

THE BEARS NECESSITIES

The Quarterly Newsletter of Bears Crossing Community

Issue #10 / May 2025



BY AMY SYRACUSE, EDITOR

*This is the 10th edition of **The Bears Necessities**, and I'm turning over a new leaf. To improve the reading experience, I've tweaked the design slightly. The masthead is cleaner and, wherever possible, font sizes are larger. For efficiency's sake, I've combined the spring and summer editions into one double issue that looks back at recent happenings and ahead to the fun and excitement that warmer temperatures bring.*

Here's what you'll find on the pages that follow:

- Everything you need to know about the Architectural Review Committee and process;
- Scott Abrams' guide to the trails of Stratton Town Forest;
- Helpful tips from Will Galway for meeting Dover's new STR registry requirements;
- Results from our Ski and Snowboard Race in February;
- A photographic "Bingo" card for bird-spotting in the Valley;
- Updates from the Board President and Property Manager; and more.

Enjoy, and have a wonderful summer!

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Next Stop: Summer

BY GEORGE FRIEND, PROPERTY MANAGER

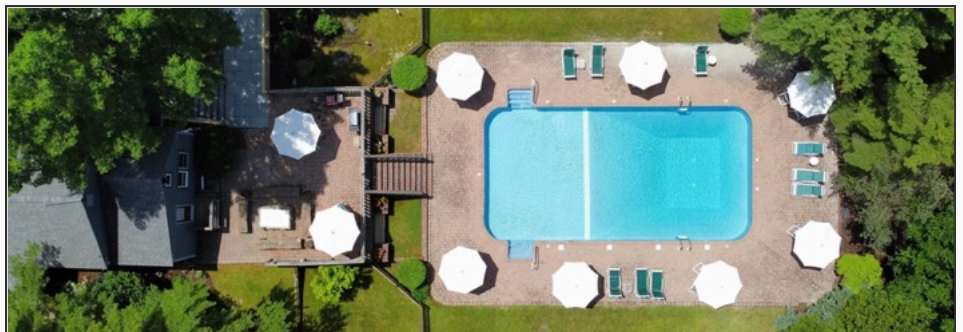
It's hard to believe Memorial Day weekend has already come and gone. With winter behind us, your property management team has been immersed in "spring cleaning": tidying green spaces, checking roads and culverts to address any damage from the snow and ice, reopening the pool and tennis/pickleball court, and much more.

Lawn mowing has begun, though several designated areas have not been mowed yet in observance of "No Mow May." Our mowing and landscaping service works on Thursdays and Fridays during the summer, but that schedule may change when there is inclement weather. Landscaping clean-up has been completed, and places that were damaged received topsoil, seeding, and haying. Driveways and gravel roads will be raked and cleaned up. Firewood delivery begins around June 1st and takes several weeks to complete.

Rain or shine, the pool is now open, and our tennis/pickleball court is ready for players. You may have noticed that the clubhouse upper deck is undergoing a refurbishment. That rebuild is close to being completed as long as the weather cooperates. Even during construction, the pool will be open and accessible.

With summer's long days and so much to do in the area, I wanted to remind homeowners about opening hours for Bears Crossing's amenities. Our pool, clubhouse, and tennis/pickleball court are open daily from 10am to 8pm. The clubhouse patio and fire pit are open until 10pm.

Please keep in mind that many homeowners keep windows open in the summer, and noise travels. Be courteous to your neighbors. Avoid noisy or disruptive gatherings—especially during local quiet hours, from sunset to sunrise. Hot tubs and fire pits should not be used after 10pm. Mount Snow and Wilmington host wonderful Independence Day celebrations that include fireworks displays. Please plan to celebrate the 4th of July at one of these organized events, as state law prohibits the personal use of fireworks.



The ABCs of ARC

Like many HOAs, Bears Crossing has an Architectural Review Committee (ARC), comprising representatives of property management, our Board of Directors, and volunteer homeowners. ARC plays a vital role in maintaining property values, preserving Bears Crossing's character, and upholding architectural and safety standards. Its responsibilities include establishing and enforcing architecture and construction guidelines, reviewing owners' applications for exterior changes, and approving or denying those requests.



With the home improvement season underway, here's a quick Q&A on ARC review and what you need to know—and do—when considering a project that affects your property's exterior appearance.

- **Who needs to submit ARC paperwork?** Simply put, that's any owner planning to do any exterior work, whether it's painting or staining; installing landscaping or hardscaping; installing or replacing exterior lighting; replacing windows, doors, or roofs; adding a hot tub or firepit (including Solo Stoves); doing a home addition; etc. Of note, condominiums are included in ARC review. Just like single family homeowners, condo owners cannot do anything on the property's exterior (e.g., windows, doors, locksets, EV chargers, etc.) without approval from the Architectural Review Committee. Failure to secure advance approval may result in fines and require the work to be removed or updated to meet ARC guidelines.
- **What paperwork do I need to submit and what information should be included?** The required ARC review forms are on [BearsCrossing.com](https://www.bearscrossing.com). These forms describe the process and needed information. In the case of ARC review, more is more. When homeowners provide sketches or renderings of proposed plans; maps; photos; proof of insurance for contractors; and specifications for materials, including brand, style, model, color swatches, etc., the application is much easier and quicker to review.
- **How long does ARC review take?** Once the ARC form is submitted, ARC members review the information and plans. If additional information is needed, the owner will be notified. Review can take up to 30 days, and submitting a thorough and complete application is key. If additional information is required, the review and decision making process may be delayed.
- **Do I also need permits from the town?** Depending on the project, additional permits may be required by the Fire Marshal's Office, the Town of Dover, or the North Branch Fire District. Homeowners should contact the following offices before submitting an ARC form to determine permit needs: Town Zoning (802-464-5100); North Branch Fire District (802-464-8415); and State of Vermont Fire Marshal's Office (802-503-2696). – AS

Calendar

June 20 - First Summer Block Party (held Fridays throughout the summer) at Mount Snow Main Base

July 2 - Wilmington Independence Day Celebration & Fireworks

July 4 - Wardsboro 4th of July Street Fair & Parade

July 5 - Independence Day Celebration at Mount Snow Main Base

July 19 - Bears Crossing Owners' Party

July 25 to Aug. 3 - Deerfield Valley Blueberry Festival

Aug. 16 - Bears Crossing BOD Budget Meeting, 9am

Aug. 30 - Mount Snow Brewers Festival

Sept. 27 - Bears Crossing Annual Owners Meeting, 9am

Check the Bears Crossing HOA Facebook Group for additional community outings. For events in the Deerfield Valley, visit the Chamber of Commerce Calendar.



Lena, Talia, and Helene represented Bears Crossing at Mount Snow's first Women's Weekend event on Feb. 2nd.

Condo, SFH Association Annual Zoom Meetings

Aug. 20th, 6pm - Single Family Homes Association

Aug. 27th, 6pm - 100 Association (Polar Bear South 7)

Sept. 4th, 6pm - 400/500 Association (Polar Bear North 2, 4)

Sept. 10th, 6pm - A/B Association (Polar Bear North 5, 7, 9)

Sept. 17th, 6pm - C/D Association (Black Bear 5, 7, 8)

Sept. 24th, 6pm - E/F Association (Brumm's Way 7, 8, 9, 10)

Summer Reminders

✓ Grills of any kind are not permitted on condo decks in accordance with Vermont's Fire Code. Built-in or portable fire pits, including Solo Stoves, must meet safety requirements and be approved by ARC (*See page 2*).

✓ Plastic bags are not recyclable and must not be put in the recycling bin. Please **MAKE SURE** guests and renters also follow this rule. Remember... There are cameras at the dumpster area, and those who violate this rule are subject to fines.

✓ The bears are back and they're hungry! Please don't leave trash outside. Also, rinse food residue from recyclables before depositing them in the recycling bin.

✓ Vermont law bans disposal of food scraps in the trash or landfills. Bears Crossing has a composting tumbler at the Polar Bear North waste disposal area. See BearsCrossing.com for details about using the composter.

✓ Pet owners must pick up and dispose of pet waste. Violators will be fined. Owners are responsible for ensuring their guests also follow this rule.

✓ Construction work cannot take place on weekends without permission from the Board and property management. Construction and equipment use should cease from 5pm on Friday to 8am on Monday.

✓ Dover's **STR complaint hotline** is now active. This offers a way for neighbors to report concerns about rules violations by rentals guests (e.g., excessive noise, illegal parking, over-capacity, etc.). Bears Crossing has a **similar system** that notifies owners, allowing them to correct issues before involving authorities.

On the Board: President's Report

BY DAVE STREETER, BOARD PRESIDENT, CUB RIDGE LANE

Hello, Bears Crossing owners. I hope everyone enjoyed the ski season. With the snow melted and the trails drying out, it's time to swap skis and snowboards for hiking boots, bikes, and lawn chairs. Summer brings a different kind of magic, and I'm excited to share some news, activities, and upcoming opportunities to connect.

- **Board changes.** The Board of Directors met on May 17th for its scheduled meeting. Minutes for this and all BOD meetings are on [W&B's owners' website](#). At that meeting, we accepted the resignation of BOD member Andy Stepan. (*See page 6.*) In Andy's place, we're pleased to welcome to the Board Bears Den Road owner Will Galway.
- **Come one, come all!** I'm thrilled to announce a series of picnics happening this summer. These will be casual, family-friendly events held in Bear Crossing's common areas. Bring your favorite snacks or dish to share, and get to know your neighbors. We'll have games, music, and plenty of room for the kids to run around. Stay tuned to your inbox for dates, or check the [Bears Crossing HOA Facebook group](#) and our clubhouse bulletin board.
- **Blaze new trails.** The snowshoe trails you enjoyed all winter are now perfect for hiking and mountain biking. Starting behind the tennis/pickleball courts in Bears Crossing's southeast corner, these paths offer beautiful views, peaceful forested areas, and landmarks like the ruins of a church, a pump house, and other gems. Keep an eye out for wildlife and enjoy the serenity of the Green Mountain state in bloom.
- **Soak up the sun and fun at Mount Snow.** The slopes may be closed, but Mount Snow stays active all summer long with festivals, outdoor concerts, scenic lift rides, and kids' adventure programs. Take the gondola up to the summit for a hike or enjoy a drink with a view. Check the mountain's [summer calendar](#) for details.
- **Stay involved.** I encourage all owners to attend a Board meeting and stay informed about community happenings. Your voice matters, and meetings are an excellent way to connect and make a meaningful contribution. Our committees are always seeking new members. Mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting on Sept. 27th, where we'll vote on the budget, discuss future plans, and hear directly from owners. More information, including the agenda and location, will be shared closer to the date.
- **Safety rules!** With more people out walking, jogging, or biking, and kids playing outdoors, please be mindful of your speed when driving through the community. Let's work together to keep Bear Crossing safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Thank you for being a valued part of Bears Crossing. I look forward to seeing you soon.

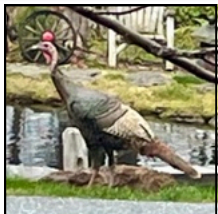
Birds of a Feather Flock Together in the Deerfield Valley

Our small corner of southern Vermont is home to a diverse array of birds, from the majestic bald eagle to the miniscule ruby-throated hummingbird, and summer is an ideal time to spot them. Keep your eyes and ears open while relaxing outdoors or enjoying a summer stroll around the neighborhood. For more advanced bird-watching, grab your binoculars and head out to one of these [local avian hotspots](#). Be sure to share your bird-spotting photos with *The Bears Necessities* for future issues. If you get Bingo on our bird-spotting scorecard below, [e-mail us](#) for a Bears Crossing prize! – AS

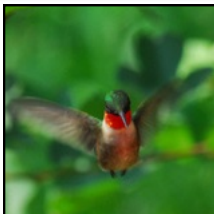
Bears Crossing Bird-spotting Bingo



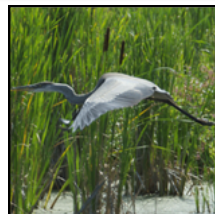
American Goldfinch



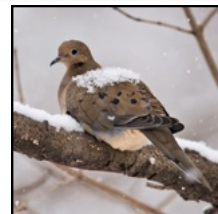
Wild Turkey



Ruby-Throated Hummingbird



Great Blue Heron



Mourning Dove



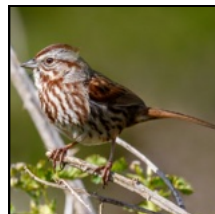
Bald Eagle



Eastern Bluebird



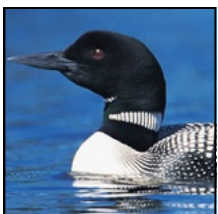
Common Crow



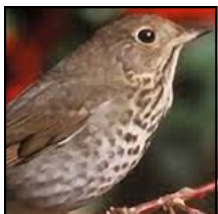
Song Sparrow



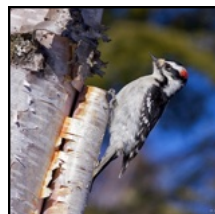
Dark-Eyed Junco



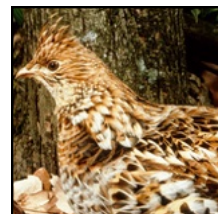
Common Loon



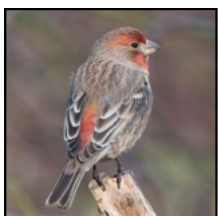
Hermit Thrush (State Bird)



Downy Woodpecker



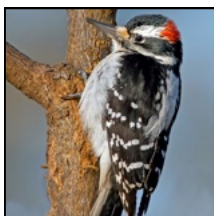
Ruffed Grouse (Partridge)



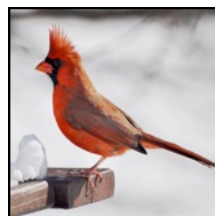
House Finch



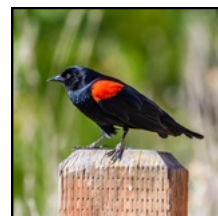
Barred Owl



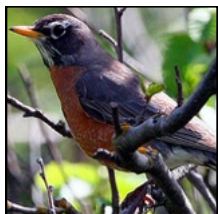
Hairy Woodpecker



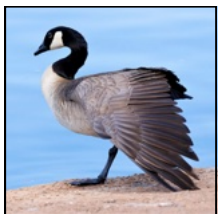
Northern Cardinal



Red-Winged Blackbird



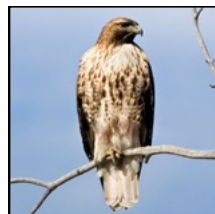
American Robin



Canada Goose



Blue Jay



Red-Tailed Hawk



Black-Capped Chickadee

Photo Credits: [VTFishandWildlife.com](#), [Audubon Vermont](#), and George Friend

2025 Ski & Snowboard Race Results

A community tradition, the annual Bears Crossing Ski & Snowboard Race took place on Saturday, Feb. 22nd, at Charlie's Chase. The weather gods smiled down on athletes, with favorable course conditions and a sunny, precipitation-free day. Organized by Mike Goodman and Helene Wolson, the race allowed athletes one timed run on each course, with combined time for both runs reported. There were some excellent performances and top showings from a new generation of racers. Save the date for next year's event, tentatively scheduled for Feb. 21st. And congratulations to all of our racers! – AS



Racers enjoyed a pizza party and unveiling of race results.

Youth/Female/Ski

(1) Avery L. (49.58 sec)

Adults/Female/Ski

(1) Samantha F. (54.06 sec)

(2) Helene W. (1:01.12 min)

Adults/Male/Ski

(1) Stephen D. (51.77 sec)

(2) Peter K. (51.95 sec)

Adults/Male/Snowboard

(1) Brian T. (1:15.48 min)



Dover STR Registry Now Open

BY WILL GALWAY, BEARS DEN ROAD

The Dover Short Term Rental (STR) Registry is now open, following the passing of the town's Short Term Rental Ordinance last fall. The ordinance requires all Dover homeowners who rent out their properties "short term" (i.e., fewer than 30 days at a time), and who rent more than 14 days per calendar year, to register with the town and obtain a Short Term Rental permit.

Deckard Technologies manages the registration website and a hotline for STR complaints. The company actively monitors AirBnB, VRBO, and other portals and is mailing registration information to homeowners who meet the STR qualifications. Permits cost \$125 a year. Failing to register will lead to fines as defined in the ordinance, so it's important to give this prompt attention.

Registration requirements and instructions are posted on Dover's website. These include:

- Completion and submission of the Vermont Short Term Rental Safety, Health, and Financial Obligations Worksheet during the registration process.
- For houses renting to nine or more guests, a Vermont State Fire Inspection is required, and a certificate of inspection needs to be submitted as part of the registration process.
- Completion of an emergency contact form, and photographic proof of the form hanging in an obvious location for rental guests to see.
- Proof of bear-proof garbage and recycling bins via a photo submitted during the registration process.
- The appointment of an "Assigned Point of Contact" (APC). This is a person who will be able to respond within one hour to any emergency situation while your property is being rented. They do not need to be physically present at the property, but must be available to answer the phone and respond to any issues. Your APC's name and contact information must be provided during the registration process.

Keep Calm and Rent On: Helpful Tips for Bears Crossing STR Owners

1

Bears Crossing owners who currently rent their properties should already have had a Vermont Fire Inspection and received an inspection certificate. This fulfills the requirement for rentals that accommodate nine or more guests, and can be submitted during registration.

2

For the bear-proof garbage and recycling bins requirement, simply provide a picture of our community dumpster on Polar Bear North during registration.

3

The only part that requires you to *be* in Vermont is to print out and hang up an emergency contact form, and then upload a photograph during registration. If you have questions or concerns, call Dover's Department of Economic Development at 802-464-5100.

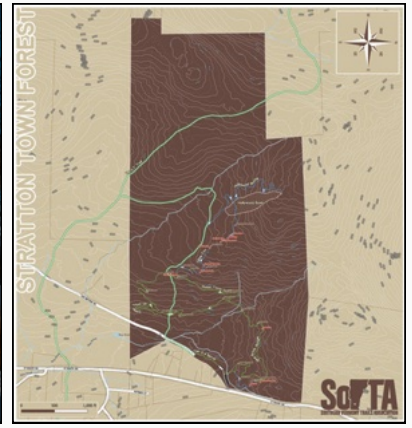
Trails for All Seasons

BY SCOTT ABRAMS, BLACK BEAR LANE

Hiking fans, rejoice! Mud season is almost over, and an array of incredible local trails await. One of the best new options is Stratton Town Forest (STF). This trail network was recently renovated through a partnership between the Stratton Select Board and the Southern Vermont Trails Association. Thanks to grant funding and more than a thousand volunteer hours, STF now has beautifully-graded hiking and biking trails in non-winter months, which become groomed trails for cross country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter.

Located on the west side of Vermont Route 100, just north of the Dover town line, Stratton Town Forest is just a short drive from Bears Crossing. As you head up Route 100, look for the small green sign just past Triple Tree Lodging. A narrow unpaved driveway leads to limited parking for trail users. Full disclosure: It's an eight-car lot so arrive early during weekends or peak times of year.

There are obvious trailheads leading from the parking lot, where a large trail map sits. The paths are well blazed and easy to follow in non-snow months. Like Horace Hill, trails are marked as either beginner or intermediate. Certain sections of trails are designated as uphill or downhill biking-only paths, so you do need to pay attention at intersections. Once covered in snow, they can be a little tricky to navigate, so it might be best to follow someone's tracks.



Nearby Stratton Town Forest provides a peaceful place to explore the great outdoors, no matter what time of year.
Photo Credit: [Southern Vermont Trails Association Instagram page](#)

Once you head into the trails, you very quickly disappear into the beauty of Vermont, no longer seeing or hearing the roads or structures. In summer, the trails are a plush green; in winter, they're covered in a blanket of fresh snow. Following trails like Fish in a Barrel, Blue Brook Boogie, and Sweet Tooth Down, you'll wind up and down and through the woods. But you're never more than a two miles from the parking lot. The trails also lead to several back country ski areas, and connect with the VAST system for snowmobiles.

This has quickly become our favorite spot in the area to go hiking or snowshoeing with our dogs. If you have dogs that need tiring out, Stratton Town Forest will get the job done. Trail conditions, maps, and other information can be found on the [Southern Vermont Trails Association's website](#). Until next time, happy hiking!

It's Not Goodbye...

At the May meeting, Andy Stepan submitted his resignation from the Board of Directors due to work and family commitments that have kept him from spending significant time in Bears Crossing over the past year. Thankfully, it's not goodbye. Andy remains a valued part of the Community. The Board extends its deepest gratitude for the insight, generosity, dedication, and sense of humor Andy brought to every meeting, project, discussion, and interaction. Please join us in thanking Andy for his service, which has helped make Bears Crossing a wonderful place to be. – AS



Andy Stepan (right) and Mike Goodman (left) man the grill at the summer barbecue.