



# Apache Plume

A Newsletter for the Community of High Desert, Albuquerque, New Mexico

February 2020

## Voting Members to Elect Four New Board Directors At Annual Meeting Set for April 23, 2020

Voting Members will elect four Directors to the seven-member Board of Directors at their Annual Meeting Thursday, April 23, 2020 at Hope Church, 4710 Juan Tabo. NE. at 6:30 p.m.

Any homeowner interested in becoming a nominee for the Board election should submit a Statement of Interest by Friday, February 28, 2020. The form can be found online at [www.highdesertliving.net](http://www.highdesertliving.net). Click on Volunteer Opportunities, then click on the Statement of Interest to the left if you wish to print and submit a written form, or click on Online Submission to complete and submit the form electronically.

### The Board of Directors

The seven members of the Board of Directors each serve two-year terms which are staggered with three or four positions opening every year in April. Current directors whose terms will expire in April 2020 are David Bentley, Jr. (2-year term), Tom Murdock, (2-year term), Dr. Janet Brierley, (2-year term) and Robin Troy, (1-year term). Robin replaced Brett Rayman who moved last year.

An applicant for a Board Director position must meet the following requirements:

- Must have lived in High Desert as a resident for at least six

months prior to the election.

- Shall not have any hearings or appeals before the Board, the New Construction Committee, or Modification Committee, nor any legal actions pending against the Association or Association officers.
- Shall not be more than 60 days delinquent in the payment of any assessment or other charge due the Association.
- Shall not have been removed as a Director by the Voting Members within the prior two years.

The time commitment for a Board Director is significant and should be carefully considered by applicants. The Board meets formally once a month and occasionally conducts supplemental meetings. In addition, there are frequent email and telephone discussions of issues between Board meetings.

Directors' volunteer time averages between 15-40 hours a month depending on the level of involvement with the Board's special projects, committee membership, and/or being an elected officer of the Board.

The Board elects its own officers in April, shortly after the Voting Members' Annual meeting.

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## High Desert Board Declares Recent Vote to Bring Bylaws Into Compliance With State Laws Has Failed

At its January meeting, members of the Board of Directors declared the recent vote by Voting Members to amend the bylaws as failed.

This was the third attempt to have Voting Members accept changes to the bylaws as mandated by state law.

Voting Members were asked to approve changes to the by-laws to meet state law. They were also given the option to individually accept or reject two optional provisions, one of which allowed the Board to make changes to the bylaws to conform to changes in future state law. The final vote showed 43.9 percent in favor of the changes and 37.1 percent against. Since High Desert bylaws can only be changed by a 75 percent vote in favor, the change to the bylaws failed.

"At this time, the Board has no plans to conduct another vote," Clay Wright, Board President said, citing the expense and time to mail ballots, collect and tally the votes.

The Board proposed the one optional change to allow quicker revisions to bylaws without going through the process of a full vote each time the state passed a change that did not agree with the High Desert bylaws. The association is, according to its own bylaws, required to abide by state law. Allowing the Board to pass changes bringing the association and its bylaws into compliance with state law would streamline the process, Board members decided. The

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*"The Board will continue to follow state-mandated changes to the bylaws. As a result, our governing documents will remain in conflict with state law."* - Clay Wright, Board President

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Board would not be permitted to change the bylaws for any other reason except to bring the association into compliance with state law. That option, along with the others, failed.

"The Board will continue to follow state-mandated changes to the bylaws," Clay said. "As a result, our governing documents will remain in conflict with state law."

The changes that are in conflict include state-required notification to homeowners when a policy change is under consideration by the Board. "We are publishing notification online right now even though it is not required under our current bylaws," Clay said. The state also requires open Board meetings which are not required in the bylaws. Board meetings are currently open. Violations notifications should be 14 days, according to state law. High Desert, which used to give 30 and then 10 days notification, now gives 14 days notification.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# President's Summary

By Clay Wright, HDROA President



Clay Wright

Hello Neighbors,  
As we move into the second month of the new year, I want you to know that our Association is in excellent shape. Our finances are closely managed, our reserve funds are earning interest and we are looking well into the future to try and address issues before they arise.

One way we are trying to meet the future needs is by continuing a gradual transition in the way we conduct business. In the past we were largely focused on maintaining the status quo by meeting the needs of individual villages or even individuals as issues arose. While the approach was logical at the time, in some cases it led to incongruity with the governing documents.

Our governing documents are the bedrock upon which this Association is built. Chip away at the foundation and the entire structure will eventually crumble. With each new Board and new set of Voting Members comes a new set of ideas about how things should be done. New faces bring value and energy. To benefit the entire Association, we must all work within the construct of our own governing documents. Working outside of the documents creates destructive chaos. Working within the framework of our Governing Documents offers continuity and fairness.

One example would be use restrictions. Those are in place

*“With each new Board and new set of Voting Members comes a new set of ideas about how things should be done. New faces bring value and energy.”*

to ensure aesthetic continuity throughout the community and help to maintain property values. While most agree with their intent, conflict arises when the rules are applied to them personally. Simply reading the use restrictions for your specific village and following the modifications flow chart on the website will alleviate a great deal of aggravation and wasted time for all.

Another area where we are trying to create efficiencies is how we interact with Association members. In the past, your volunteer board became mired in everyday minutia. Virtually every little issue, or what someone thought was an issue became a board level concern. The practice was not sustainable either personally or organizationally. We quickly learned that the root cause was simply a lack of understanding about what the Association is and is not – and what it can or cannot do.

To address the issue, we ask that Association members make an effort to educate themselves. Read the Apache Plume, look at the website- especially the documents and policies section. Familiarize yourself with the documents specific to your village. Think of it as a responsibility for which you will be the main benefactor.

## Recent Vote Failed — From Page 1

HDROA attorney Lynn Kurpnik said “The Association is required to comply with the changes of the law even though those changes are not reflected in the Association’s bylaws. Clay said as long as the association follows state law, there will probably be no official consequences, but he could not guarantee that.

A total of 45 Voting Members are allowed in High Desert with just 35 Voting Member positions occupied and 10 positions unfilled. Those unfilled positions result in 20 percent of High Desert homeowners not represented by Voting Members. In the recent failed vote, 22 Voting Members representing 710 homeowner/properties voted “yes” to adopt the state-mandated changes to the bylaws. A total of 13 Voting Members representing 600 homeowners voted “no.”



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# Stucco Repair Work Progressing in High Desert



**Lynnette Rodriguez**

*By Lynnette Rodriguez,  
Community Association Manager*

I am pleased to inform you that we have made some headway on the stucco work in High Desert. The Pinon Point stucco repairs have been ongoing since early November. Keep in mind that cold temperatures delay our vendor's ability to complete the stucco work as quickly as they can in warmer weather.

One of our preferred vendors has created a website exclusive to the stucco work being done in High Desert. I would like to invite you to visit [www.highdesertmaintenance.com](http://www.highdesertmaintenance.com). While visiting this website, you can view work being done currently, as well as work that has already been completed.

As warm weather approaches, please ensure all backyard irrigation

heads are facing away from your stucco walls. Any plants, flowers, trees, or vines touching the stucco can cause harm to the stucco as well. We have seen many backyards throughout High Desert that had irrigation heads spraying the stucco walls and foliage growing up them. This negatively impacts the stucco and causes water to intrude into the walls causing significant deterioration. Please help us preserve our walls by doing your part.

Should you have any question or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact my office, 505-314-5862.



*These photos (left and right) show the brand new stucco walls in High Desert following recent repairs.*

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## HAPPY NEW YEAR & DECADE!

I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season. The Real Estate Market in High Desert did quite well, although the 2019 vs 2018 numbers don't show much improvement. Many times, it depends on what type of properties sold in any given year, especially when it comes to Custom Homes, floorplans, and views. High Desert is still one of The Most Desirable areas in the city. It's come a long way since I was the 7th home up here (along with the apartments) in 1998, and a 3,700 square foot Custom Home sold for \$500,000! Let's hope 2020 continues this upward trend. All indications are pointing that way!

### High Desert 2019 Sold & Closed (On Estate Lots)

**Listing Count:23**

Sqft: 4,560	\$/Sqft: 222.3	DOM: 77	<u>Averages:</u>	L-Price: \$1,022,157	S-Price: \$983,976	%LP to %SP: 96.62
			<u>Price:</u>			
			High: \$1,595,000	Low: \$562,500	Median: \$965,000	

### High Desert 2018 Sold & Closed (On Estate Lots)

**Listing Count:24**

Sqft: 4,375	\$/Sqft: 216.18	DOM: 90	<u>Averages:</u>	L-Price: \$990,433	S-Price: \$937,341	%LP to %SP: 95.28
			<u>Price:</u>			
			High: \$1,444,116	Low: \$535,000	Median: \$917,500	

### High Desert 2019 Sold & Closed (Non-Estate Lots)

**Listing Count:81**

Sqft: 2,292	\$/Sqft: 213.02	DOM: 31	<u>Averages:</u>	L-Price: \$492,018	S-Price: \$484,094	%LP to %SP: 98.51
			<u>Price:</u>			
			High: \$938,995	Low: \$275,000	Median: \$489,500	

### High Desert 2018 Sold & Closed (Non-Estate Lots)

**Listing Count:74**

Sqft: 2,455	\$/Sqft: 207.23	DOM: 42	<u>Averages:</u>	L-Price: \$517,016	S-Price: \$505,782	%LP to %SP: 97.86
			<u>Price:</u>			
			High: \$920,000	Low: \$290,000	Median: \$503,500	

### FREE REAL ESTATE REVIEW

How would you like to know what your home is worth, even if you are not selling? Please contact me, and I will be more than happy to do an analysis unique to your home.

# High Desert Patrol Report: October- December 2019

Call Type:	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Call Type:	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<b>CRIMINAL/</b>				(Lost) Property	0	0	0
<b>CRITICAL EVENTS:</b>				Gate Issues	6	11	4
Assault/Fight	0	0	0	Street Lights/Maintenance	0	1	0
Breaking/Entering: Home	0	2	1	<b>OTHER:</b>			
Breaking/Entering: Vehicle	5	1	0	Animal Control Calls	1	1	0
Construction Site Burglary	0	0	0	Abandoned Vehicle Calls	0	0	0
Dwelling Fire	0	0	0	Snake Calls	0	0	0
Vehicle Fire	0	0	0	Vacation Home Checks	35	45	47
Grass/Wild Fires	0	0	0	Security Inspection	88	101	84
Medical Emergency	2	0	0				
Alarms	4	7	7				
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	8	4	15				
Vandalism	4	5	2				
<b>TRAFFIC EVENTS:</b>							
Vehicle Crash	0	0	0				
Parking Violations	3	0	0				
<b>PREVENTION &amp; NUISANCE:</b>							
Loud Music/Party Noise	1	0	0				
Salesperson/Solicitor	0	1	0				
Open Door/Window/Garage	16	10	15				
Notices Posted on Residences	0	0	0				
Pool Issues	0	0	0				
<b>QUALITY OF LIFE:</b>							
(Lost and Found:)							
(Lost) Children	0	0	0				
(Lost) Pets	1	1	2				

## Security Contact Numbers:

- In the event of a true emergency (a crime in progress or a life-threatening situation) call **911** immediately. Residents should then follow up immediately with a call to G4S Security Patrol at **(505) 485-5658**.
- For urgent, but non-emergency situations (a suspicious person or vehicle, an annoying salesperson, a loud party, an animal complaint, etc.), call the G4S Security Patrol at **(505) 485-5658**.
- For routine calls (such as notifying G4S of vacation dates, etc.) you should also call the Security Patrol at: **(505) 485-5658**, or go to [www.highdesertliving.net](http://www.highdesertliving.net), click on *Community Safety* and scroll to the bottom of that page for links to the form.



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## High Desert Dermatology Welcomes Niki Manole Ninopoulos, PA-C

Niki Manole Ninopoulos was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of New Mexico with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Spanish and a minor in Biology. After graduating, Niki worked as a Research Scientist at the University of New Mexico's Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Addictions while simultaneously shadowing and learning from a few of Albuquerque's great physicians. She was then given the opportunity to continue her medical education through the University of New Mexico Physician Assistant Program where she received her Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies. She was also awarded the UNM PA program award of excellence.



Niki Manole  
Ninopoulos, PA

Niki's first encounter with Dr. Carey was many years ago. As a young woman, Niki struggled with acne and was a patient of Dr. Carey's. Her passion for dermatology grew after seeing what a profound difference he had on her life. She is honored to work alongside the great providers at High Desert Dermatology to deliver the same exceptional care she received as a patient.

When not at work, Niki enjoys spending time with her husband and young son. She is actively involved with the Greek community of Albuquerque and also enjoys baking and reading.

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## Keep An Eye Out For Suspicious Persons in High Desert

By James Gage, Operations Manager G4S  
(G4S is contracted with HDROA to provide security services.)

High Desert is home to some of the best views in Albuquerque. From the very top of High Desert, the view is spectacular during the day and even better at night. The shining of the lights throughout Albuquerque and the close proximity of the Sandias, gives the best visibility of the stars and makes for amazing and astounding reflections. These views can bring in persons who want to sit back and just observe and enjoy the scenery, however, these individuals may not know that the area is private property.

Some individuals may come to High Desert for the scenery, family, friends, or the trails throughout High Desert. Not all individuals know where authorized parking is available and some persons end up parking on the streets, which creates a safety issue for the residents of High Desert. If you notice vehicles parked in unauthorized areas, please contact the G4S security team at **505-485-5658**. The security team will respond and make attempts to contact the vehicle owner.

### Suspicious People?

At times there are individuals walking around the High Desert community. Among their duties, the security team keeps a vigilant watch out for individuals who should not be in the area. Once the team is aware of someone, the officer on site responds to the location and attempts to identify the suspicious individual. The security team works closely with law enforcement when needed. It is our ongoing endeavor to work with and assist High Desert neighborhoods to keep everyone safe and secure within the community.

*Please remember if you see something, say something. If you don't recognize someone, please let the security team know.*

Please remember if you see something, say something. If you don't recognize someone, please let the security team know. The security team does complete incident reports on all suspicious activity that is reported. This helps us identify trends and allows us to be proactive. The security team is happy to assist with all calls, at any time.



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*Leeco Services Spring Update*

## Vegetation Cleared for Fire Safety In High Desert

*By Jeremy Humphrey, Vice President,  
Leeco Grounds Management, Inc. (Leeco is contracted with  
HDROA to provide landscaping services.)*

With February here, our preparation for spring has started.

### **Vegetation Cleared For Fire Safety**

We have cleared all of the vegetation outside perimeter walls around the entire community. This is done as a matter of fire safety and is done annually and to a distance of five feet.

We are currently cutting back all flowering perennials and grasses. The dry grass tops and dry flowers normally protect the plants from snow and cold during the November to February/March time frame. We have to now remove this growth to make room for the new flowers and blades of grass.

We also cut back the grasses in medians as a fire safety measure.

### **Tree Pruning to Remove Deadwood**

We are working on tree pruning and removing deadwood or damaged branches. We are selectively pruning shrubs and removing some of those branches that obstruct traffic and often require constant pruning during the growing season.

### **Non Selective Herbicide Applied**

We have applied non-selective herbicide to all areas with buffalo

grass to eradicate all cool season grasses and weeds and to provide a clean roomy area for the buffalo grass to grow in May and June.

### **Sprinklers**

With spring on the way, we are charging, testing and inspecting all the sprinkler systems. In addition, we are watering trees and shrubs as needed under tech supervision.

### **Other Areas of Landscape Work this Spring**

Bluegrass turf will be aerated and fertilized with pre- and post-emergent on March 1, 2020.

All street cracks in the community will be sprayed with a non-selective herbicide to eradicate crack weeds.

The erosion in all arroyos is being checked and repaired. Work on the arroyos controlled by the Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA) needs to be completed before spring rains to avoid further erosion near homes. The AMAFCA work we do involves cleaning out debris that can cause flow blockages or changes to the flow channels. High Desert (and Leeco) are responsible for Level 1 and 2 cleanups of the arroyos, which include the debris removal. Level 3 and 4 involve major event-caused damage or changes to flow channels.

The final clean-up to the rest of the property is ongoing since tumbleweeds will start rolling in a month...and we will be chasing them!

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# High Desert Treasurer's Report: 2nd Quarter Fiscal Year 2019-20



By Tom Murdock  
Treasurer, Board of Directors

For the first half of the 2019 – 2020 fiscal year, the Master Association had an income of \$605,127.67 which was \$4,752 (0.79%) more than initially budgeted. Mandated transfer to reserves of \$31,275 resulted in a net income of \$23,493. Expenses totaled \$581,634.57 and were \$36,892 (6.77%) less than budgeted, resulting in an operating net income of \$23,493.

**Tom Murdock**  
ing net income of \$23,493.

### Gated Villages

The Gated Villages had a combined income of \$148,144. Expenses of \$98,249 and reserve contributions of \$56,150 totaled \$154,399 which yields a combined gated village operating net loss of \$6,255.

### Reserve Accounts

The Association reserve accounts remain healthy and fully funded as mandated in the current reserve study. The Master Association had a balance of \$691,340 in its reserve checking and CD accounts. The Arroyo Reserve account balance was \$104,717. The gated villages had a combined reserve checking and CD balance of \$1,064,884.

### Other

As of 31 December 2019, the High Desert Residential Owners Association had cash assets of \$2,663,615.

### Overdue Accounts

As of 31 December 2019, 116 owners had accounts receivable balances totaling \$97,328 which is a delinquency rate of 7.15%. Removing the amounts associated with pending litigation reduces the delinquency rate to 5.7%. Of note is the fact that the top twelve delinquent owners (those owing \$2,000 or more) account for 81.8% of the total receivables.

### Association is Well-Positioned to Meet Requirements

The Association continues to remain well-positioned to meet all of its financial requirements and obligations.

• See more Treasurer's Reports on page 11 •

### HDROA Reserve Account Balances as of 31 December 2019

	Reserves
<b>Master</b>	691,340.64
<b>Arroyo</b>	104,717.35
<b>Canyons</b>	186,630.91
<b>Chaco Compound</b>	52,659.27
<b>Desert Mountain</b>	236,005.32
<b>Enclave</b>	114,174.31
<b>Legends</b>	115,986.11
<b>Trillium</b>	254,696.04
<b>Wilderness Canon</b>	8,786.04
<b>Wilderness Compound</b>	95,946.36
	<b>1,860,942.35</b>

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**HDROA Income/Expense Report**  
**YTD as of 31 December, 2019**

<b>INCOME</b>	
HOMEOwner ASSESSMENTS	\$ 584,280.00
COST SHARING - ALTEZZA	39,370.50
ASSESSMENT INTEREST	1511.26
ASSESSMENT LATE FEES	1200.00
LEGAL/COLLECTION FEES	(76.00)
GATE REMOTES	-
INTEREST INCOME	2,749.60
UNREALIZED GAIN/LOSS	570.00
RECOVERY OF BAD DEBT	-
PENALTIES/FINES	3,797.31
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>	<b>3,000.00</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>636,402.67</b>
<b>TRANSFER TO RESERVES</b>	<b>-31,275.00</b>
<b>Total INCOME</b>	<b>605,127.67</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PR	\$26,805.82
BANK CHARGES	\$90.00
INSURANCE	\$7,625.52
LIEN/COLLECTION COSTS	\$653.82
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT	\$8,344.47
BOARD/VOTING MEMBER MEETINGS	\$668.70
OFFICE EXPENSE	\$806.14
POSTAGE	\$141.90
PRINTING	\$3,182.62
MAILINGS	\$3,575.52
BILLING STATEMENTS	\$3,887.55
RESERVE STUDY	\$0.00
<b>LANDSCAPE</b>	
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE	\$90,340.66
LANDSCAPE REPLACEMENT	\$15,050.97
LANDSCAPE OTHER	\$17,098.94
ARROYO & POND MAINTENANCE	\$14,192.77
EROSION CONTROL	\$3,119.40
IRRIGATION REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$12,975.20
PET CLEANUP	\$10,946.10
TRAIL MAINTENANCE	\$1,059.32
LANDSCAPE PROJECTS - MASTER PLAN	\$34,055.06
<b>PROFESSIONAL FEES</b>	
ACCOUNTING/TAX PREP FEES	\$6,364.63
CONSULTING	\$33,632.38
LEGAL FEES - COLLECTION/SMALL CLAIMS	\$27,455.70
LEGAL - GENERAL SERVICES	\$8,969.41
ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT	\$70,550.28
SECURITY SERVICES	\$108,038.15
SECURITY - APD	\$5,060.00
<b>TAXES/OTHER EXPENSES</b>	
ALLOWANCE FOR DOUBTFUL ACCOUNTS	\$1,114.39
COMMUNITY EVENTS	\$6,231.92
WELCOME COMMITTEE	\$1,013.83
WEBSITE	\$2,360.82
GATE & GUARDHOUSE MAINTENANCE	\$458.42
SIGN/ENTRY MAINTENANCE	\$382.91
WALL REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$13,249.76
SNOW REMOVAL	\$4,658.64
LOCKS & KEYS	(\$96.95)
SECURITY CAMERA SERVICE	\$181.70
MISCELLANEOUS	\$1,126.33
HDROA OFFICE	\$4,666.20
TAXES - CORPORATE	\$11,339.48
<b>UTILITIES</b>	
ELECTRICITY	\$1,498.27
TELEPHONE	\$510.00
WATER/SEWER	\$36,612.82
<b>Total EXPENSE</b>	<b>599,799.57</b>
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 5,328.10</b>

# High Desert Treasurer's Reports


**HDROA Gated Villages Income/Expense Report**  
**YTD as of 31 December, 2019**

<b>Canyons</b>	
INCOME	\$ 14,837.24
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(5,274.50)
EXPENSES	6,572.29
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>2,990.45</b>
<b>Chaco Compound</b>	
INCOME	\$ 6,186.88
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(2,321.50)
EXPENSES	3,630.16
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>235.22</b>
<b>Desert Mountain</b>	
INCOME	\$ 56,283.40
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(20,683.75)
EXPENSES	43,098.88
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(7,497.23)</b>
<b>The Enclave</b>	
INCOME	\$ 14,781.28
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(7,308.00)
EXPENSES	6,098.49
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>1,374.79</b>
<b>Trillium</b>	
INCOME	\$ 25,532.04
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(7,644.00)
EXPENSES	15,820.36
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>2,067.68</b>
<b>Wilderness Compound</b>	
INCOME	\$ 8,278.74
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(2,544.00)
EXPENSES	7,696.65
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(1,961.91)</b>
<b>The Legends</b>	
INCOME	\$ 17,881.16
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(7,644.00)
EXPENSES	13,057.13
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(2,819.97)</b>
<b>Wilderness Canon</b>	
INCOME	\$ 4,346.46
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(2,730.00)
EXPENSES	1,829.14
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(212.68)</b>
<b>Total Gated Villages Income</b>	<b>\$ 73,504.57</b>
<b>Total Transfer to Reserves</b>	<b>(28,074.75)</b>
<b>Total Gated Villages Expenses</b>	<b>57,981.72</b>
<b>Total Operating Net Income</b>	<b>(\$ 12,551.90)</b>



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## 2019 High Desert Studio Tour Draws Visitors to See HD Artists' Work



**Dagmar Beinenz-Byrd of The Highlands**

One of the artists who has exhibited her work each year is Dagmar Beinenz-Byrd of The Highlands (see photo above) who spins, dyes and knits her speciality wools into a variety of objects ranging from clothes to fiber artworks.

### Another Success!

Thea Berg called this year's Tour "another success!" and thanked all the High Desert participants and homeowners who toured.

High Desert's 11th Annual Studio Tour took place Saturday, November 16 under the direction of longtime Studio Tour coordinator Thea Berg. Thea conceived and implemented the tour in 2008, contacting and encouraging High Desert artists, organizing publicity and tying up purple balloons on the day of the tour. The Tour has been held without fail each year since then with regular visitors and a sense of holiday fun throughout the day each November.



*One exhibitor this year was Sarah Lovell, a potter who crafts nature-inspired functional stoneware.*

## Tramway Cleanup is Set for Saturday, April 18 — All Volunteers Welcome!

Want to do your part in keeping the area on Tramway near High Desert clean? The Tramway Cleanup group will be meeting on Saturday, April 18 at 10 a.m. in the Albertsons parking lot at Tramway and Academy. Together the group spends a couple of hours picking up trash along Tramway as part of the Adopt-A-Highway program. Homeowner Michele Lesher is Chair of the group. Interested? Email her at [mlesher222@comcast.net](mailto:mlesher222@comcast.net) or meet the group on Saturday, April 18 at 10 a.m. at Albertsons.



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# Crime in Albuquerque

By Dr. Janet Brierley, Board Director & Crime Prevention Liaison



Dr. Janet Brierley

## Front Door Security

*It's 2 p.m. on a warm Wednesday afternoon and you are relaxing after lunch. The front doorbell rings and you really don't want to deal with any callers; there have been a few political canvassers around recently and you are simply not in the mood for thoughtful discussion right now. You ignore the bell. The*

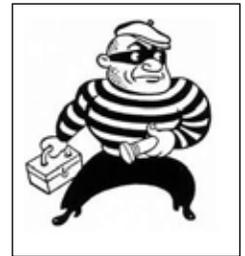
*next thing you see is a shadow passing by the back window, and before you have time to even stand up, a strange man is standing at the open patio door next to you.*

Obviously this would be a very alarming situation, but it illustrates an important piece of security advice which is to always respond to callers at your house in order to indicate that there is somebody at home. Criminals prefer to enter empty houses, which is why most burglaries occur on weekdays during working hours, when there is a better chance there will be no one in the house. If thieves think somebody is at home, then they will leave. They test whether or not the house is empty by ringing the doorbell and seeing if anyone answers.

### Communicate Through A Closed Door

It is not necessary to open the door to communicate with the visitor, and generally the sound of your voice will be enough to make any potential wrongdoer leave. If you are concerned that

the visitor was a suspicious person, then call High Desert Security Patrol at (505) 485-5658 and they will check the area. If you feel under immediate threat, dial 911.



### Video Doorbells

Many High Desert homeowners have invested in video doorbells. When activated, a message is sent to your cellphone so you can respond remotely to anyone who comes to the front door, even if you are out.

Some video doorbells are equipped with motion detector cameras that record activity at the front of the property. Suspicious events can be downloaded, and the data shared. Recent data shows an apparent increase in attempted vehicle break-ins in this part of the city. The videos show criminals approaching vehicles parked in driveways, trying door handles and peering inside to look for items worth stealing. When parking your car remember to take out garage door openers and remove all items, especially computers and purses, but also jackets and gym bags. This advice is for everyone, including people living in gated villages.

### First Line of Defence Against Thieves

Your front door is your first line of defense against thieves. Make sure you respond to rings and knocks whenever possible as that is an effective way of scaring criminals away from your property.

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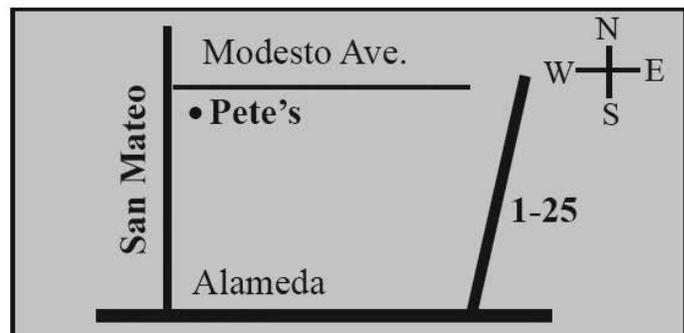
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# Landscape Committee Activities Update



**Ray Berg**

*By Ray Berg, Landscape Committee Chair*

The High Desert Landscape Committee has been working on restarting some of its activities in the key areas around the development that need revisiting after around 20 years in existence.

The first two of these will be at the Spain Entrance and the Kiva Water Feature Park (see sidebar below, right). The initial steps will be to assess the status of these areas against the original designs and any plans that have been developed for them, such as the High Desert Landscape Master Plan.

We will also look at new techniques or technologies (such as water conservation or harvesting, watering, plants, etc.) that have come along since these areas were built. We will be implementing any desirable changes as quickly as the budget allows.

## Looking at Redesign and Updates

We are also starting some initial planning on what needs to be done next. This activity includes areas that need redesign as well as areas that need updating due to the slow deterioration that frequently occurs with landscaped areas over time. One of the principal sources of information for this activity will be the High Desert Landscape Master Plan.

## Fire Mitigation

Another activity that we have been working on is fire mitigation.

*We will also look at new techniques or technologies (such as water conservation or harvesting, watering, plants, etc.) that have come along since the Kiva Water Feature Park and Spain Entrance were built.*

This is being performed by the Fire Prevention Working Group (FPWG), which is looking at what can be done to mitigate wild land fires (such as those that have affected the Highlands areas and the Forest Service east of the development) as well as median and other fires that have occurred in and around the development. This activity has been ably led by homeowner Camille Singaraju, who is a member of both the FPWG and the Landscape Committee.

The FPWG has proposed an experiment in areas of arroyos and open spaces adjacent to community walls. The experiment involves cutting back larger plants such as chamisa, four-winged saltbush, Apache plume to a distance of 10 feet from community walls, and cutting back grasses to a distance of 20 feet. The details, such as cost, acceptability to AMAFCA, consistency with the HD Guidelines, etc., will determine how acceptable the plan is.

The topic of fire mitigation is much more complicated than you might expect, given that it involves Elena Gallegos Land Grant requirements, High Desert Guidelines requirements, Albuquerque Fire Rescue guidelines recommendations, and other issues. This activity is being reported through several channels, given its importance to High Desert owners.

## What is the Kiva Water Park?

The High Desert Water Kiva and Water Harvesting Garden is on the corner of Spain and Imperata.

The kiva sits astride a side branch of the Bear Canyon Arroyo that cuts through the open space on the north side of Spain from above High Desert Street to Tramway.

Completed in 2003, this park is a collaboration between the landscape design architects at Sites Southwest and the hydrologic engineers at Bohannon Huston.

The kiva is designed to provide the High Desert community with a formal place to view interactions between a desiltation and detention storm drain facility.

Water is harvested from both the adjacent street and from the arroyo watershed that empties directly into the kiva. The "Water Kiva" (ponding area) is defined by stone clad banks in a formal circular pattern with paths, and protected seating areas above.

A large grama grass sculpture is in fact an overflow drain inlet into the City's storm drain system.

The Water Harvesting Garden collects the street and site water and provides it to colorful perennial plantings throughout the park. The walking paths around the kiva connect to a path that proceeds east up the south bank of the arroyo all the way to High Desert Street.

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# The Risks of Fire in High Desert Increase As More Homes in ABQ Are Built in Wildland Urban Interface

By Lt. Brian Fox,  
Wildland Coordinator Albuquerque Fire Rescue

As part of the southwest region, Albuquerque's risk of wildfires is real and is typically high to very high by late spring through the summer until we begin receiving our monsoonal rains.

We are faced with different landscapes between the dry deserts of our mesas with light fuels to mountainous terrain in the foothills with heavy fuels. We also have the Middle Rio Grande Valley (Bosque), and its unique fuel load of both light and heavy fuels. These areas make for three totally different scenarios when it comes to wildfires, both how the fire will burn and how the tactics for fighting the fire will be established. Fuel conditions can change rapidly based on dry temperatures and lack of moisture.

## What Sort of Fuel?

In the profession of wildland firefighting we define fuels as whatever is available for a fire to consume, i.e. grass, brush, shrubs, and trees.

The lighter the fuel the easier it is to ignite and the faster it spreads. Wildfires that burn in light fuels burn fast and will usually only spread if the fuel load is continuous or the fire is wind driven.

Heavy fuels are harder to ignite but once they do they usually burn so hot it is nearly impossible in most cases to fight these fires close up.

*Some homeowners understand these risks and they prepare both their landscape and their homes against wildfires. Others who don't understand these risks do nothing to prepare their landscape and homes against wildfire.*

Regardless of which type of fuel a wildfire is burning, it still has the potential to severely damage property and cause injury to homeowners in its path.

As time progresses, more and more homes are being built in the wildland urban interface (WUI) areas of Albuquerque, especially the foothills. By adding homes in these areas we are adding additional fuels and risks.

Some homeowners understand these risks and they prepare both their landscape and their homes against wildfires. Other homeowners who don't understand these risks do nothing to prepare their landscape and homes against wildfire. This creates a greater risk for both life and property.

It is important for a homeowner to understand that when a wildfire burns, it will burn over a large geographic area that will tax the resources of Albuquerque Fire Rescue and surrounding agencies. When a fire burns rapidly, our first two priorities are life/safety, and

*(Continued on page 17)*



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# Fire Risks in High Desert — From Page 16

property conservation.

Once fire crews have eliminated threats to life safety, we will begin triaging (assessing) structures to categorize them based on how the homeowner has prepared their home and landscape against wildfires. Once we have assessed a home we will place it in a category. These categories are - Stand Alone, Prep and Hold, Prep and Leave, or Rescue Drive By.

If a homeowner that lives in the WUI area is aware of the risks that come along with living in these areas as they relate to wildfires, they have usually mitigated their homes which will be categorized as Stand Alone. This means the homeowner has removed all fuel around their home and despite fire conditions their home can stand alone without the fire department having to add any protective measures. This becomes important to understand when imagining a community with 100 homes and a wildfire burning rapidly through it.

Albuquerque Fire Rescue has 22 fire engines and 5 brush trucks that have fire suppression capabilities. That is a total of 27 fire suppression units. If you divide 100 homes by 27 fire suppression apparatus you will have approximately 1 fire apparatus trying to protect every 3 homes. Also consider that all 27 fire suppression units will not be able to respond and stay on one incident for its entire duration due to the fact there are other emergencies throughout the City, Albuquerque Fire Rescue responds to over 106,000 calls annually. Realistically that would put approximately 1 fire suppression apparatus covering 10 homes. Now imagine if 8 of the 10 homeowners have not removed the risk of wildfires to their homes

and/or removed fuels around their homes. This makes our job to save their home and other homes nearly impossible.

Over the last 3 years AFR has responded to at least 2 wildfires in or around the High Desert neighborhood each year. Some of these fires have burned several acres which threatened and/or damage homes. Two of the most recent fires that caused significant damage were the High Desert Fire in May of 2018 located in the Desert Highlands that burned 11 acres, threatened 13 homes and caused significant damage to 3 homes. The second fire was the Bear Canyon Fire in June of 2019, located in the foothills above the Highlands that also threatened multiple homes and burned 56 acres.

These fires are becoming more frequent and it is not a matter of if it is going to happen but a matter of when it will happen. In 2018 AFR's Wildland Division began working with the HDROA Board of Directors to revise the landscaping guidelines for premier estate homes to reduce the risk of wildfires. After the Bear Canyon Fire in 2019 residents from High Desert as well as AFR's Wildland Division formed a Wildfire Prevention Working Group that is working to reduce the threat of wildfires within High Desert Neighborhoods. Some of these action items include public education, fuel reduction projects, revision of policies, home assessments, etc. As we continue to work together and move forward, we are asking homeowners to do their part and recognize that the "risk is real." Please do your part and get involved. There are several resources available to every homeowner.

For more information, go to AFR's webpage: [www.cabq.gov/fire/safety-information/wildfire-safety](http://www.cabq.gov/fire/safety-information/wildfire-safety)

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## Wilderness Cañon Homeowners Host First Breakfast Meeting to Discuss Important Issues

On Jan 25, 2020, Bomi Parakh (Voting Member) and Linda Blanchard hosted the first breakfast meeting of Wilderness Cañon residents in High Desert. Wilderness Cañon is the newest and last village to be built in High Desert. Dr. Janet Brierley, a Board member of the High Desert ROA was also in attendance and shared updates from the Voting Members Quarterly Meeting held earlier that week. Attendees introduced themselves, shared contact information and thoughts on security, fire safety and other items of interest, and suggested ideas for future get-togethers. A neighborhood watch/night-out is planned when the weather gets warmer.



*Wilderness Cañon homeowners, (left to right): Barbara Gallegos, Richard Gallegos, Voting Member Bomi Parakh, Bob Suiter, Rich Eagle (standing), Cindy Suiter, Jon Mitovich, Sandy Warnock and Phil Warnock.*

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- Pat & Rob D., Los Alamos/Sandia Labs Scientists

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*The High Desert Gardener*

# Starting a Vegetable Garden

By Margo Murdock  
High Desert Resident**Margo Murdock****Why Grow Your Own Vegetables?**

There are several reasons why you might want to grow your own vegetables. These are my reasons.

*Freshness:* you can pick your vegetables the same day you eat them. *Hard to find varieties:* you can find heirloom varieties, new or unusual varieties and help preserve the seeds. You can grow just the vegetables you or your friends like. *Protect your health:*

you know how your food is grown, ideally without the use of pesticides or chemical fertilizers. *Closer to nature:* you become part of the process and have pride in what you grow. You can enjoy being outdoors. *Exercise:* you have to get up and down, lift things, stretch and bend.

**Finding Your Garden Site**

The best orientation for a garden, especially in New Mexico, is on the east side of your house with some protection from north winds (using conifers or walls) and the south sun (using shade trees, trellises, and walls). With east canyon winds, which are a real possibility for us, an east-facing wall or shrub hedge helps, too. An east-facing garden gets afternoon shade. Only a few crops can stand up to all-day sun and our altitude.

**Rows/Beds/Containers**

There are several ways to build the garden: in raised or sunken rows, in raised or sunken beds, or in containers using potting soil. If you are starting your first garden, you might try using large tub

containers with potting soil (not garden soil). The advantage to the containers is that if you don't position them properly, you can always move them. Also, they use less water and are easier to protect in case of frost – just cover them up with an old sheet. They also weigh less because potting soil was developed for shipping plants from growers and nurseries.

Your garden rows can be slightly above or below ground level and a soaker hose or drip irrigation can be used for watering. A timer can be placed on the hose attached to your faucet or you can use a zone on your automatic irrigation controller. You can amend the soil or have garden soil delivered to use in this type of garden.

Beds are built with edging, either stone, block, or lumber. Lumber deteriorates over time however and will need to be redone. Garden soil is used in these beds too. Raised beds can be built at a height that works for you with a cap (or ledge) so you can sit, or taller with no cap so you can stand. You can create a PVC hoop over the bed to extend the season, shade some crops, or keep some pests away. You do have to open the area occasionally for pollinator access. The depth of the bed depends on what you want to grow. Carrots, parsnips, and turnips take a deeper bed.

**What to Grow**

**Cool Season Vegetables:** These vegetables like cold weather and grow best when the soil is cooler. The following is a short list of cool season vegetables. Hardy means "frost hardy." We are in USDA hardiness zone 7. The Master Gardener book on Gardening includes the planting time(s) for various vegetables for this part of the state. Seed packets can give you hints about when  
*(Continued on page 21)*

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## Growing A Vegetable Garden — From Page 20

to start seeds or transplants, but local knowledge is always better.

- **Hardy:** broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, collards, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, onion, peas, radishes spinach, turnips.
- **Half Hardy:** (handles less frost): beets, carrots, cauliflower, celery, endive, lettuce, parsnips, potatoes, Swiss chard.

**Warm Season Vegetables:** These vegetables grow in warmer weather (at least 70 degrees) and may stop growing when temperatures reach 85 degrees. In Albuquerque that means vegetables start growing in late April and early May but may shut down in June and not start growing again until monsoons bring cool afternoon temperatures. You can plant earlier in April, but you'll need to protect the plants if a freeze is forecast.

- **Tender:** green beans, sweet corn, black-eyed peas, tomatoes
- **Very tender:** cantaloupe, cucumber, eggplant, chile and bell pepper, lima bean, okra, pumpkin, summer squash, sweet potato, watermelon

### Options for Starting Plants

You can get plants into the garden in two ways: as transplants or by direct seeding. Some plants don't transplant well (such as peas) so they must be directly seeded. Starting your own plants from seed is an amazing experience. You'll need seeding trays, a transparent cover, seedling potting soil, a grow light, and a heating pad. Radiant heating makes the heating pad unnecessary.

A few hints for starting your own plants include: raise up the height of the grow lights if the seedlings begin to grow into them, plant two seeds per hole, and put the lights on a timer. Seeds have different requirements so don't mix seeds in a tray unless the seedlings have the same needs. Finally, you need to harden them off

before putting into the garden. That means bringing them outside (to an eastern exposure) for an increasing amount of time each day to allow them to adapt to outside sun and wind. Of course, you can always buy transplants, but your choices are much reduced.

**Direct seeding** is just that. You seed directly into the garden. Be sure to develop a plan where each type of seed is to be planted and use markers to identify the variety. Paper seed packets deteriorate. Rotate crops each year so you don't wear out your soil. Amending the soil with compost or other "missing" ingredients (usually iron and zinc) also helps. With containers and potting soil I worry about this less since I change out the soil.

**Fertilizing:** My favorite fertilizers are fish emulsion that has not had the nutrients heat-processed out and liquid seaweed. Follow the labels for application and timing.

**Fall Gardens:** Use seeds with a shorter "days to harvest" number and plant according to the table in *Down to Earth* or the NMSU recommended schedule for the central part of the state. One of my failures *and* success stories was a fall lettuce crop. I direct seeded some varieties, but they didn't grow very well and were not ready in the fall. I used a pup tent shaped cover with shade cloth over the winter and took off the cover in the spring. The lettuce took off and I had early lettuce, my best ever crop.

**Other Reference Sources:** Take any information that is not local with a grain of salt. Most areas of the U.S. have acid soil and lots of organic matter in it. We have alkaline soil and very little organic matter. Here you need to add compost and a type of iron needed for heavily alkaline soil 7.5 and above. Products for adding iron to your soil need to have FeEDDHA formulated iron to be effective in our local soil.

I hope I got you excited about starting a vegetable garden and I'd love to hear about your experiences. Feel free to share your vegetables with me, too!

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# High Desert Committee & Project Contact Information

If you have a question about High Desert, who should you ask? The answer to many questions is easily found on the High Desert website at [www.highdesertliving.net](http://www.highdesertliving.net). A calendar of events, all our governing documents, easy access to the request form for modifications, and a great deal more is found on the site. When it comes to High Desert, the website is the place to start. For other questions:

- Owners should contact HOAMCO at (505) 314-5862 for any inquiry about High Desert development, questions about the CC&Rs, or concerns with the operation of the Association.

- See the names and telephone numbers on the opposite page for Board members, patrols, website and newsletter information.

- High Desert residents can contact their elected Voting Members for specific answers to questions concerning their villages. Village Voting Member contact information can be found online at [www.highdesertliving.net](http://www.highdesertliving.net). Click on "Contact Us" and select Voting Members from the left hand menu. Residents can also call the office at 505-314-5862 to learn their village representative. High Desert Committee chairperson contacts are below.

- **Crime Prevention Liaison:**

Dr. Janet Brierley: (505) 856-5390: [jkbrierley@comcast.net](mailto:jkbrierley@comcast.net)

- **Welcome Committee Co-Chairs:**

Amy & Bill Stein: (404) 987-5254: [alsypula@gmail.com](mailto:alsypula@gmail.com)

Robin Troy; 505-967-5119; [TRY\\_RBN@YAHOO.COM](mailto:TRY_RBN@YAHOO.COM)

- **Voting Member Chairperson**

Caroline Enos: (505) 797-7044: [dccenos@comcast.net](mailto:dccenos@comcast.net)

- **Gated Villages Committee:** Lucy Sinkular: (day) 883-3070, (evening) 703-638-4286; [lucy.sinkular@gmail.com](mailto:lucy.sinkular@gmail.com)

- **Park and Trail Cleanup Projects:**

Open Position: Contact [highdesertmanager@hoamco.com](mailto:highdesertmanager@hoamco.com)

- **Tramway Cleanup Project:**

Michelle Leshner: 505-844-2854: [mlesher222@comcast.net](mailto:mlesher222@comcast.net)

- **Landscape Advisory Committee Chair:**

Ray Berg: 505-366-8104: [rsberg01@comcast.net](mailto:rsberg01@comcast.net)

- **Communications Committee Chair:**

Dr. Janet Brierley: (505) 856-5390

[CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com](mailto:CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com)

## G4S Provides Vacation Watches For High Desert Homes

Are you leaving on vacation and would like G4S to keep an eye on your home? You can call the patrol service directly or fill out a form and send it to management.

Go to the High Desert website at [www.highdesertliving.net](http://www.highdesertliving.net). Click on "Notices & Reminders" and scroll to the article "Leaving on Vacation" and click the link for the Vacation Form. Fill out the form and fax, email or mail it to the HOAMCO address. An online submission form is available, too. Or, call G4S directly at (505) 485-5658.

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<b>Vice President:</b>	• <b>David J. Bentley, Jr.</b> <i>djbentley@q.com</i>	<b>(505) 299-6871</b>	April 2018 - April 2020
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<b>Director:</b>	• <b>Robin Troy</b> <i>TRY_RBN@YAHOO.com</i>	<b>(505) 967-5119</b>	April 2019 - April 2020
<b>Director:</b>	• <b>Neil Wetsch</b> <i>neilwetsch@gmail.com</i>	<b>(505) 944-6000</b>	April 2019 - April 2021

**Management**

- **HOAMCO:**  
8700-A Education PL NW, Albuquerque, NM 87114  
*(Note new office location)*  
PO Box 67590, Albuquerque, NM 87193-6590  
(505) 888-4479 Fax: (505) 888-4483  
After-hours emergency maintenance phone contact:  
(505) 508-9568
- **Community Association Manager:**  
**Lynnette Rodriguez:**  
High Desert Northeast Heights Office  
(505) 314-5862  
Fax: (928)-776-0050  
*highdesertmanager@hoamco.com*
- **High Desert Office (Northeast Heights):**  
10555 Montgomery Boulevard NE  
Building 1, Suite 100  
(505) 314-5862 Fax: (928)-776-0050
- **G4S:**  
Security Patrol: **(505) 485-5658**  
(See page 5 for details on calls.)
- **High Desert Website & Apache Plume Newsletter:**  
*Website: www.highdesertliving.net*  
Rebecca Murphy: Editor, Website Administrator  
(505) 377-7227; *EEnews@outlook.com* or  
*CommunicationsCommittee@hoamco.com*

**Board & Committee Meetings**

- **Feb. 20, March 19, April 16, 2020 at 4 p.m.**  
**Modifications Committee Meeting**  
Location: High Desert Office, 10555 Montgomery, NE
- **Feb. 18, March 17, April 21, 2020 at 2 p.m.**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
Location: High Desert Office, 10555 Montgomery, NE
- **Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**  
**Voting Members Annual Meeting**  
Location: Hope Church, 4710 Juan Tabo. NE
- **March 4, April 1, May 6, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.**  
**Landscape Advisory Committee Meeting**  
Location: High Desert Office, 10555 Montgomery, NE

*Note: For a complete list of all events and meetings,  
see the website calendar at: [www.highdesertliving.net](http://www.highdesertliving.net).*

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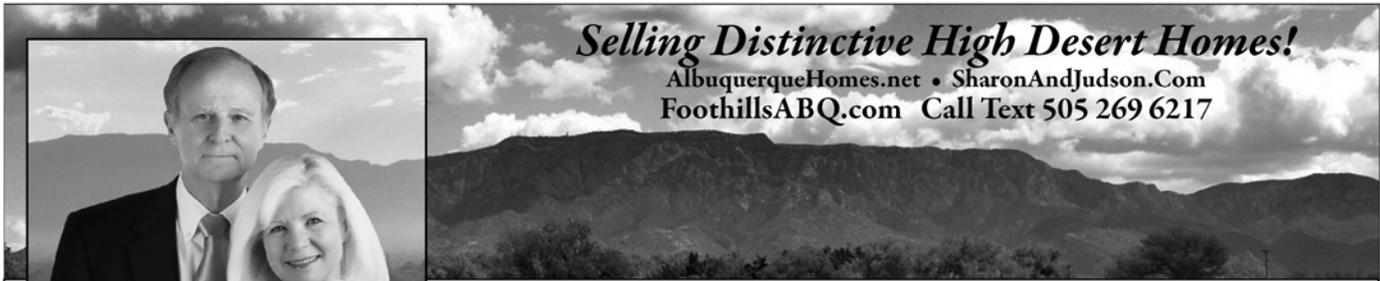
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Community Association Manager, Lynnette Rodriguez: [highdesertmanager@hoamco.com](mailto:highdesertmanager@hoamco.com): (505) 314-5862  
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Communications Committee, Dr. Janet Brierley, Chair: [CommunicationsCommittee@hoamco.com](mailto:CommunicationsCommittee@hoamco.com)



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