeting he updated us on progress and will now create a blueprint for installing speed cushions on various roads and the costs involved. This was not a line item in the FY2022-23 budget and money will have to be allocated. However, the Board knows the community wants us to address speeding. You will see a multi-level approach as we want to try to tame speeding and reckless driving with various methods.

Finally, it's good to see the Good Neighbor Club reforming after the pandemic and having its first pot-luck cookout. The Good Neighbor Club has long been a valuable part of Coosawattee and especially useful for helping new residents get accustomed to the area.

—*Dave Bennett, President*

# It's Time to Cast Your Vote!



Once a year, each neighborhood has the chance to elect one member to the Board of Directors. Candidates for the 2022 election applied in April, were vetted by the nominating committee as bona fide property owners of the neighborhood for which they applied, and as of June 15, were found to be “in good standing,” with all dues and fees paid.

## Here are the 2022 candidates:

### **Eagle Mountain Campground**

Shelah Muse (incumbent)

William Wallace

### **Eagle Mountain**

Deb Sundberg (incumbent)

### **Beaver Forest**

Bob Hazzard (incumbent)

### **Beaver Lake**

Bill Elliott (incumbent)

### **Beaver Bend**

No candidate

### **The Villas**

No candidate

Ballots for each neighborhood will include the option of voting for the listed candidate(s) or adding a Write-in candidate's name. Ballots for Beaver Bend and The Villas also will have the option of selecting “No Candidate”

“It is extremely important that people cast a vote, even if [there is] only one candidate or they chose to select ‘NO Candidate’. We need to have a quorum of eligible voters for the election to be legally valid,” said Nominating Committee Chairperson Susan Decker. “Last year we barely met that quota.”

Any Write-ins will be checked for residency and paid fees before being installed on the Board, and that will happen as soon as all the ballots are received and counted.

“The process for write-in candidates is simply to give them the same consideration as any other person running for a position. If they have the most votes and are qualified, they would be elected. If there are no Write-ins or candidates,

then the BOD position for that neighborhood would be opened to applicants, and those candidates would then be selected by the Board at a monthly meeting,” she said.

We asked what is considered a quorum under our rules and the answer is 20% of eligible members in good standing. So, how many is that? There are 3,283 eligible voters as of June 1, so 657 votes are required for a valid election. Winners are declared by simple majority.

The sign-up for e-voting shows an improvement from last year, which was the first time it was offered. Fully 439 people signed up in advance to e-vote prior to ballots being printed last week and several more have signed up since. E-voting was encouraged because it saves CRRA \$2.50 per ballot printed and mailed out and an addition \$1 per ballot returned and counted. Even if you didn't select e-voting when returning your property owner update last spring, you can still register to e-vote, thus saving the \$1 per ballot counted by contacting Michele Kellogg [michelekellogg@mycrra.com] and providing your email address, along with the legal name that appears on your property title, the neighborhood and lot number, according to Decker.

“Last year we had 325 people E-vote and this year we hope more than 500 vote that way.”

E-voters will receive an email with the link to the voting site, and their personal ID and password to vote at their convenience from July 5th until 5pm on July 22nd. Paper ballots have been sent via first class mail. E-voting assistance will be available July 12-15 in the POA Library from 12-3pm each day for any resident needing help with the process or who does not have access to a computer.

# Meet the Candidates...

## Beaver Forest



**Bob Hazzard**

My wife, Susan, and I moved to Coosawattee in 2016. Prior to that we lived in the Washington, DC-Northern Virginia area.

Before my retirement, I worked for 22.5 years at an International Consulting Firm, Booz, Allen & Hamilton. During my tenure, some of the places I was assigned to work at were, the White House, for a period of 3.5 years, DARPA, CIA, NRO, the Office of the Secretary of Defense and other Public & Classified Government Agencies.

Currently, in addition to serving on the Board since May, I am the Chair for the Document Committee, a committee I have served on for four years, where I have been able to become familiar with and help streamline By-Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures.

I feel these experiences and qualifications will help me in doing what is best for Coosawattee, helping our community to thrive and grow. And I look forward to further serving our community.

## Eagle Mountain



**Debra Sundberg**

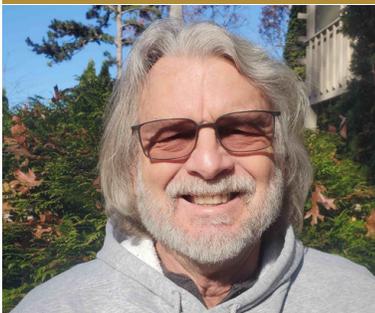
I am a healthcare executive with 35+ years' experience as CEO and/or CFO in multiple healthcare systems. I hold an undergraduate degree in Accounting/Business and a Master's in Business Administration.

Chuck and I purchased our Eagle Mountain cabin in 2005 and utilized it as our "getaway to paradise" for the next 13 years. When we retired in 2018, Coosawattee became our "forever" home and we have lived here full time since.

I served as a member of the Finance Committee from 2019-2020 and 2021-2022, and I have been a member of the Architectural Review Committee since 2019.

My interest in serving on the board, and as the Treasurer, lies with the belief in the ongoing potential for Coosawattee. I feel my experience and education are an asset and I am delighted to be participating in this endeavor.

## Beaver Lake



**Bill Elliott**

I have learned quickly over the past eight months how the BOD works and the issues that still lie before us as a community with diverse owners and desires. I have also served on the ARC committee for the past six months.

My wife of 41 years, Nancy, and I moved to CRR in 2016. We are University of Tennessee graduates and enjoy watching college football and basketball. I am a runner and just completed the 2022 Peachtree Road Race, which I have been running since 1979.

My professional experience includes work for Fortune 100 companies as a sales representative, district and regional managers; City Operations Manager for hardware and software for the transportation corporation South Eastern System Specialist; President and owner of two multi-million dollar computer hardware and software development corporations; and General Manager of Division, a \$110 million corporation with Coca-Cola and Chiquita as two of my better clients. I am presently retired. My persistence, good judgment and desire to solve problems should be an asset for the BOD. I welcome the challenge and the opportunity to serve.

# Meet the Candidates, cont.

## Eagle Mountain Campground



**Shelah Muse**

My first visit here was in 2007. In 2014, my husband and I purchased a campground lot on the river and placed an RV there. We were both still working at the time but would visit often. In 2018, after raising three sons, we retired and purchased the lot next door, so in 2019, we moved up here full time, turning our two lots into our little piece of heaven!

I spent 37 years in medical office management, recruiting physicians and managing several medical offices and imaging centers. I made the decision to get involved with the Coosawattee River Resort Association in 2020, I applied for and was elected to the board for the Eagle Mountain Campground, joined the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) and Compliance Committee. In 2021, I became ARC chairman.

I love being involved with our community and I strive to make things better. Over the years that I have served as a board member, we have accomplished many things. This year we have budgeted for many needed repairs and projects while making great strides in becoming fiscally sound. My goal is to continue to improve our community and to have better communication between the residents, the board, and management. I welcome new ideas and I listen with an open mind.

## Eagle Mountain Campground



**William Wallace, Jr.**

Retiring from the Board of Regents in 2006 as Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, I have more than 30 years of higher education work experience and was responsible for the management and fiscal solvency of all employee benefit programs for the University System of Georgia. During my tenure I stabilized and significantly increased the plan reserves of all employee benefit programs. Previously I worked in Human Resources at Georgia Southern and Kennesaw State University.

From 2006 to 2008, I co-chaired the Commission for a New Georgia Task Force that reviewed Recruitment, Retention, and Retiree Benefit strategies, and from August 2010 to 2014, I served as Gov. Sonny Perdue's appointee to the Board of the Georgia Department of Community Health and chair of its Policy Committee.

My wife, Dr. Lana Wachniak, and I have both served as Board Members for the United Way of Cobb County, and continue to serve as senior advisors for the Orange Duffel Bag program, which assists foster and/or homeless individuals who have been accepted into a Georgia technical college or the University System of Georgia. We have fully funded four undergraduate scholarships. We also volunteer at an elementary school food bank serving 40-60 families.

I love our time at Coosawattee and feel that I have extensive insights and experience in fiscal management, in leadership positions, and in serving others in our community.

# By-laws Changes Submitted for Community Approval

During the last year, the Governing Documents Committee has reviewed the CRRA Bylaws and made recommendations for multiple amendments. This has been a stringent and detailed process. As the governing articles were reviewed and edited, they were sent to the BOD for discussion and revision or approval. In June, the Committee presented its recommendations for the complete slate of amendments to the Board of Directors, which were approved for further processing.

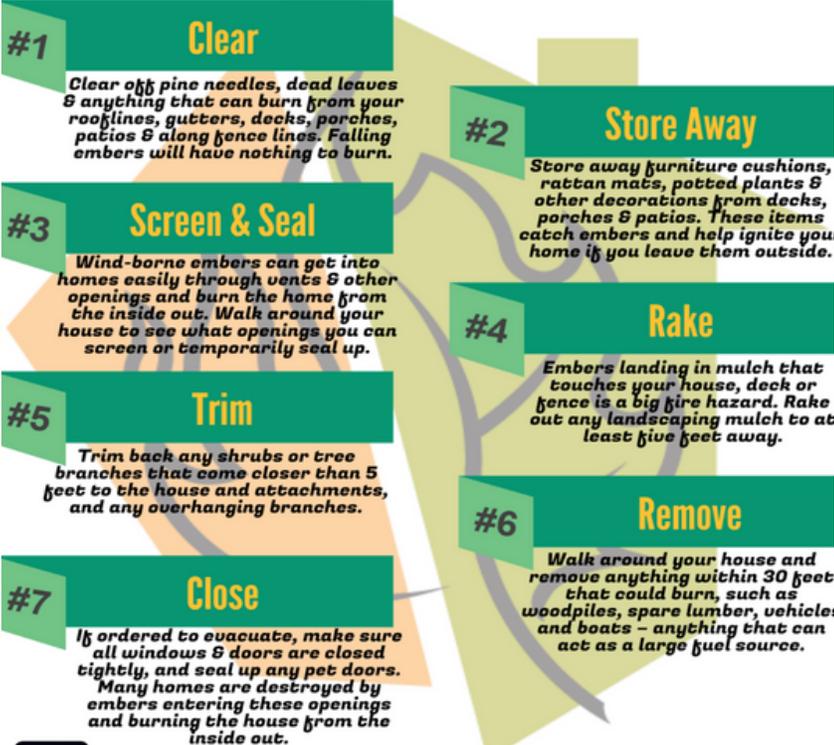
Next, all amended by-law recommendations were sent to the Association's attorney for review. The attorney confirmed that all amendments were sound and would need to be voted on at the Annual meeting August 20. Finally, all amended by-law recommendations were then sent to the USDA. This was done in accordance to our contract, that any by-law changes will be presented to them for review so as to not effect the loan agreement or contract for the Eagle Mountain Campground Water Project. Upon review by the USDA, the amendments were approved to proceed for a membership vote. In order to conduct business at the annual meeting we will have to first meet quorum and then have the by-law changes approved by 2/3 of the eligible voting power.

**The following is an overview of the recommended amendments to the CRRA By-laws. The full changes can be viewed using this link: <https://portal.connectresident.com/#/community/documents>**

- Article III Sec. 1 – Change month of annual meeting to August
- Article III Sec. 3 – Adds verbiage that allows notice of meeting through electronic mail or manually
- Article III Sec. 8 – Adds verbiage that allows delivery of ballot via electronic means. Removes “written” in multiple areas to alleviate constricted methods of voting.
- Article IV Sec. 2 – Limits terms of Directors of the Board, beginning with the next election after approved.
- Article IV Sec. 2 (vii) – Adds verbiage to reduce the number of Board members from 18 to 12.
- Article IV Sec. 3 – Modification of requirement to remove a Director.
- Article IV Sec. 4 – Adds verbiage on when and how a new Board member will fill a vacant Board seat.
- Article IV Sec. 6 – Changes verbiage that a Director shall not enter into a contract that creates a conflict of interest.
- Article IV Sec. 7 – Adds requirements for all Executive Members to undergo a credit check and meet stated requirements
- Article IV Sec. 8 – Adds verbiage for electronic ballots. Additionally, adds verbiage for conditions of write-in ballots.
- Article IV Sec. 8 - Adds that all Board Members will take Oath of Office annually.
- Article IV (B) Sec.10 – Adds verbiage for electronic notification for Special Meetings.
- Article IV (D) Sec. 24 – Adds verbiage that final committee appointments will be approved by the Board of Directors.
- Article V Sec. 10 – Adds verbiage that all executive committee members shall be FT residents.
- Article VII Sec. 6 - Changes title of section, and adds penalties to delinquent accounts.
- Article VII Sec. 7 – Reduces the maximum amount the Capital Contribution can be per year.
- Article XII Sec. 9 (viii) – For recording purposes of Board Members, removes business/home address and add verbiage stating CRRA email addresses.



## 7 Ways Residents Can Reduce the Risk that their Homes & Property Will Become Fuel for a Wildfire



NFPA has many more tips and safety recommendations on its websites, including [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)

## Be Firewise, Be Prepared

By Al Cash, Communications Committee

On Friday, June 10, Coosawattee residents had the opportunity of receiving a presentation by Frank Riley of Firewise USA. Firewise provides a framework to help communities organize and take action to reduce the risk of wildfire in their communities.

Riley pointed out how we can organize our own “Liaison Team” to assist homeowners with steps to protect their homes from approaching wildfire. This team would be in direct contact with Firewise for their direction if needed. With an established team and measurable community participation, Coosawattee River Resort would become an official Firewise USA® Site with access to inspections, direction, and training.

We were presented with an outstanding video depicting how to mitigate ignition zones around our homes. There was actual footage of protected homes that were in the path of wildfires and were not damaged in the slightest. And there

were plenty of images showing homes that were not prepared for a wildfire encroachment. That was an eye opener to watch from our perspective as deep-woods homeowners. Riley offered his services in any form we require, from creating the liaison team to personal home inspections. There is literature available at the POA, and we will begin putting together a liaison team very soon. Learn to be prepared.

As the month of June made abundantly clear, Coosawattee, as with the rest of most of north Georgia, is in a moderate drought condition. From June 1 to July 2, the soil in Gilmer County lost more moisture to evaporation than it gained in rainfall. With above average temperatures predicted for July, significant rainfall is needed. For weather geeks, the avid gardener or backyard farmer, there are several sites that offer ground moisture information by zip code or county name. Try [www.georgiaweather.net](http://www.georgiaweather.net) from the College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences at UGA, <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?GA> or <https://www.drought.gov/states/georgia/county/Gilmer>

If you are having a picnic or a cookout or party at any of our CRRA parks and fancy a campfire, please note that there can only be fires within the confines of the fire rings at each camp site. You are responsible for making sure the fire is “dead” when you leave. Before you light your fire, have a fire plan and remember to locate the nearest water source. If your fire jumps out of control, please call 911. Other numbers and resources: Coosawattee Central Security (706) 640-4032 Georgia Forestry Commission for Gilmer County (706) 635-2363 Gilmer Co. Fire Station (706) 635-1333

# CRRRA Finances in Positive Territory

*Treasurer Debra Sundberg sounds bright notes for end of Fiscal Year*

In May, Debra Sundberg of Eagle Mountain was appointed to fill the Board term previously held by Mike Hill. As a former member of the Finance Committee, she was selected to take the Treasurer's spot on the Executive Committee as well. Sundberg is no stranger to finances, having a 35-plus-year career in management and budgeting in the healthcare sector.

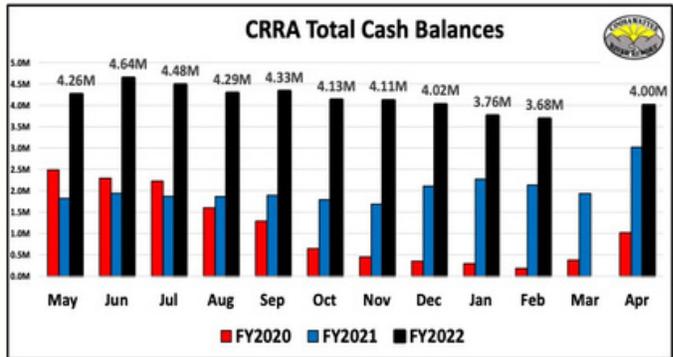
For the fiscal year that ended April 30, 2022, Sundberg announced "numerous positives" in her report to the Board on June 4.

"Our Revenues are over budget (favorable variance) by \$146,000 for the month of April and favorable by \$821,000 for the fiscal year ending April 30. Operating expenses are over budget (unfavorable) by \$2,124 for the month of April but \$318,000 under budget (favorable) for the year," she said.

As a measure of the progress made in recovering from CRRRA's recent financial crisis, she noted that the Operational Cash balance as of April 30 is \$1.2 million, compared to less than \$200,000 in April 2020. To put this in perspective, property-wide, CRRRA averages monthly operational expenses of approximately \$500,000.

An even better marker of progress can be noted in the Reserve Account balance, which now stands at more than \$2.72 million. It should be noted that just two years ago (April 2020) the Reserve Account was depleted with a balance of approximately \$2,500. The Reserve holds select funds aside from operating funds, which cannot be used for any other purposes other than capital improvements in the resort.

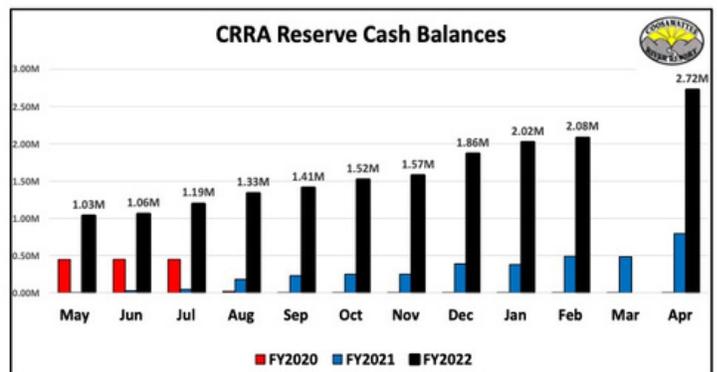
Capital Reserve revenue for the fiscal year that just ended performed even better than budget expectations bringing in \$429,462 over budget. Reserve revenue includes funds received from: The Capital Reserve portion of owner's annual assessments/dues; New lot/homeowner one-time Capital Contribution fees; Architectural Review Committee Permit Impact fees; CRRRA rental fees; and any year-end financial surplus



transferred to the Reserve Fund. The Capital Reserve Fund balance has had an astounding turnaround over the past couple of years, but the requirements over the next several years are still a long way apart compared to present funding principles. At present, there is a \$3.1 million discrepancy between the fund balance and projected fund requirements, according to the latest (2019) Reserve Study. With no change in funding levels, the gap will continue to grow.

"Serious planning needs to occur to maintain our resort in excellent working and living conditions," said Sundberg. "With capital reserve contributions currently constrained at the current \$100 of annual dues, serious planning needs to occur."

YTD Capital Contributions, which are deposited into the Reserve Account, were \$177,000 over budget projection. This is the one-time fee paid by new lot/home owners. Income from YTD FY 2022 sale of lots owned by CRRRA was \$211,000 over budget projection. While there was a rush on lot purchases during the past year, it appears to be slowing currently.



## Meet the Directors...

### Tom Miller – Eagle Mountain Campground

*Although Thomas Miller has been a resident of CRRA since 2003, this Board Member from the Eagle Mountain Campground neighborhood is an enthusiastic relative newcomer*

“We bought property on Mountain Town Creek in 2001 and built a cabin,” explains Miller. This New Jersey native has lived in several states and worked in many countries, but says he prefers the rural atmosphere of North Georgia as his home. “As my wife of 43 years and I thought about downsizing, it occurred to us that we could accomplish our goals by moving into our 38-foot RV in the Campground.” Not only did he relocate to the Campground, but he soon found himself buying up other campground lots.

“We bought a few and began renovating them and it wasn’t long before people came to us and said, there’s a lot over on this street or that street that is available. Some of the lots and RVs we intend to update and sell, others we plan to upgrade and rent,” Miller says. The process allowed him to get to know his new neighborhood quickly and meet a lot of people. “I’m gregarious and not afraid to talk to people. I enjoy people,” Miller says. When a vacancy occurred for a Board seat in Eagle Mountain Campground, Miller says he was encouraged to apply and he was selected by the BOD on February 22.

“I recognized there were some feelings of negativity about the Campground,” he says. “I think it has the same issues as the rest of the community, but they are just concentrated into a smaller space. Living here, I see that attitudes toward the Campground from outside are misplaced. I see a lot of opportunity here. Newer, better equipment is coming into the campground and with it, new people who want to enjoy what we have to offer.”

A few minutes talking to Miller reveals that as well as being a “people person,” he’s a high energy kind of guy who still works full time as a regional manager for an acoustical plasters insulation company named Pyrok, headquartered in White, Georgia. How he ended up in that career is an interesting story.

After moving with his family to Florida as a child, he developed a love for all things related to water. In college, he enrolled in an oceanography program, but



switched majors for something more “hands on.” Earning a degree from Florida Institute of Technology in Underwater Technology, he went to work offshore on platforms and conducting underwater surveys. But then he met the love of his life and realized a career that took him away from home for extended periods of time just wasn’t a match.

Shifting gears, he found work with a hydroelectric company in its machinery department, which brought him into contact with spray-on applications for insulation and fireproofing. Spray on acoustic applications followed and it’s a career that suits his need to be actively solving problems. His company has solved diverse issues such as the reflective sound problems for dolphin tanks and sound insulation for rides at Disney theme parks. His work on industrial and hospitality installations has taken him to China, Korea, Mexico, Germany, the Middle East and Caribbean. For personal travel these days he enjoys Central America.

“Many of the things I had on my list that needed to get done by the Board and management are already being addressed, such as implementing the new budget, employee raises, increases in starting salaries, and improving roads and grounds,” Miller says. Noting that the current fiscal year budget has increased funds for the Compliance Department, he added, “We need to clean up the Campground in line with the existing rules and encourage better community responsibility.”

# Current CRRA Board and Executive Committee

## Beaver Bend

Randy Click – 2022  
rclick@mycrra.com  
Susan Decker – 2023  
sdecker@mycrra.com  
Jeff Jackman – 2024  
jeffjackman@mycrra.com

## Beaver Forest

Bob Hazzard – 2022  
bobhazzard@mycrra.com  
*President* – Dave Bennett – 2023  
dbennett@mycrra.com  
Beth Miros – 2024  
bethmiros@mycrra.com

## Beaver Lake

Bill Elliott – 2022  
billelliott@mycrra.com  
Virginia Chapman – 2023  
virginiachapman@mycrra.com

## Eagle Mountain

*Treasurer* – Deb Sundberg – 2022  
dsundberg@mycrra.com  
Jorge Fernandez – 2023  
jorgefernandez@mycrra.com  
*Secretary* – Vito Molfetto – 2024  
vmolfetto@mycrra.com

## Eagle Mountain Campground

Shelah Muse – 2022  
smuse@mycrra.com  
*Vice President* – Malcolm Carter – 2023  
malcolmcarter@mycrra.com  
Thomas Miller – 2024

## Villa Timeshare

Ron Townley – 2022  
rtownley@mycrra.com  
2 Vacant seats  
Main number: (706 640-4010)



## Save the Date for Summer Fun

### **PICKIN' ON THE PORCH**

July 9 — Ethyl's Envy

July 23 — The Bearfield & Foley Band

August 13 — 7 Licks

August 27 — Venae & The Vibe

September 10 — Last Call Band

September 24 — Surrender Hill

October 8 — Gregg Erwin & 200 Proof

October 22 — Traveling Downbeats

All concerts held at the Tubing Company stage, Eagle Mountain Gate Entrance, 7-9 p.m. Free of charge, but bring a tip for the band.

### **ELLIJAY FARMERS' + ARTISANS' MARKET**

Every Saturday through October 1, rain or shine. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 pm, Located at the Gilmer County Courthouse parking lot.

### **GILMER COUNTY APPLE FESTIVAL**

Oct 8-9, 15-16 Lion's Club Park. Parade, car show, fair, rides food and many other activities to be announced.

### **TRUNK OR TREAT**

Oct. 29, 5pm-8pm. Time for Halloween fun and decorated vehicles at the Rec Center.