



## THUNDERBIRD PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION



Photo by George Evans

Spring 2023 ISSUE

PO BOX 1263 , Robbinsville, NC 28771

### OFFICERS (2023 – 2025)

President.....Bette LoBue (727-519-3902)  
 Betteannl@verizon.net  
 Vice President...Bill Piel (305-238-7836)  
 williampx@aol.com  
 Secretary.....Mary Roemer (404-918-1330)  
 marycroemer@gmail.com  
 Treasurer.....Greg Connor (404-569-6738)  
 tgconnor@yahoo.com

### SANTEETLAH TOWN COUNCIL

**Connie Gross, Mayor**  
**Ralph Mitchell, Vice Mayor**  
**Tina Emerson, Chief Finance Officer**  
**Diana Simon, Councilwoman**  
**Jim Hager, Councilman**

## NOTICE TO READERS:

Please note the correct address  
for TPOA is:

TPOA

P.O. Box 1263

Robbinsville, NC 28771

This is the only address at  
which membership renewals  
and election ballots will be re-  
ceived and considered valid.  
Thank you again for your sup-  
port!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ah, spring! A time of transition and new begin-  
nings! Permanent residents, seasonals, weekenders,  
and some-timers alike are invited to join with us for  
fun social activities and community improvement  
projects, planned for our new fiscal year!



As we begin a new season on beautiful Lake Santeetlah, I  
look forward to working with our new executive board mem-  
bers, Mary Roemer and Greg Connor, as well as continuing to  
work with veteran board member, Bill Piel. I also look for-  
ward to working with our committee chairs and co-chairs:  
Beth Carlton, Kevin Haag, Frances Connor, Susan Robinson  
(with Greg Connor), and newsletter editor, Charlie Mathews.

My deepest thanks and appreciation go to our outgoing  
board and committee members, who kept everything about  
T.P.O.A. up and running for the past few years despite Covid  
restrictions! , Further, I appreciate our supportive property  
owners who have volunteered their time and efforts in helping  
to beautify the front entrance, Manierre Park, and points in-  
between, as well as everyone who helped make our communi-  
ty litter-free. Thank you, one and all, for your efforts to bring  
neighbors together and turn them into friends.

*Sincerely,*

*Bette LoBue*

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ The Nominating Committee wishes to congratulate the in-  
 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ coming T.P.O.A. Executive Committee for 2023 -2025:  
 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ President, Bette LoBue; Vice President, Bill Piel; Secre-  
 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ tary, Mary Roemer; and Treasurer, Greg Connor.  
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## Mayor's Corner

### Connie Gross



Happy Spring to everyone! I'd like to welcome back my many friends and neighbors.

It may have been a long winter hibernation, but in truth we have been blessed with a relatively mild winter. Now that spring is here, it seems like overnight everything blossomed. Our wonderful staff has worked very hard to keep the wagon wheels turning. They are the best!

With the warmer and longer days, people have been busy fixing up their places and getting ready for spring and summer. A few new homes are nearing completion, and we welcome our new neighbors.

Watch for upcoming budget meetings coming soon. Our finance officer has been working with Kim to prepare a new 2023-24 draft budget. There will be a public hearing before the draft budget comes to a council vote. We all welcome your ideas and concerns. Everyone should have your new Graham County property assignments by now. Appeals are underway and if any adjustments are made, the county will notify the town of the new tax base. We will then be able to present a more precise draft budget and set a millage rate. Please come to the budget meetings and be part of the town's financial decisions. Our council has put in place a Capital Reserve ordinance to raise money for long-range projects.

Under the guidance of our government auditor the ARPA money we received is being put to use in our water fund. We are continuing to upgrade equipment for our water system in this year's budget. The new water reader machine has been ordered. With winter weather and short-staffed issues, our water mapping project will be extended. Scott Kamps is confident in his findings so far and is preparing a draft map outline.

Things are progressing for the Goldleaf grant for repairing storm water run-off issues. The application will be completed and submitted soon. This grant information came from Senator Corbin's office. His office has been helpful in finding and sharing information.

I hope to welcome our oldest elected official in North Carolina, Vice mayor, Ralph Mitchell back to the mountains very soon.

I would like to wish only the best for our town clerk, Emily Hooper, as she moves onward assisting with the family business and spending time with her grandchildren. She was a gift to our town and will be truly missed.

I wish to welcome our snowbirds back to the mountains. I value all homeowner's opinions and hope to see you at the meetings. Enjoy the beautiful lake and forest that surround us. We are all truly Blessed to be here.

**My best to all,**

**Connie Gross**

**JOIN US ON OUR JUNE ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY LITTER PICKUP DAY, TUESDAY, JUNE 13, AT 9:00 A.M. AT TOWN HALL. BRING YARD GLOVES AND BUG SPRAY! DELIGHTFUL ORANGE VESTS AND LITTER PICKERS WILL BE PROVIDED! SEE WHAT INTERESTING LITTER YOU CAN FIND!**

**Tourism Development Authority**

**by**

**Diana Simon**

It is Spring on the Lake! Flame azaleas are beginning to bloom. The forest is full of wildflowers and white dogwoods. The front entrance is abloom with yellow daffodils. Welcome back to the Lake.

The Santeetlah Volunteer Fire Department has reached their goal for construction of the new annex building.

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Ground breaking was celebrated April 20. Brian “Taco” Johnson wishes to extend his appreciation to all Santeetlah homeowners who supported the building fund.

Construction is underway on the Corridor K highway expansion. Make sure to plan extra time for trips to Bryson City, as the road has sections that are one-way during the construction workday. This project is expected to be completed in 2027.

Stecoah has a wonderful lineup of seasonal music. Plan for your favorites: the Kruger Brothers on June 24 and Buncombe Turnpike, July 1.

## Adopt-a-Highway

by

Beth Carlton



Do you enjoy occasional morning walks? Would you like to meet more of your neighbors? You can do both when you participate in the TPOA Litter Pickup campaign!

Meeting on the first Tuesday of the month, the Litter Pickup Committee participates annually in the NCDOT Adopt-A-Highway Program. Since 1990, TPOA volunteers have faithfully picked up roadside litter during the summer months from the Fire House on US129, along Thunderbird Mountain Road, and to the western edge of the Town of Lake Santeetlah. NCDOT supplies litter bags and safety vests; TPOA supplies trash grabbers and pokers. Volunteers arrive with hats, gloves, and bug repellent. Just in case!

Litter pickups are scheduled for Tuesdays at 9 am on the morning following the monthly TPOA meetings. In 2022, TPOA members Larry and Becky Block, Greg Connor, Diana and Joe Simon, and co-chairs Beth Carlton and Kevin Haag met regularly to support TPOA’s commitment to NCDOT’s program and to help keep the Town’s road-sides clean and beautiful.



THUNDERBIRD PROPERTY OWNERS’ ASSOCIATION’S ANNUAL WELCOME BACK PARTY WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2023, AT 5:00 P.M. THE EVENT WILL BE HELD AT CHALET VILLAGE, ADJACENT TO MANIERRE PARK. BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGE AND CHAIR AND JOIN THE FUN! *[Note: Volunteers are needed to help set-up, take-down and clean-up. Please check with Frances Connor to find out how you can assist the Planning Committee.]*

TPOA Planning Committee

by

Frances Connor

The TPOA Planning Committee is charged with providing opportunities for social gatherings during the Summer Season. Committee members are Frances Connor, Becky Block, and Mary Roemer. We would LOVE to have you join us! If you are interested, please reach out to Frances at [fconnor@outlook.com](mailto:fconnor@outlook.com)!

We are going on repeat this year for a couple of events. We will have our Welcome Back Party on June 17 at Cha-

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let Village. Your TPOA will provide all the food and drink, so please bring a lawn chair and come to meet new friends and neighbors. The meal will be catered by Willow Tree, so you know it will be good. If you have NOT joined TPOA, please come and bring your dues!

Our second event will be another Band Block Party! We are planning for August 26, but are waiting final confirmation from the Band. If you attended last year, you know this was a fun party! This year, TPOA will provide a light dinner and you will need to bring your Dancing Shoes and BYOB!

If you have ideas or suggestions for other events for July and September that you think would be fun, please let us know! Email Frances at the above email address.

We hope to see you ALL at the June event!

THE TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED TO DATE FOR THE THUNDERBIRD PROPERTY OWNERS' GREEN ELEPHANT FUND IS \$5,495. THE ENTIRE AMOUNT WILL PROVIDE MUCH-NEEDED ASSISTANCE TO WORTHWHILE CHARITIES IN GRAHAM COUNTY. THANK YOU, TPOA CONTRIBUTORS!

## **TPOA ELECTION RESULTS**

The Nominating Committee wishes to thank all candidates for their willingness to serve on the TPOA Board of Directors for the coming two years. At the request of some of our members, we are publishing the vote tally for each candidate below.

President: Bette LoBue, 61 votes; Aura Griffith, 5 votes

Vice President: Bill Piel, 60 votes; Jack Gross, 4 votes

Secretary: Mary Roemer (unopposed), 62 votes

Treasurer: Greg Connor (unopposed), 64 votes

## **Around the Mountain**

**by**

**Bette LoBue**



Spring greetings to all our friends and neighbors at Thunderbird Mountain! Some of us are already enjoying the lake, while the rest are eager to get back to our mountain homes and enjoy the wonders of spring! From snowy white dogwoods and orchid-like trilliums to yellow and purple finches, beautiful colors dot the mountainside!

However, Spring doesn't always bring clear skies and fair weather! Our normally serene mountain was recently subjected to heavy winds, with gusts up to sixty miles per hour or more, that took down trees, branches, screen enclosures and various other items. Braving the aftermath, Mayor Connie Gross was seen removing some of the branches to help clear the roadways and keep traffic going. Thank you, Connie!



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The following story crossed my desk recently, courtesy of neighbor Keith Predmore. The plot revolves around the adventure of a certain poodle named Siobhan and the involvement of several of our neighbors here on the mountain. It seems that one day Siobhan's dad inadvertently left his gate open when he took off for town. Siobhan, not willing to stay home alone, decided she would just tag along on her own. However, her little escapade did not go unnoticed. Alerted by calls from Jim and Anne Hagar who had spotted the wandering miscreant, Keith headed back to Thunderbird. In the meantime, the Hagers called Bob Wehr and Myra Almond, and enlisted their help. At that point, the "princess" had made it as far as the front exit gate. Fortunately, by the time Keith circled back, Siobhan was happily ensconced in Myra's car. Later, when safely back home, Siobhan and Keith had a short "chat". Siobhan indicated that it was Keith's fault and that he should not leave the gate open any more. Keith assured her that he was sorry and that it would not happen again. She then demanded an extra treat for dinner—and got it!! This story was a good example of "It takes a village." Thanks, Keith, for sharing Siobhan's adventure and the community efforts of her rescuers!

Speaking of dogs wandering around on their own, Fred Averett experienced a no-good-deed-goes-unpunished incident when he stopped to help a couple of small hunting dogs that were trotting along Highway 129 on their own. Fred had noticed them two days before, so he had brought some food for them. In the process, Fred got his SUV stuck in the mire. Thanks to property owner John Emerson, who pulled him out of the muddy ditch, Fred was soon on his way again. Now for the rest of the story: Parents of the dogs' owner stopped to identify and retrieve the young wanderers.

And that's the way it is, ALL AROUND THE MOUNTAIN!

[If you have a story or event to share, please email it to [betteannl@verizon.net](mailto:betteannl@verizon.net).]

## **Focus Committee**

by

**Susan Robinson and Greg Connor**

The Focus Committee took a short hiatus in the winter but is now back at work! One charge of the Focus Committee is to update our technical platform for running TPOA efficiently. With the election of new officers completed, our new secretary will be moving TPOA's mailing list function to Gmail, which offers additional functionality

Another quick win will be to set up ways for members to pay their dues other than by check, such as Venmo. So, if you received your membership form but didn't have a check handy, please come to the Welcome Back Party on June 17 at Chalet Village with cash or Venmo to support TPOA's work to keep the community beautiful and lively. Stay tuned for more updates in TPOA's regular, monthly member meetings, beginning Monday, June 14.

### **Need-to-Know Numbers**

Brookfield Renewable Energy	865-663-3301
Graham County Sheriff's Office	828-479-3352
Graham County Transit	828-479-4129
Graham County Emergency Services	828-479-7967
Community Care Program	828-735-4059
Graham County Public Library	828-479-8796
Graham County Senior Center	828-479-7977

**DID YOU REMEMBER TO PAY YOUR DUES? IF NOT, PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHECK FOR \$20 TO THUNDERBIRD PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, P. O. BOX 1263, ROBBINSVILLE, NC 28771.**