



The Gold Mountain® Nugget

The Newsletter of the Gold Mountain Homeowners Association

Issue No. 19

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Board President's Corner

Creating Shared Value at Gold Mountain

By Tom Murtha -GMHOA Board President

On behalf of the board, I want to thank the 150-plus Gold Mountain owners who made their voices heard at the 2007 GMHOA/CSD Annual Meeting. If you attended, you invested a significant commitment of time. The meeting took an entire day on May 26, over Memorial Day weekend, when many of you might have preferred to kick back with family and friends. You had the opportunity to hear about many projects planned or underway, and detailed elsewhere in this edition of the Nugget. Equally important, you provided your board members with an opportunity to hear your views about the directions the community is taking. We need these views to maintain a clear vision of the kind of community our fellow owners want to build here. Clear, two-way communication between your board members and fellow owners provides us with the opportunity to help create shared value in our community.



It was not all business at the annual HOA Meeting. Clubs were swinging and forks were flying at the Nakoma Golf Resort once again as the first Golf and Grub event was held.

How we value our community is a primary ingredient that determines how those outside Gold Mountain will value our community in the long term.

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Take the Long Way Home— Getting to or From Gold Mountain is Fun. Getting “Lost” is More Fun

By Len Fernandes

Sometimes you have to get creative to travel to or from Gold Mountain. Since most of us reach the promised land from points west the de facto route is Interstate 80.

On a good day you cruise to make a Bay Area trip in about four hours. On a bad day, it can take all day. Is there a better way? The “all season” Feather River Highway is an easy alternative to I-80 to thwart a Donner Pass winter storm.

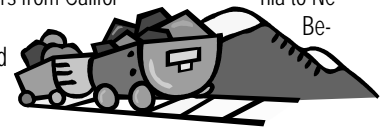
For those who love history, crave the “old road” and have few hours to kill, there are alternate routes. They won't make the drive any faster, but if the mere thought of crawling along in I-80 traffic drives you nuts you may want to take one of these long ways home.

Henness Pass Road requires a sense of adventure. The road runs from Verdi, crosses Highway 89, and ends in Camptonville on Highway 49. Catch it off Highway 89 between Truckee and Sierraville. It's paved for 18 picturesque miles to Jackson Meadows before turning to dirt.

Henness Pass gained attention as an easier route into Cali-

fornia after the Donner Party tragedy of 1846. Settlers turned northward taking a longer route developed by Patrick Henness. Construction began in 1852 as a wagon toll road from Nevada to the gold fields of California.

By 1859 the California gold rush was dying down and with the discovery of silver in the Nevada Comstock, a mass exodus of miners from California to Nevada began. Between 1860 and 1868, the road was the major artery between California and Virginia City. The traffic was so bad that in order to regulate it, freight wagons ran during the day and stages ran at night. Imagine that the next time you're parked on I-80. When the Central Pacific Railroad was completed in 1868, the major use of the Henness Pass route came to an abrupt end. Don't expect to find too many cars once you hit the dirt road at Jackson Meadows. If you do see many, they are probably lost.



Road Surface: Paved and dirt

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What's the Scoop With Nakoma?

The Nugget's well-placed sources have an ear to the rumor mill. Actually, there are people interested and looking at the project. Several the week of 7/8/07 and others on the way. Check out the web site www.goldmountainhoa.org for the latest info. ▲

DRC News

Warm Bodies Needed, Revised Contractor Regulations...

Opportunity to Serve on the DRC - The committee invites interested Association Members to contact Sandy Simmons or Tom Cooley to learn about the work of the DRC and an opportunity to serve the GM Community. Interested persons should live in the area, have a basic understanding of the home design and construction process, and share the belief that the community benefits from enforcement of design standards. There is ample opportunity for on-the-job training.

Contractor Construction Regulations - The Committee has just completed a review, update and clarification of the Contractor Construction Regulations. This document is presented to the building contractor as a part of each Pre-construction meeting conducted by the Committee. The contractor signs the regulations to acknowledge receipt of the document.

The significant changes incorporated in the most

recent version of the regulations include; a prohibition against living or camping on the premises during construction, a prohibition against workers discarding cigarette butts anywhere within Gold Mountain, modification of the period of time required to obtain a blasting permit from "four weeks" to "sufficient to notify all affected parties."

Building Activity - Current building activity includes: one home start, two major home addition starts and seven on going home construction projects.

Meeting Dates Notice - The DRC meets on the second Wednesday of each month during 2007. Please remember that Preliminary Plan Submittals are due 17 days before and Final Plan Submittals are due 8 days prior to regular meeting dates. Contact Tom Cooley (530) 832-1184 t-cooley@sbcglobal.com or Sandy Simmons (530) 832-9818, goldmtbear@psln.com with any questions. ▲

Dispute Resolution at Gold Mountain

By Tom Murtha

All of us enjoy the many pleasurable aspects of living in the Gold Mountain community. But sometimes, we also get on each others' nerves. Irritants can range from small things like a neighbor who forgets to turn off exterior lighting (almost all of us at some time), to the dog that occasionally barks, on to larger issues such as questionable maintenance of properties' appearances. Many, although not all of these things, come under the rules we call CC&Rs, or "Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions," which we all agreed to observe when we bought our property.

Even though we have all agreed to abide by our Gold Mountain CC&Rs, individual homeowners do not have a right to take personal enforcement action against a neighbor's perceived violation by, for example, pulling invasive, non-native weeds or painting his or her house (even though you might think of these things as favors). There are things individuals can and should do when they feel negatively affected by a neighbor, or believe they have identified

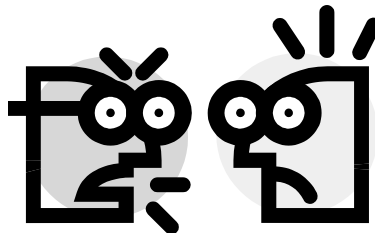
a problem of wider concern to the community.

Under many, but not all circumstances, a friendly discussion between neighbors is appropriate, and can resolve issues that arise. For example, if you think your neighbor is leaving the exterior lights on or the garage door open unnecessarily, it's probably inadvertent, and a friendly word would be appreciated. In almost any such case, it will help our sense of community if we talk to a neighbor about a situation that bothers us, rather than talking about the neighbor to others.

Not all issues can be resolved through friendly discussions. In such cases, equitable enforcement of the CC&Rs falls among the responsibilities of your HOA Board. Examples include any instance where cordial discussion fails to reach agreement, and many instances where the issue at hand has a large impact on the community as a whole, or would cost a lot of money to resolve. Examples might include a neighbor's decision to raise livestock, erect an unapproved addition or outbuilding, fence off access to a common area, or conduct an illegal timber operation.

If friendly discussion fails, or the issue seems too large or contentious to resolve in this way, notify a board member verbally of your concerns, and then follow up in writing by Email or U.S. mail. Board

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The CSD Report

NEWS OF THE GOLD MOUNTAIN® COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
ISSUE 7

SUMMER 2007

Meeting Attendees Hear CSD Infrastructure Master Plan

Joint Committee Tackles Funding Options

Consulting Civil Engineer John Shaw made a special presentation of the CSD Infrastructure *Master Plan* at the 2007 Annual Meeting in May. His recommendations dealt specifically with "Water, Sewer, and Fire" proposals. He has estimated the price tag to fully implement the *Master Plan* is \$10.5 Million.

To implement the District's infrastructure *Master Plan*, the Joint Homeowners' Association and Community Services District Capital Finance Committee is actively evaluating funding options. Committee members include Noreen Carter (HOA Board member), Steve Wise (GM Homeowner) and Paul Erickson (CSD Board member). Each were selected because of their expertise and knowledge of various funding mechanisms. Also participating is HOA and CSD General Manager, George Sipel.



This committee will also take very seriously the results of the last property owners' survey that clearly directed infrastructure improvements should be scheduled and implemented on an as needed basis over time. There is also recognition of the fact Gold Mountain is not a "cookie cutter" planned unit development. Rather, it is an extremely diverse community of undeveloped parcels and uniquely

designed and crafted custom homes. The committee is very sensitive to the fact that their recommendation needs to take those differences into consideration as they might impact all property owners.

The following funding mechanisms are being currently evaluated:

- State & Federal infrastructure planning and grant construction programs
- Shared bond pools coordinated by the California Special District Association
- Mello-Roos Bond program
- General Obligation Bond program
- Assessment District Bond program

The committee's target is to present pro and con information for each of the capital funding options this coming fall, 2007 at a community meeting which will be scheduled and announced in advance. The committee will also take responsibility for beginning the due diligence process by first interviewing and then recommending bond and underwriting firms together with bond counsel. Anticipated is the use of a third property owners' survey before winter to receive and evaluate reactions and recommendations for a Gold Mountain Capital Infrastructure Funding Program.

There is strong consensus that the *Master Plan's* recommended infrastructure projects are essential for this community as it moves toward build-out. The resulting capital investments made by Gold Mountain

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Fire Safe Committee Report -Responsible Fuel Reduction is the Best Defense

The fire season came early this year. The unseasonable dry conditions contributed to two lightning induced wildland fires just east of Gold Mountain boundaries in late May. Fire fighters said luck was with us because of the heavy rain that accompanied the lightning strikes. These conditions allowed firefighters to arrive on scene before the fire was wide spread which enabled them to extinguish the fires while they remained relatively small.

Unfortunately, dry lightning strikes are common here during the summer. Each year we are reminded that forest fire is a natural occurrence in the mountains. A point of ignition within Gold Mountain is inevitable. Although we cannot control the forces of nature, we can greatly contribute to our community's resistance

to uncontrollable fire by embracing responsible hazardous fuel reduction practices.

All lot and homeowners are encouraged to assess their property as a source of hazardous fuel and take appropriate measures to make Gold Mountain a more fire defensible community. Measures may include reducing sources of ground fuel such as overgrown brush and weeds, dead wood, limbing up trees or thinning excessively dense trees. Lot owners are encouraged to contact any member of



the Fire Safe Committee with any questions or request for guidance on how to proceed with fuel reduction.

Beginning in July, the Gold Mountain CSD/FSC will notify all homeowners by mail that they will be contacted by FSC volunteers to schedule surveys of their homes relative to wildland fire safety, and for compliance with GM fuel reduction guidelines and public resources code 4291. The primary goal will be to help each homeowner through education to better understand and meet the spirit of the current California statute pertaining to "defensible space", home wildland fire and hazardous fuel reduction. It is hoped this familiarity will create momentum toward further community wide efforts. ▲

There's Water In Them Thar Hills!

New Well Brings A Gusher

On April 14, 2007 the Board of Directors approved the lowest of three bids (\$102,928) to construct a new well in the Blazing Star area. This project was necessitated by studies that identified problems with the existing well at that location, which compromised production and reliability and would ultimately fail.

Work began in late May and the target depth of 850 feet was achieved

on June 14. During the construction it became clear that the amount of water that could be produced will exceed earlier estimates of 30-40 gallons per minute. Assuming a doubling of production to 75 gal-



lons per minute it is likely that the District's water needs can be accommodated for a number of years. The project was completed by Steve Bejcek of Steve's Pumps and Well Drilling who incidentally owns two lots at Gold Mountain.

Location of a substantial water supply at this higher elevation is a first step toward establishing a gravity-fed system which will ultimately include installation of additional water storage tanks in the area. ▲

How the Bankruptcy Impacts the CSD and HOA

The Gold Mountain Community Services District has maintained a watchful eye throughout the Gold Mountain Ranch, et. al. bankruptcy proceedings with support by legal counsel. The District has a major interest in that Gold Mountain Ranch has never formally conveyed the utility infrastructure or water rights as required by the District's agreement with Gold Mountain Ranch.



Signs point to those issues being resolved in our favor soon. Negotiations continue on

whether the District must pay Gold Mountain Ranch \$160,000 as prescribed by the agreement. The District's position is that the required payment should be offset by utility fee and charge delinquencies for Nakoma and other properties (about \$75,000) and infrastructure construction defects in the community leach field and water storage tank landslide.

The bankruptcy has also taken its toll on the District's operating revenues. The Fire Fund has experienced a \$10,000 (14%) shortfall because the bankrupt entities are delinquent in their property tax payments. A similar problem exists with the Water and Sewer Fund where 27 Gold Mountain Ranch-related properties are in arrears.

The Homeowners Association is also not immune. The HOA has agreements with Gold Mountain Ranch to maintain 10% of our roads and contribute to trail and common area maintenance. These costs average \$6,000 to \$7,000 annually and have not been paid for three years. In addition, four lots included in the bankruptcy have not paid HOA dues for three years (\$11,000).

Obviously, there are other more substantial impacts attributed to the bankruptcy that affect all of us. We continue to work with the bankruptcy trustee, Angelique Clark, and to support the Nakoma Golf Course. We look forward to working positively with new owners. ▲

News From Around the Mountain - Gail McGrath Resigns from GM CSD

Steve Fuqua Fills CSD Vacancy

Longtime Gold Mountain CSD member Gail McGrath resigned from the CSD in early May coinciding with her appointment by the Plumas County Board of Supervisors to the Eastern Plumas Health Care District Board of Directors. California law precludes her from serving on two boards simultaneously.

Gail was among the first three local residents who were initially appointed to the CSD by the Board of Supervisors in January 2005 when Gold Mountain took over CSD responsibilities from Plumas County. The CSD Board of Directors thanked and recognized Gail by formal resolution at the

recent 2007 Annual Homeowners Meeting.

Following a vacant position public posting process during the month of May, local eligible residents were encouraged to apply for the vacant Board position. A selection committee of the Board at the regular June 9th CSD meeting recommended, and the Board unanimously approved, the appointment of Steve Fuqua for the open position for the duration of Gail's unexpired term through 2007. District General Manager George Sipel administered the oath of office, Steve was sworn in and immediately put to work on Board business.

Steve and his wife Karen have been full-time residents of Gold Mountain on Great Spirit

since May 2005.

Chipper Project - Just Four Dates Remain!

Four dates remain for all lot and homeowners to take advantage of our monthly curbside chipper service. The dates are July 27, August 31, September 28 and October 26. Notify GMHOA @ (530) 832-5945 or e-mail: goldmtnhoa@sbcglobal.net to schedule the clipper service. Give your name, lot number, and number and location of the piles.

The cost is based on an hourly fee of \$100. per hour. Your cost for 2 or 3 large piles will typically be about \$50. You will be billed by the GMHOA. ▲

(Continued from page 1)

Vehicle: All wheel or four wheel drive

Winter Use: Do not even think of it. This becomes a snow mobile route.

The La Porte Route is a fun back road to the Bay Area from Gold Mountain. You access it from Highway 70/89 just outside Quincy (look for the signs). It's an epic 30-miles to La Porte with sweeping vistas, crossings of the Feather River and Nelson Creek and the 2,000 foot ascent up the Hogback.

When you visit La Porte, try to imagine it as it was during the gold rush with its 14 sa-

lons, two theaters, three hotels, a Chinatown, several churches, jammed streets, and a few houses off ill repute. Like most Gold Rush towns little of that remains today. La Porte's rise and fall was rapid yet memorable. The geology of the area was conducive to hydraulic mining, which brought 60 million dollars worth of gold in 16 years. But when the Anti-Debris Act of 1883 prohibited hydraulic mining,

the hoses were turned off and the people moved on. In the winter La Porte is cut off from Plumas County and accessible only from the west. The road ends just past Bangor from which you can connect with Highway 70 and head south to Marysville and make your path to the Bay Area from there.

Road Surface: Paved

Vehicle: Suitable for all

Winter Use: Closed in winter. Check road conditions in the fall before travel.

Oro-Quincy Highway (Bucks Lake Road) is one of my favorite trans-sierra routes and bicycle rides with some great sites along the way. From Gold Mountain drive to Quincy



The Union Hotel in La Porte

and then make a left as you head out of town and head toward the hospital. The follows Spanish Creek to quaint Meadow Valley. You can take the low road (Big Creek Road) or opt for the steep (no RV's Gold Mountaineers) Bucks Lake Road, which has great vistas before heading down to Bucks Lake.

Like a big smooth blue jewel, Bucks Lake glitters peacefully amid the forested valleys and rocky mountaintops. The dogwood bloom in the spring and turn color in the fall as do the aspens and cottonwoods. In the early summer the wildflowers are like a garden.

Bucks Lake was once a lush valley divided by a meandering creek and inhabited by Maidu Indians. In the 1920s the valley was targeted for hydroelectricity, and 20,000-acre Bucks Lake was born. Be sure to visit Bucks Lake Lodge (trapped in a time warp) for a cold drink or munchies. You'll need to double back a half mile if you take the low road.

The road then crosses the lush Haskins Valley before ascending to Grizzly Summit. Just past the summit you will pass Rock Island Ridge with its interesting volcanic rock and granite formations. The road then starts a gradual descent past Mountain House and Brush Creek before crossing Lake Oroville and eventually ending in Oroville.

Road Surface: Paved

Vehicle: Suitable for all

Winter Use: Closed in winter. Check road conditions in the fall before travel.

Bucks Lake Lodge is open in the winter and reached via snow mobile.

Highway 49 is an all season road with all season interest. Wildflowers bloom in spring and summer, including rare wild orchids on Yuba Pass. In the fall, this route comes alive with color. In the winter the route is a play land for backcountry skiing and snow mobile use from Bassetts to Yuba Pass.

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Creating Shared Value at Gold Mountain

(Continued from page 1)

Owners' confidence in Gold Mountain's future is rising. This seems due in large part to careful planning by management, in cooperation with our boards, taking owner survey data into account. Rehabilitated roads, improved gate performance, and alternative scenarios for necessary infrastructure improvements have been charted so that we have an increasingly clear picture of what to expect in the coming years as the community continues to grow. We have analyzed survey data to find out whether preferences differ among current homeowners, those planning to build in the future, and those of us who have invested purely to capture future resale value. We found that these different groups of Gold Mountain owners agree on the important steps we need to take to realize our community's full potential, both as a place to live and as an investment. We will continue to work toward these goals in the coming year. (You can see

the slide presentation of my annual report of last year's board accomplishments on the GMHOA website)

Part of the optimism generated over the weekend grew out of the community's experience of the re-opened golf course and Nakoma Clubhouse. Sunday's day-long golf outing drew more than 70 players, and the group swelled to well over 100 for an evening potluck. Anyone who missed the proceedings heard repeatedly over the following few days that everyone enjoyed a good time of historic proportions. The evening at Nakoma wound down a weekend of tremendous community renewal.

We can look forward to more such experiences in the future. Bankruptcy Trustee Angelique Clark addressed the annual meeting attendees on Saturday, and impressed the crowd with her energy. She spoke of the importance of collaboration between the community and a future Nakoma owner/successor developer, whom she is clearly working very hard to identify. Much of the property's attractiveness to future investors will depend on how we value that

collaboration. Certainly our own property values will be enhanced by a Nakoma sale and successful, related developments, so it is in our interests to help in any way we can. As a small effort in that direction, stop in at Nakoma this summer and help the place feel lived-in again!

In the same spirit, Nakoma hosted the first HOA board meeting of the new term on Monday, May 28. We seated directors Noreen Roche Carter and Bob Christensen. Noreen accepted re-election to a second term. Bob, appointed in December to fill an incomplete term, was elected for the first time. I am pleased to report that Noreen will continue as chief financial officer. Continuing directors Jim Lafferty and Deb Dobbs will serve again as vice president and secretary/communications director, respectively. It will be my honor to serve during the coming year as your board president. I look forward to working with my fellow owners, HOA board members, and the board of the GMCSO to continue to create shared value at Gold Mountain. ▲

Dispute Resolution at Gold Mountain - It's all Good in the Neighborhood

(Continued from page 2)

members do not patrol Gold Mountain looking for problems, and most matters will not be investigated on the basis of verbal complaints alone. Problems are investigated on the basis of documented, homeowner concerns.

When a written complaint reaches the board, it will trigger the following process.

- 1) The board will meet in executive (closed) session to determine whether probable cause exists to initiate an enforcement action under the CC&Rs.
- 2) If a violation of the CC&Rs seems to be



happening, the Board will write a friendly letter to the Gold Mountain owner or owners whose actions led to the complaint, explain the problem, propose a solution, and set a reasonable deadline for resolving the matter. In most cases, a board member or members will discuss the problem with the owner before the letter is sent. Assuming the owner agrees and complies with the proposed resolution, most if not all disputes that arise will conclude at this stage.

3) Steps 1 and 2 should, hopefully, lead to a resolution of most, if not all matters. But if an owner with an alleged violation disagrees, does not cooperate, does not respond, or requests it, the Association will send a second letter setting a date for a hearing with the Board. At least 15 days notice will be given.

4) At a hearing, if one is scheduled, the Board will meet with the owner in closed session. Following the hearing, the Board will notify the owner of its decision within 3 days. If the Board has notified the owner that a problem still exists, a reasonable deadline will again be set for resolving the matter.

5) After all of these steps, if 1) the Board has found that the homeowner is still violating the CC&Rs and 2) the homeowner has not remedied the situation, or 3) the owner failed to attend the hearing, the Board will turn the matter over to the HOA's attorneys. The attorneys will send a letter to the owner, offering formal mediation.

6) If the owner refuses mediation, or fails to comply with the outcome, the HOA's attorneys will seek a court order. This request will be heard in a bench (non-jury) trial in which a judge's ruling is binding. If the court finds in the Association's favor and the owner still does not resolve the problem by a deadline given, the HOA may take whatever action is necessary to correct the problem. Any expenses incurred by the HOA will be assessed to the owner found in violation. The HOA may also assess fines at any stage after a scheduled Board hearing (Stage 5).

Board members make every effort to resolve disagreements regarding obligations under the CC&Rs amicably, though discussion, if homeowners cannot do so themselves. The CC&Rs do not empower neighbors to take actions on another's property – such as unscrewing a light bulb or clearing brush without permission – to correct perceived violations. When Gold Mountain owners cannot resolve a disagreement themselves, the matter should be brought to the attention of a board member and followed up in writing. This will trigger the enforcement process outlined in this article. ▲

Take the Long Way Home...

(Continued from page 5)

From Gold Mountain take Highway 89 and turn onto 49 to ascend Yuba Pass. An alternative route is the spectacular Gold Lake Highway (closes in winter) and a right onto Highway 49 at Bassetts.

There are numerous places to stop along the route. The Buckhorn serves yummy breakfasts in Sierra City. Check out the Kentucky Mine with its restored stamp mill and museum. Big Springs Garden near Sierra City is another great brunch stop with its trails and gardens. Reservations are required.

Farther down Highway 49 Downieville is packed with history, and unpretentious funkiness. Many buildings are remnants of Gold Rush days, when Downieville's population swelled to 5,000 making it the third largest community in California. A stroll through town, along plank sidewalks, will take you past old brick and stone buildings.

From Downieville the route meanders along the Yuba River and lush green canyon walls before it rolls through historical Nevada City. My favorite spot is the Empire Mine State Historic Park in Grass Valley. The mine closed in 1956 after a century of use that produced nearly 6 million ounces of gold.

Meeting Attendees Hear CSD Infrastructure Master Plan

(Continued from page 3)

property owners will enhance the attractiveness of Gold Mountain as an investment opportunity as well as our overall quality of life.

This committee and the respective Boards comprised of the HOA and the CSD are

One must-see exhibit is near the dilapidated head frame's base: a flight of stairs down to a view of the main shaft.

Between 1865 and 1914, the tunnel grew from 200 feet to four-fifths of a mile long. Off-shoot shafts extended thousands of feet more and reached almost one vertical mile below the surface. Today, the Grass Valley area's 367 miles of mining tunnels are mostly full of water. Be sure to visit the Empire Cottage, home to the mine's longtime owner, William Bowers Bourn Jr. (1857-1936). The grounds around it are nicely landscaped.



The Sierra Buttes as seen from Highway 49 outside Bassetts

Empire Mine State Historic Park is off Highway 49/20 in Grass Valley; exit East Empire Street and follow the signs. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily through August, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. September through April.

Road Surface: Paved
Vehicle: Suitable for all
Winter Use: Snow Tires or Carry Chains ▲

committed to communicating with all of our property owners on our status, recommendations on directions and options, and the impact of potential financing options upon the individual property owner. We also intend to answer any questions in as timely a manner as possible. So please let us hear from you if you have questions or concerns. ▲