

**John Baker (and the Boys)
Candidate Statement**



Among the best decisions I have ever made was moving to Nepenthe 6 years ago! I have enjoyed every day with our friendly, engaging Owners. Our gorgeous grounds give a marvelous park-like vibe as we enjoy our wonderful amenities.

During these 6 years (including 4 years serving on the Finance Committee), it has been disconcerting and troubling to watch the process used by the Board of Directors for making significant policy and financial decisions, including the setting of our **monthly dues**, become less transparent. Decisions by the Board that will impact Owners must have input from Owners. Acknowledgement and involvement of the Owners is critical to a successful Board and Association. The Owners of Nepenthe should have a governing body that is **owner-centric** as opposed to **board-centric**.

Nepenthe Owners deserve **transparency, communication, accountability, and collaboration**. My past and current service on 6 volunteer boards has taught me that all of these are critical to effective governance.

Transparency: The review and adoption of the annual budget and setting of the **monthly dues** needs to be presented and discussed in an Open “budget hearing” of the Board with the budget being the only agenda item.

Communication: Owners should, if they request, be given the opportunity to speak on specific Board agenda items as they are addressed, not simply in the “Homeowners’ Forum”.

Accountability: The financial impact of major Board decisions, including contracting with outside vendors, needs to be evaluated prior to Board action. While it is understandable that contract negotiations require discretion and

confidentiality in Executive Session, final approvals need to be presented and ratified by Board resolution in the Open Session.

Collaboration: Board meetings should be held on days and times that are more conducive to larger Owner participation. Major policy and financial decisions need to be made in an Open Forum where Owners are given ample opportunity to comment and provide their perspectives and priorities. The opinions and recommendations of Owners and Committees must be seriously considered and deserve thoughtful response.

I am well acquainted with budget development and analysis, human resource management, strategic planning, quality assurance, and effective verbal and written communications. As a civil engineering graduate of UC Berkeley with both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree and Navy veteran, my 50-year professional career led me to being responsible for 650 employees and \$100 million dollars of annual gross revenue. The volunteer boards on which I have served have ranged from 5 to 50 directors, with annual budgets ranging between \$5 million and \$40 million. During my time as President of two of those Boards, I headed up a \$20 million statewide initiative campaign and a \$40 million building renovation project.

I am currently semi-retired working as a part time professor at CSU Sacramento, teaching construction management. I have 5 daughters and 3 (soon to be 4!) grandchildren. Many of you have met my 2 adorable King Charles Spaniels (aka, "the boys") who insist we take regular walks in our beautiful neighborhood. I look forward to when we can once again come together to enjoy the many recreational and cultural opportunities available to us.

My love for Nepenthe grows each day as I continue to make many wonderful, new friends. I would be privileged to have your support in my candidacy. You can count on my pledge to provide you a more active understanding of and voice in the direction of Nepenthe through my commitment to transparency, communication, accountability, and collaboration!

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