

Apache Plume

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

August 2022

Tom Murdock Memorial Park Dedicated At June Ceremony With New Stone Pillar and Plaque

High Desert homeowners joined the Board of Directors June 15 at the former Kiva Park at Spain and Imperata to dedicate it as the “Tom Murdock Memorial Park” in honor of Tom Murdock, a longtime homeowner, volunteer and former president of the Board. Tom passed away last summer.

Reg Rider, also a former Board president, spoke of Tom’s many years of dedicated service to High Desert. Following his remarks, the stone pillar was unveiled. The plaque reads:

*Tom Murdock
Memorial Park*

*In honor of our friend for
his dedication to High Desert
and our neighbors who call
this home. 1941-2021.*

Tom’s wife Margo also
(Continued on page 2)



Board members, homeowners and friends and family of Tom gathered in June to dedicate the new Tom Murdock Memorial Park. The park is located at Spain and Imperata.

Photo by Sharon Littrell-Marsh

City Continues to Evaluate Plans for Elena Gallegos Education Center

The City of Albuquerque continues to move forward with plans to consider developing an education center in the 640-acre Elena Gallegos Open Space north of High Desert.

“Parks and Recreation is proceeding exactly as we have outlined to the community,” wrote Dave Simon in an email. “We are completing additional studies related to the Elena Gallegos projects, including an engineering study of Simms Park Road and other environmental analyses. These studies were actually requested by the community.”

The city’s Parks and Recreation Department scheduled two on-site tours for the public to explain the project and obtain input. The May tour was held but the July tour was cancelled, Dave said, “due to lack of available staff to lead that event.”

He said once the studies are completed there will be additional public engagement of a variety of types. “Public input is always welcome in the meantime,” he added.

Comments on the project can be sent to: openspace@cabq.gov

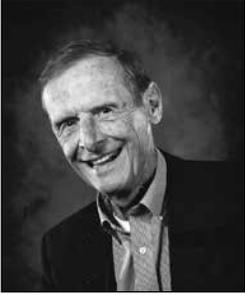
Education Center

The proposed \$2 million expansion of Elena Gallegos Open Space involves building a new education center of up to 4,800 square feet with a covered outdoor patio space, parking lots and consideration of the inclusion of a shuttle from a new parking lot at the corner of Tramway and Simms Road. The original estimate by the city for the education center was 6-10,000 feet. That plan was

(Continued on page 9)

President's Summary

By George Marsh, HDROA President



George Marsh

Well, here we are in August and many children are already back in school and activities will be gearing up throughout the community. Football teams are starting practice and we will see games on TV soon on Saturday and Sunday - allow me one little football promo -go Irish !

This month I am discussing several policies that we have implemented over the years and some concerns that have arisen recently over those policies. I will be addressing our High Desert homeowner rental policy, estate sales and High Desert sign policy. Then I will follow up with a brief update on the stucco program.

RENTAL POLICY

This policy was established several years ago with the intent of limiting the frequency of short-term rentals in High Desert that might be considered disruptive and inconsistent with the character of our neighborhood.

Any homeowner wishing to rent their home should notify our management company of their intent by providing a copy of the signed lease agreement and tenant information sheet. The term of the lease shall be for a minimum of six months unless an exception has been agreed upon in advance and approved by the Board of Directors. A very important part of this policy is that the lease has to be for a minimum of six months, which eliminates the frequent turnover of homes.

If the owner uses an agent to manage the leasing of that home, then the owner shall provide the name and contact information of the agent to the management office.

This is a brief summary of the most important aspects of the rental policy that every homeowner should be aware of in case a rental property occurs in your neighborhood and you have some concerns. These concerns should be addressed to the management office for resolution.

ESTATE SALES

Two recent estate sales in our gated villages brought to our attention the inadequacy of our guidelines on this policy.

As the policy is currently stated, an estate sale may be held as long as it's conducted entirely within the house and that there are no street signs in front of the house or gated community promoting it.

We have certainly found out that this policy is not adequate to cover all the circumstances surrounding estate sales. As the policy is written now, the homeowner is not required to get any advance approval from the management company. The two most recent examples of these sales illustrate the difficulties with this policy in that both of them were for three days and no one had notified our management office at all. This created a considerable amount of confusion and surprise from the homeowners in the neighborhoods.

The Gated Village Voting Members group has established a working committee to develop a more comprehensive policy that

covers duration of sale and hours, homeowner notification, security and traffic control. This amended policy should be stronger and much more enforceable once it is completed. We will keep you posted on this in the coming weeks.

One last point in this area is that garage sales are not permitted at all.

SIGN POLICY

I realized when writing this president's message that this is the last message before the state and national midterm elections in November so I thought it would be a good opportunity to review the policy regarding signage and, in particular, election signs.

Our policy is very brief regarding political signs in that it allows a homeowner to place two campaign signs on their property 45 days prior to an election.

Those same two signs must be removed within three days after the election. Those two signs must be located in the front yard facing the street and they cannot be on the sidewalk or in the rear of property facing open spaces or streets. Political banners are also not allowed.

SUMMARY

This covers the three general areas of policies that have some significance at this point in time. I have kept my comments brief and covered just the general specifics that might be of interest to homeowners. There are numerous other policies available for you to review in more detail, which you can do by visiting our website at www.highdesertliving.net. Go to Documents and Forms and then click Policies.

Financial Update

Steve Hartig, your treasurer, will provide a more detailed update in this issue on page 10 on how we finished our financial year as of June 30, 2022, and give his insight as to how our budget projections look for the 2022-23 budget year just underway.

Stucco Work Halted During Evaluation

All planned stucco work has been halted while we evaluate the entire program and determine what work will be done based on availability of funds from the reserve accounts.

We will complete any work that has been started and this includes the Enclave. The Contracts Committee has been instructed to begin the process for soliciting proposals for a stucco contract, which we did not have previously.

We have taken several steps to provide better management control of this program.

First, we are using specific criteria to determine what is the priority sequence for wall repairs.

Second, we have established a point of contact from the Board of Directors who will provide oversight and monitor the quality control of the projects before payment is authorized. My thanks to Bill Pederson for taking on this challenge.

All in all, we are being very careful and asking a lot of questions, not just with stucco but in all areas of the management of your homeowners association. Stay tuned for more updates in future issues.

Manager's Message



Lynnette Rodriguez

*By Lynnette Rodriguez,
Community Association Manager*

Questions often arise in our office from homeowners wondering about the best way to get a request for work done in their village. Residents might see a cracked sidewalk, weeds growing in a common area or sprinkler heads broken or spraying erratically. There may be missing streetlight bulbs, a fallen tree or graffiti. Who should they call and what is the timeline to have something repaired?

We have a system in place for work orders. The first thing you should do is contact your Voting Member (VM). If you don't know who that is, go to the website at www.highdesertliving.net and at the top select "Villages" and then either "Gated" or "Non-Gated" and finally your own village. If you do not know your village, call us!

Next, write your VM at the email address provided on your village web page. If you cannot email, phone numbers are usually provided, too. Tell your Voting Member about the problem.

Your VM will then go back to the website and fill out a "Voting Member Work Order Request Form" on the "Online Forms" web page (found at the top). Your VM will either submit the form immediately to us, or print and mail or email and attach the form to our office.

We will receive the work order and decide who should take care of the problem. It may be a landscape concern, an association prob-

lem or the responsibility of the city. Our compliance officer will use the city's 311 hotline app to report city problems and follow-up afterwards. We will communicate with your VM about the time needed to complete the repair. That timeline can change depending on the season, money available in the budget for the repair or concerns about who is responsible for the repair.

If you live in one of the villages in High Desert without Voting Member representation (and there are, unfortunately, several in High Desert), do not fill out a VM work order form. Instead, go to the website and click "Documents & Forms" and then "Online Forms" and scroll to "Report CC&R Concerns Form." Fill it out and submit it to our office.

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DECADES OF INTEREST RATES

1970's & 1980's

Rates in 1971 were in the mid-7% range and they moved up steadily until they were at 9.19% in 1974. They briefly dipped down into the mid-to high-8% range before climbing to 11.20% in 1979. This was during a period of high inflation that hit its peak early in the next decade. In both the 1970's and 1980's, the United States was pushed into a recession caused by an oil embargo against the country. One of the effects of this was hyperinflation, which meant that the price of goods and services rose extremely fast. To counteract hyperinflation, the Federal Reserve raised short-term interest rates. This made money in savings accounts worth more. On the other hand, as the interest rates rose, the cost of borrowing money increased, too. Interest rates reached their highest point modern history in 1981 when the annual average was 16.63%. Fixed rates declined from there, but they finished the decade around 10%. The 1980's were an expensive time to borrow money.

1990's

In the 1990's, inflation started to calm down a little bit. The average mortgage rate in 1990 was 10.13%, but it slowly fell, finally dipping below 7% to come in at 6.94% in 1998. One big reason for the economic growth and declining inflation seen later in the decade was the arrival of the internet in the mainstream consciousness. The increased investment in research and development of new technologies spurred a ton of economic growth.

2000's

Mortgage rates steadily declined from 8.05% in 2000 to the high 5% range in 2003. However, it wasn't all milk & honey in this decade. The housing crash happened in part because property values declined steeply until they hit their lowest pint in 2008. This left many homeowners owing more on their homes than the property was worth. To provide some relief and to stimulate the economy, the Federal Reserve cut interest rates to make borrowing money cheaper. Short-term rates, or the rates at which financial institutions borrow money, ended up being slashed to the point where they were at or near 0. This made it extremely cheap for banks to borrow funds so they could keep mortgage rates low. As a result of the change, mortgage rates fell almost a full percentage point, averaging 5.04% in 2009.

2010's

Riding the wave of low bank borrowing costs, mortgage rates entered the new decade around 4.69%. They continued to fall steadily and were in the mid-3% range by 2012. In 2013, rates went up to 3.98%. A big reason for this was that the bond market panicked a little bit when the Federal Reserve said it would stop buying as many bonds.



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Albuquerque Police Crime Statistics for High Desert

Level	Type of Crime	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
1	Animal Call							
1	Rescue Call							
1	Missing Person		1		2	1	1	
1	Stolen Vehicle Found							
2	Neighbor Trouble			1				1
2	Direct Traffic							
2	Traffic Stop				6			
2	Traffic Accident no injury	1				3	1	
2	Auto Accident with injury					1		
2	Drunk Driver							
3	Disturbance	2	2	9	1	3	6	10
3	Vandalism				1	1		
3	Suspicious Person/Vehicle	1	3	3	3	2	4	2
3	Burglary Auto						2	
3	Vehicle Theft			1				
4	Theft/ Larceny							2
4	Theft/Fraud/Embezzlement	2	1	2	1		1	
4	Burglary Residence	1	1					
4	Family Dispute	6	2			1	1	1
4	Aggravated Assault/Battery	1			1		2	1
4	Shots Fired		1		2			1
	Total	14	11	16	17	12	18	18

These statistics come from Albuquerque Police Department's reports for calls involving High Desert for year to date through July, 2022. Homeowner Doug Weigle, Sunset Ridge, obtains these statistics from APD each month.

Contact Numbers:

- In the event of an emergency, call APD at 911.
- Follow up immediately with a call to High Desert Security at **505-485-5658**



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Tom Murdock Memorial Park Dedicated in June Ceremony

From Page 1

spoke to those attending the ceremony, citing her husband's many contributions to High Desert.

Tom Murdock, who spent 16 years in continuous service on the High Desert Board of Directors and who devoted countless hours to the association as a volunteer since 2000, died July 27, 2021, following a fall at his home in Solterra.

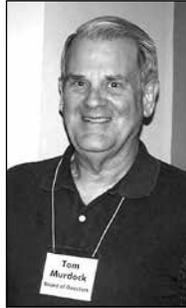
Dedicated to Serving High Desert

Tom and Margo Murdock moved to High Desert in the late 1990s and he became a Voting Member in 2000 for Solterra. He went on to be elected to the first entirely homeowner-controlled High Desert Board of Directors in 2004, where he was elected Treasurer. Tom served as Treasurer for six years, as Vice President for two years and as President of the Board for eight years. He also oversaw the Run For The Hills trail race event in High Desert and the Open Space for a number of years. Throughout these years Tom continued to operate his software company, Spring Lake Software, from his home.

The Board of Directors decided last year to rename the former Kiva Park the Tom Murdock Memorial Park.

"We wanted to honor Tom and have a place where homeowners can physically go to see his name memorialized on the plaque and remember all he did for us," said George Marsh, Board President.

A variety of new shrubs and flowers were planted in the area sur-



Tom Murdock

rounding the pillar and plaque. HOAMCO contributed \$1,500 toward their purchase and Yellowstone landscaping gave \$500. The rest was paid by the association.

The memorial stone and plaque was designed by Desert Mountain artists and Voting Members Bill Freer and Mary Martin who also serve as website liaison with the board. Bill and Mary had previously worked closely with Tom to design the new website.

Worthen Memorials did the actual casting and set the monument in the place Margo selected. The stone was taken from the park so the color and texture of the sandstone would match other nearby stones.

"Of course Margo and Reg were instrumental in making this all happen and we think fondly of Tom and throw him a smile every time we pass by the park," said Bill.

George added that Tom was a vital member of the community, adding, "His creative leadership was a major factor in preserving the lifestyle that we all now enjoy."



The newly named Tom Murdock Memorial Park features this large stone pillar with a plaque dedicating the park to Tom.



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City Continues to Evaluate Plans for Elena Gallegos Education Center

reduced to the current estimate after recent public input, Colleen Langan-McRoberts, Open Space Superintendent, said at a High Desert town hall meeting in March. Several sites are under consideration in the area as sites for the education center.

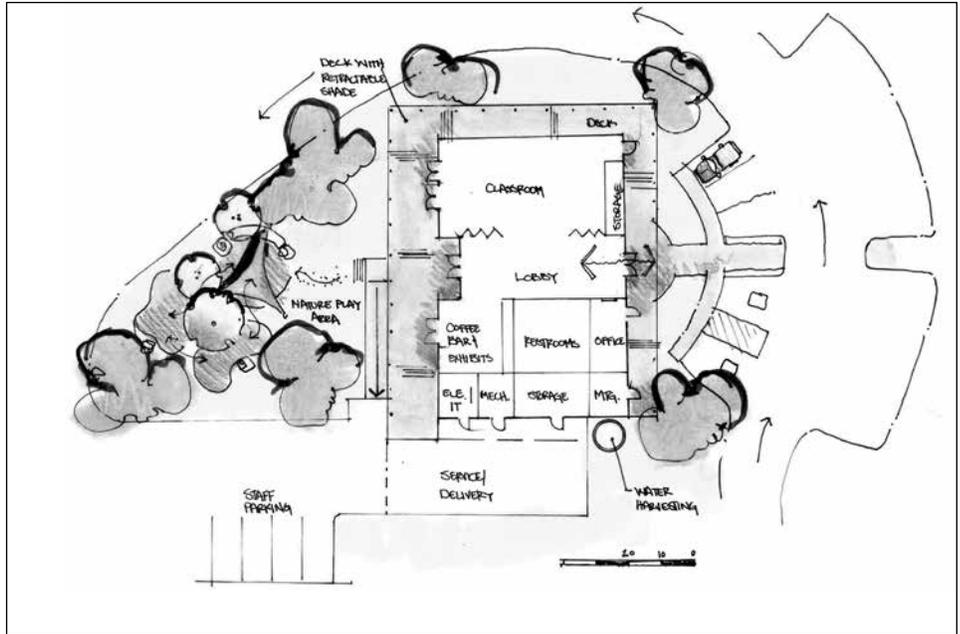
Homeowner Concerns

The city made a presentation to the High Desert Board of Directors last January, followed by the High Desert town hall meeting in March via Zoom. Some High Desert homeowners cited concerns about traffic and noise. Others questioned why any open space should be developed.

No Official Position by Board

“The board is not taking a position on this issue,” said Reg Rider, then-president of the High Desert Board of Directors, at the Annual Meeting April 28. “We represent all of High Desert. This is only in the preliminary stages. We are three to five years away from any construction.” He added that the board will take every opportunity to have forums with the city to increase public input.

The site drawing above was made by Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, an Albuquerque architecture firm. It shows the proposed education



center on Inner Loop Road with a classroom, storage area, an office and a restroom. Outside are play areas and parking lots.

For more information online about the proposal, go to: www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/lands/elena-gallegos-open-space.

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Treasurer's Report: Year-To-Date As Of June 30, 2022

By Steve Hartig, Treasurer



Steve Hartig

in business management.

June ended the fiscal year for High Desert so these comments will predominantly be about the entire year. For the Master operating income and expenses we were under budget by \$68,000 or about five percent. Notable items are:

- Landscaping was over budget predominantly due to extra hours worked by the landscape consultant. We have reduced the hours on this for the coming year and we have a sub team of the Board developing a better process to manage landscaping work.
- Maintenance was \$5,000 over budget mainly due to wall washing and maintenance.
- Professional fees was \$70,000 under budget mainly due to lower legal and consulting costs.
- Taxes/Other expenses was lower predominantly due to no community events and lower taxes.

Overall, we have a balance in the Master operating accounts of about \$360,000 or about three months of income and expenses,

which is reasonable but certainly not excessive.

The Master Reserve Account expenses were at \$733,000 which is very high due to significant wall and stucco repair. This work has been halted while a plan is put together for what further work is to be done this year. The present balance in the reserve account is \$189,000.

There is nothing notable in the Gated Villages income and expense statements, with most being below budget or only slightly over. Three villages did have significant reserve spending during the year, with Desert Mountain at \$71,000, Enclave at \$61,000 and Trillium at \$87,000.

Looking ahead, the expense budget for fiscal 2022/23 is at \$1.2 million, slightly below that of this year. It is set at breakeven with income, which is staying steady from year to year. In order to meet this, key items will be:

- Managing landscape expenses. A number of projects have been proposed beyond normal landscape maintenance including fire mitigation, irrigation system upgrading and replacement plants. We will need to put together a plan for the year and monitor it closely.
- Allied, our security company, has proposed a 20 percent increase in fees for this year as compared to five percent that we budgeted. We have had an initial meeting with them to push back. They will come back with a new proposal but our expectations are that it will be above what we budgeted.
- In general, with inflation as we are seeing it in general, many items are going to be more expensive this year, which will challenge us.

In the Master reserve, the key item will be managing what further wall and stucco work needs to be done and slowing it down over several years.

For the gated villages, the main item to monitor is the reserve accounts with significant asphalt and wall work being proposed in several of the villages.

One new activity that the Board approved in the July meeting was for us to start investing some of the excess funds we have in reserve accounts in certificates of deposit in order to capture some income from these funds. This will take place in the coming months.



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Reserve Account Balances June 30, 2022	
MASTER	\$ 189,464
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New Compliance Officer Justin Rodriguez Joins HOAMCO Staff

High Desert has a new Compliance Officer. Justin Rodriguez took over in late July, replacing Stephan Nicholishen, who left to become a full-time firefighter.

Justin, a native of New York, has a degree in criminal justice, taught physics at Georgia State University and moved to Albuquerque this year. He joins the HOAMCO staff in the North-east Heights office on Montgomery and said he already has enjoyed his interactions with High Desert residents. "People have been very friendly and welcoming," he said.

As Compliance Officer, Justin tours High Desert each week looking for violations of High Desert CC&Rs. Violations can range from unkempt properties to stored garbage cans not shielded from view.

As High Desert grows older, driveways become a concern. "I am seeing a number of cracked and chipped driveways," Justin said. "Property owners must repair or replace those driveways. Owners can fill the cracks as long as it's done evenly and smoothly."

Stucco on homes and non-common area walls must be repaired as needed,

too. Cracks should be filled and peeling stucco replaced, Justin noted.

Homeowners in violation of the CC&Rs generally receive a letter notifying them of the violation and requesting the problem be resolved within a specified time. However, Justin said he prefers at this point to speak directly to the homeowner when possible. If he sees the owner during his weekly tours of High Desert, he said he will stop, introduce himself and point out the violation. "I prefer to have a conversation if I can meet the homeowner," he said. "Problems can be resolved more quickly and resentments can be avoided."

If the homeowner is not available, Justin said he will write a friendly letter about the violation, asking them to get in touch. "I've spoken and met with some very nice people," he said. "Most of them want to fix the violation. There may have been a misunderstanding about who takes care of what problem and I try to clarify those issues."

Justin said he is available anytime for questions or concerns. He can be reached at HOAMCO by calling (505) 314-5862. His email is justinrodriguez@hoamco.com.



**New Compliance Officer
Justin Rodriguez**

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National Night Out Brings Neighbors Together

By Cindy Suiter, Voting Member for Wilderness Cañon

Nineteen neighbors in Wilderness Cañon gathered to celebrate National Night Out at Bob and Maxine Avery's home. We were joined by HDROA Board President George Marsh and his wife Sharon. It was a great evening of fellowship and fun.

(Wilderness Cañon photos by Cindy Suiter)



It was a gorgeous sunset from the hills of Wilderness Cañon as National Night Out drew to a close. Here, residents Maxine Avery, Erika Anderson and Vincent pause for a photo.



Photo, left: Wilderness Cañon homeowner Bob Avery talks to Sharon and George Marsh, Board President, who were invited to join the group for National Night Out.

By Julie Brown, Overlook,

Under magnificent New Mexico skies, we celebrated National Night Out in style! While I didn't count, we had at least 40 neighbors join us. The best part was that we were joined by members of both APD and AFD. All in all, it was a very rewarding evening!



Photo above: Wilderness Cañon neighbors left to right: Bomi Parakh, Rich Eagle and Maxine Avery.



Photo above: Overlook homeowners were joined by Albuquerque Fire Department officials. Below, neighbors catch up with each other and enjoy the beautiful evening. Photos by Julie Brown.



Photo above: Fifty Solterra homeowners gathered outdoors along with members of the Albuquerque Police Department who regularly participate in National Night Out. Photo by Margo Murdock, Solterra.



National Night Out



*By Lauren Krimsky,
Voting Member for
The Canyons*

The Canyons' National Night Out was organized by our three voting members with the help of several past voting members. It was well-attended and was a lovely time to connect with friends and neighbors and meet new folks. Besides around 50 of our residents of all ages, we had several

special guests: two tactical police officers, a fire engine crew with truck and equipment, our extraordinary mail person Valerie, former High Desert Gated Community Chair and Board Member Kitty Smith, and High Desert Board President George Marsh and his wife Sharon. The food was spectacular and thanks to Ray and Bernadette Gonzales for the shade structure and to Gary Hines of Stripes Burrito for the delicious enchiladas and beans. Thanks also to everyone who attended for making The Canyons a closer-knit and safer neighborhood.

4th of July Parade



There was no riding in the backseat for this boy on the 4th of July. Lincoln drove his own car in the Desert Mountain parade as his brother Thomas ran beside him. They are the sons of Ryan and Amanda Guth. Photo courtesy Amanda Guth Photography.



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Voting Member Elections

By Mark Soo Hoo, Voting Member Vice Chair

Your community needs you, your ideas, your support, and your input! Out of the 14 High Desert villages electing Voting Members this year, only three villages – Legends, Solterra, and Tierra del Oso – have enough candidates to ensure that all Voting Member and Alternate positions are filled.

The following villages need additional candidates to fill vacant positions: Chaco Compound, Chamisa Trail, Desert Sky, Desert Song, Enclave, Overlook, Pinon Point, Sunset Ridge, Wilderness Compound, Wilderness Estates, Wilderness Village. All of these villages need additional candidates to fill vacant ballot positions.

Look for the ballots that are mailed out this month. Please consider writing your own name on those vacant positions or encouraging your friends and neighbors to do so. Make sure your village is represented on important issues such as electing board members, amending the bylaws, and tax issues that can affect your quality of life, your property value and the overall safety and security of your community. Vote by early September!

Missed the ballot? There is still time to become a Voting Member. Submit a Statement of Interest for Board approval. You'll either fill out the form online or save and email it to: highdesertmanager@hoamco.com. Be sure to select Voting Member/Alternate.

Why volunteer as a Voting Member or Alternate? Because every village is unique, with its own character, challenges and day-to-day needs. You have the opportunity to help your village (and High Desert) maintain property values and remain beautiful, while you meet and help your neighbors.

Contracts Committee Report

By Lynn Claffy,
Contracts Committee Chair



Lynn Claffy

I would like to welcome two new members to the Contracts Committee: Kate Mitchell and Cindy Suiter. The other members of the Committee are Dave Bentley, Caroline Enos and myself.

At the direction of the High Desert Board of Directors, the Contracts Committee will be issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) soon for our security patrol services.

The security patrol services contract was last competed in early 2017. At that time, the contract was awarded to G4S, which was acquired by Allied Universal in the past year.

The expected timeline for the security patrol services RFP is to first revise and update the RFP in July; issue the RFP to local vendors in August; evaluate the proposals in September and October; and make the committee's recommendation to the Board of Directors as to our preferred vendor in early November.

If the recommendations are approved by the Board, the contract with its associated pricing would be negotiated with the selected vendor by the end of the calendar year.

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High Desert
Year to Date
Market Stats

Closed Sales
60
-1.6% from 2021

Average Sale Price
\$801,306
+ 10.6% from 2021

Avg Price per sq.ft.
\$282.67

Year to date comparison 1/1/2022 - 8/1/2022 to same time in 2021

single family detached

The impact of increasing housing inventory

We are beginning to see the effects of rising interest rates with an increase in the monthly supply of inventory across the market. We continue to see growth in home values across the market but at a slower pace. The market is still favorable for home sellers, especially in desirable areas such as High Desert. Time will tell, but if this trend continues we may see the real estate market move towards pre-pandemic levels.

“There has been a pickup in inventory that we’ve seen recently, but it’s not from a big increase in new listings...but rather a slowdown in the pace of sales”

- Mark Flemming, Chief Economist

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Fire Preparedness Committee Is Busy Preparing for Wildfire



Judy Pierson

*By Judy Pierson, Chairperson
Fire Preparedness Committee*

Who knew that when our group volunteered to form a Fire Preparedness Committee that it would be such a daunting challenge?

We started with the name “Fire Prevention” and quickly learned from our Albuquerque Fire Rescue (AFR) partners that wildfires cannot be prevented; one can only prepare to minimize damage. So we changed our name to Fire Preparedness.

The potential for wildfires in our Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) community is a price we pay for living in our beautiful native landscape. There are many things that we can do as individuals and as a united community to deal with that potential..

Fortunately, our gang of 10 homeowner committee members brings a wide range of experiences and expertise to bear and we all share a passion for our mission. Our group includes former Forest Service managers, volunteer firefighters, an attorney, health care executives, “Firewise” experts, organizational change management experts, community activists—and myself, with 10 years of land restoration and wildland management in Zimbabwe.

What is our mission? When we had our Charter approved by the High Desert Board of Directors, it emphasized three main goals.

Educate & Mobilize

#1. The first goal was to educate and mobilize all High Desert residents on fire preparedness. You are probably most familiar with our articles in the Apache Plume, information in the monthly email bulletin, and distribution of materials from the Albuquerque Fire Rescue (AFR) department for “Get Ready, Set, Go” which is a national information campaign from the National Fire Protection Association. (Call me if you want a copy.)

In addition, we have worked closely with our association’s website designers to create the “Fire Safety” tab under the “High Desert Living” menu item (at the top of the homepage) with useful information on steps homeowners can take to reduce fire risks.

We have also arranged for speakers at our community forums, including town halls and even collaborated with the AFR on an event at High Desert Park.

We have made ourselves available to High Desert villages through their voting members for our “Walk-Abouts” to meet with residents to hear concerns and share ideas about what they can do. We try to facilitate appropriate responses from our association and landscape contractor when specific hazards are identified. Bottom-line: We can’t do our job without everyone’s support and assistance.

Address Immediate Risks & Long-term Investments

#2. The second goal was to interface with our own homeowner’s association governance and management entities to get their support to address immediate fire risks and consider long-term investments in fire preparedness.

We learned that when the original High Desert Landscape Master Plan was developed, fire issues were mentioned but not specifically addressed. Times have changed and going forward our

The stakes are high in many ways. A brush fire on a windy day could destroy many homes if we are not prepared. We were lucky in 2018 that more homes weren’t damaged as the brush fire raced up Elena Gallegos arroyo.

work with the Board will be to advise on implications for policies, budgeting and resources to keep us all fire-safe.

Like many Wildland Urban Interface communities, we are faced with some climate change paradigm shifts to prioritize actions for our immediate threats.

Whereas the first couple of years we concentrated on education and mobilization, we’ve spent much of our time this year identifying the risks on HDROA-owned lands.

Specific intent has been to make the arroyos that define our community safer through fuel reduction and fuel breaks to allow immediate access by fire personnel in case of a fire. Our focus was on the interface of the arroyos with adjacent homes to keep wildfires a safe distance from them.

The board is currently considering a proposal for a few high priority actions through the end of the year. The theme was addressing dangerous deferred maintenance as we all learned more about what we should be doing to prepare for fire.

Cooperative Efforts

#3. The third goal was to build cooperative efforts with essential agencies that would support us in fire readiness on our land as well as on land owned by government entities.

The City of Albuquerque has large swathes of open arroyos running from Tramway Blvd. up to the Forest Service land that borders us on the east. Tramway itself poses a risk.

The AFR has been critical to help us navigate a steep learning curve and has assigned a lieutenant as a member of our committee.

Our Albuquerque city council representative, Trudy Jones, continues to facilitate addressing issues we raise such as painting fire hydrants and fuel reduction in High Desert Park located off Academy.

We are now embarking on projects with the Albuquerque Open Space department about fuel reduction in Bear Canyon arroyo. The director has offered to conduct a town hall meeting for us to go over the Community-Wide Wildfire Prevention Plan developed by the city and county that includes specific assessments of risks in our foothills. One subgroup of our committee is seeking funding to help us address issues such as evacuation planning and wildland fuel reduction.

The stakes are high in many ways. A brush fire on a windy day could destroy many homes if we are not prepared. We were lucky in 2018 that more homes weren’t damaged as the brush fire raced up Elena Gallegos arroyo.

We can be prepared if we work together. Please feel free to offer your feedback and suggestions to any of us. We are working for all of us in High Desert. Our community is worth protecting.

Risky Business

And by risky business, we're not talkin' about Tom Cruise dancin' in his tighty-whiteys to "Old Time Rock and Roll." We're talkin' about taking the less risky route to wealth.

Throughout the ages—from Pythagoras (a pithy pescatarian, or so I'm told) to Stiglitz (a Nobel-winning economist who likes kosher dill pickles, or so I'm once again told)—natural human behavior is to lower exposure to uncertainty. In other words, it's natural to avoid risk.

See saber-toothed tiger? Run, Ogg, run!

This holds true in almost all human endeavors. Uncertainty is perceived as risky. I knew a guy who once bet on Buster Douglas, a 42-1 underdog, when he took on an undefeated Mike Tyson. It was an uncertain bet to say the least, but he wasn't clairvoyant, just plain lucky. Sometimes even the stupid can get away with being stupid. Risk aversion, however, is not only a natural human trait but also one that is, perhaps, as important to our survival as knowing to unplug a toaster before sticking a fork in it.

The good news is, the most common way to get rich is the least risky.

Oh, don't get me wrong, there are many ways to strike it rich. The majority, though, are not nearly as reliable. It's cool to be an inventor, for sure. Or throw a baseball at 100 mph. Both can make you millions. But there are a scant number of inventions that succeed, and even fewer arms that can hurl major league heat.

Yes, there are inventions that make millions. But how many millionaires made their millions being inventors? I'd guess only about one percent. Barely. The other ninety-nine percent probably used a method we'll be getting around to shortly. But, once upon a mullet, when I was wet behind the ears (and, most likely, under the arms—I worked hard on construction sites), I daydreamed of one day becoming super rich by inventing something really cool. But instead of, let's say, a Slinky® or The Snuggie® or The Dogbrella™, I came up with a real humdinger. What I find to be a most reliable, straightforward way to get rich.

Ready? Okay, here's Step One: *Help others.* (Sort of like what I'm trying to do by writing a book.)

I'm not necessarily saying join the Red Cross or volunteer for the Peace Corps, although both are noble altruistic occupations. I'm simply saying whatever your business is, in some way, it should help others. Do that and I think you might find you hit the mother lode. Because the more you help others, the richer you may get.

Yes, a Boy Scout helping old Maude Frickert cross the road is doing good—but so is being a plumber, a welder, a lumberjack, a hairdresser, a proctologist and so on and so forth. So many people make the big mistake of thinking the road to riches requires reinventing the light bulb, or winning the lottery, or starting a rock band, or selling socks in threes.

When we look at the wealthy, we discover that the vast majority followed Step One. They all had a person or a thingamajig that helped others. Then they most likely added a profit to that person or thingamajig. And a million "helps" later, figuratively speaking, they were millionaires. A darn good reason why a business should try to hire as many workers as is practical.

After all, the name of the game is making the most amount of money with the least amount of risk.

Excerpted from Steve Lynch's new book MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS, available soon at a bookstore near you (and, if not, ask for it) and also Amazon in both softbound and ebook.

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Desert Mountain has a New Little Free Library

By Bill Freer, Desert Mountain Voting Member,

Desert Mountain now joins other High Desert villages with our own Little Free Library. On the grassy hill that leads up to the Desert Mountain pool, sits our colorful red, yellow and blue library.

This is a free book exchange with books for adults, teens and kids who live in Desert Mountain. See something you'd like to read? Take it! When you're finished with the book, please return it or add another book to our Little Free Library. We welcome any books you'd like to share - especially kids' books - but please no travel guides or magazines. The library is tended by Karen Ceroni and Voting Members Laura Horten and Tracy Capozzella.



Rafael (age 3) and Urijah (age 5) Lucero enjoy the benefits of Desert Mountain's new neighborhood library. Photo by Neil Wetsch.

Many thanks to our talented neighbors who contributed their design and construction skills, the neighbors who pitched in money collected at neighborhood events, and others who topped it off with a red bench perfect for story-time. Desert Mountain has proved once again that good neighbors working together can do anything. Here's to a great summer of reading!



The Jackman family reads a children's book from the Little Free Library on the new red bench. Left to right: daughter Aspen, parents Harmony and Chris, and son Tyler. Photo by Bill Freer.

There are more than 110,000 Little Free Libraries in 110 countries. The national non-profit organization was launched in 2010 with the motto "Take A Book • Share A Book." Its mission is to be a catalyst for building community, inspiring readers, and expanding book access for all.

Interested in starting a Little Free Library in your own village? Go to <https://littlefreelibrary.org> and see how to build your own, or purchase one ready-made.

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High Desert Newcomers Get a Helping Hand With Brand New Eight-Page Color Welcome Booklet

By Susan Camp, Co-Chair;
Communications Committee

In the coming months, newcomers to High Desert will be greeted with a brand new booklet that will introduce them to our unique and beautiful community.

Voting Members in the Desert Mountain gated village recognized the need for this type of welcome and have been distributing a booklet targeted to their village for some time. Newcomers to Desert Mountain have loved that booklet so Voting Members Bill Freer & Mary Martin, working with Susan Camp and the Communications Committee, created a publication that would be appropriate for all of High Desert. This eight-page color Welcome Booklet is the result.

Sharing The Vision

The Welcome Booklet shares the sustainability vision and history of High Desert with colorful pictures that showcase that vision. High Desert is one of the first sustainable, master-planned developments ever created, not just in the U.S., but in the world. We want to make sure our new neighbors understand and are excited about that vision.

The booklet explains that High Desert chose to form an association to maintain our vision and protect our property values. Some of our homeowner rules are highlighted and the reasons we need them are included so newcomers can understand why it is important to follow them and emphasizing that the rules are not just arbitrary.

“The Communications Committee did a wonderful job,” George Marsh, Board President, said. “The new

booklet is creative, colorful and informative. I am truly impressed with the quality of their work.”

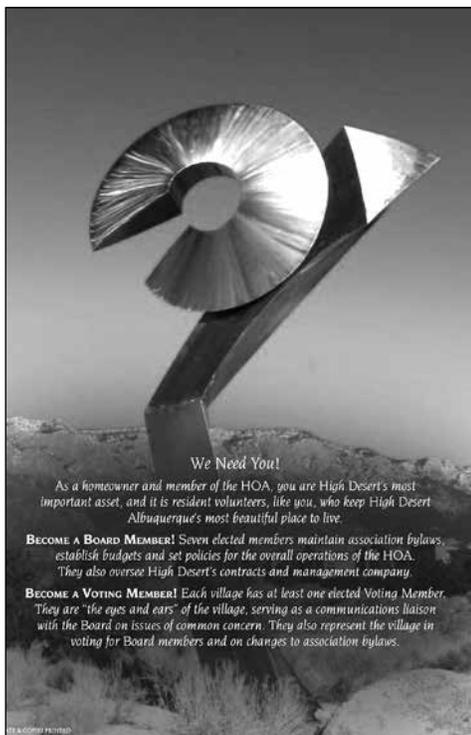
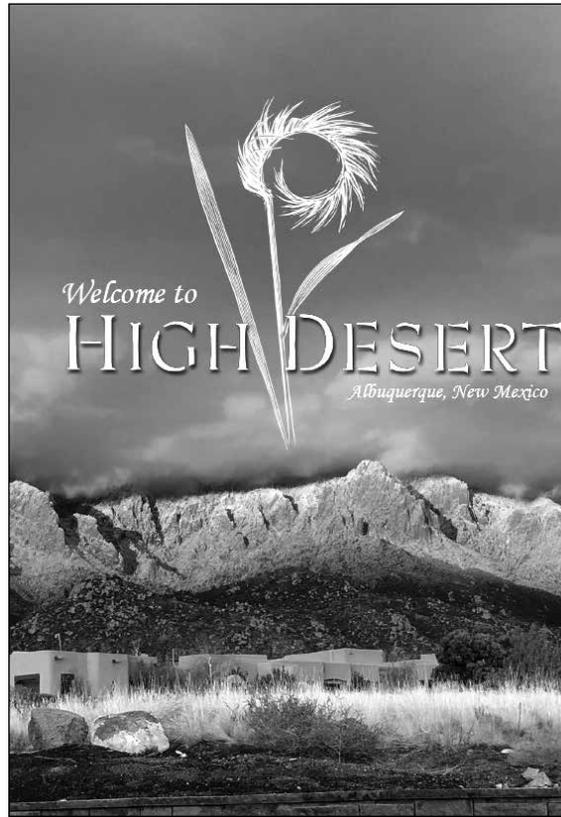
Role & Organization

Our association’s governing structure is rather complicated and the governing documents can be intimidating to dig through. The newcomer booklet explains the role and organization of High Desert in readable terms. In addition, the booklet lists generally helpful information that is needed when people move into a new neighborhood.

The full-color booklet features beautiful photos by High Desert residents, including sunsets, wildlife, and stunning photos of the Sandias in all seasons. It gives a brief history of the 660 acres High Desert was built on beginning with the larger Elena Gallegos Land Grant, the gift of land to Albuquerque Academy and the eventual development of our association by High Desert Investment Corporation in the 1990s.

The booklet discusses our homeowner management company HOAMCO, our communication tools, the importance of volunteering and includes helpful advice about modifications and landscaping, lighting and pets (see *We Love Pets* below).

We hope this booklet helps newcomers get excited about our special neighborhood and inspires them to participate in HOA volunteer activities. We encourage everyone to look at the newcomer booklet on the High Desert website at highdesertliving.net/welcome. Scroll to the “High Desert Welcome Booklet” to open and view.



We Love Pets both Ours and Yours



However, Albuquerque has strict rules regarding pets and pet waste. Everyone in High Desert must obey the following:

Leash Law Your pets must always be on a leash, EVERYWHERE including High Desert Park and on the trails.

Pet Waste There is No Poop Fairy

Calling All Artists for December 3 Studio Tour

Calling all High Desert artists! The High Desert Studio Tour, on hold for the past couple of years, is returning and now seeking artists and craftsmen to participate.

Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022, is the date set for homeowners to tour participating artists' studios and see their fellow homeowners' creative efforts.

Thea Berg conceived the Studio Tour more than 12 years ago but stepped down prior to the pandemic. The tour has been on hold since then.

Homeowner Dagmar Beinenz-Byrd, a fiber artist, agreed this year to organize the tour and already has several artists and craftsmen signed up to participate. They include potters, fiber artists, oil and watercolorists, jewelry designers, sculptors and silversmiths. The fee for participating is \$35 per artist, which pays for the flyers, maps and brochures. As always, there will be purple balloons on the day of the tour to help guide visitors.

If you are interested in being part of the 2022 Studio Tour, please contact Dagmar at ziawoolz@comcast.net.



Dagmar Beinenz-Byrd, the Highlands, is organizing this year's Studio Tour.

Crime Awareness Liaison Position Open

High Desert is seeking a Crime Awareness Liaison between the Board of Directors and homeowners. The new liaison's role will be to communicate with residents on how they can reduce their chances of becoming victims of crime. The position includes writing articles for the Apache Plume and working with residents interested in participating in the Neighborhood Watch program. It also involves working with the Albuquerque Police Department's Community Crime Specialist on focusing APD resources to specific areas of concern in High Desert. Duties include participating in the Foothills Community Policing Forum's monthly Zoom meeting and obtaining APD Crime Mapping Statistics within High Desert for the monthly report, which is posted to the community website. Interested persons should contact HOAMCO and fill out a Statement of Interest (SOI), found online at www.highdesertliving.net. Click on "Documents & Forms" and then on "Online Forms" and scroll to the SOI.

Gated Villages Committee Chair Open

A volunteer is needed to assume the position of the Gated Villages Committee Chair. The candidate must live in a gated village, but not necessarily be a voting member. The Chair supervises the committee, which meets quarterly to address the specific needs and interests of High Desert gated villages. The group interacts with the Board and presents pertinent issues for Board actions.

Interested volunteers should contact HOAMCO and fill out a Statement of Interest (SOI), found online at www.highdesertliving.net. Click on "Documents & Forms" and then on "Online Forms" and scroll to the SOI.

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

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The High Desert Gardener

Renovating Your Landscape

By Margo Murdock
High Desert Resident



Margo Murdock

If you are like most High Desert residents, your landscape is at least 10-15 years old. It may look tired, overgrown with mature shrubs that were planted too close initially, been invaded by volunteers, or the design looks spotty from missing dead plants. You may also be at a different life stage than when the house was built or purchased and may want changes. So, if the kids are gone, do you really need a lawn or playsets? Do you really need a high maintenance landscape? Has your view disappeared over the years from trees and shrubs growing tall or wide and you'd like to get it back? Or are you not the original owner and the landscaping doesn't fit your style. These are just a few reasons you might want to redo your landscaping.

Renovating a landscape brings different issues and considerations to the table. Now you have existing and in many cases mature plants – what will you do with them? Large trees for example may need special care during construction if you want to retain them. Healthy trees are valuable assets and need to have their roots, bark, and branches protected from heavy equipment and other damage. What other changes will you make to hardscape and irrigation? What has worked well for you in the current landscape and what has not? Who will do the work, you or a professional?

This article is designed to provide you food for thought and my feelings about what you could do, why, and in what sequence.

Step 1: Evaluate what you have and consider what you'd like to change. Things to look for include tree or shrub roots raising a sidewalk, wall, or foundation; vines that have attached to the walls or view fence, or house; trees with branches over your house which may be a fire danger.

Step 2: Develop a plan or have it designed by a professional.



Is it time to change out your landscape and try something new?

It's much cheaper in money and labor to make your mistakes or change your mind when the landscape is on paper. Identify, on paper, which existing plants can be part of the new design. The design can even be done in phases so you see how it (and the landscaper) performs before committing to the whole plan. You may learn what mistakes can happen during phase 1 and not reproduce them in phase 2. A plan gives you direction. You can also create a design that naturally harvests rainwater using berms, swales, and ponding areas. A plan offers new opportunities.

You can also create a functional bubble design that shows where you want your entertainment space, utility space, and relaxation area. And you can add sun, wind and season directions and mark desirable or undesirable views. I did this for a street light opposite

Continued on page 25

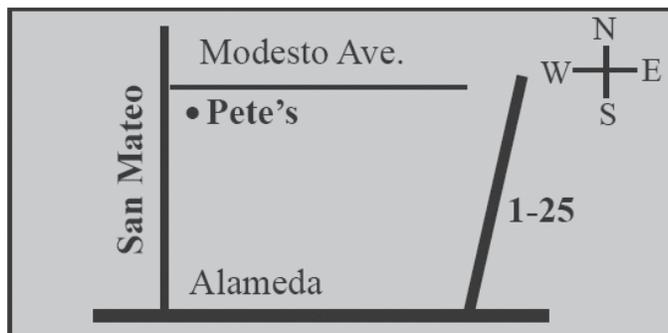
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Renovating— *From Page 24*

the master bedroom where we ended up installing a tree and for a sunny west side of our house where we had an overhead trellis/shade structure installed.

Step 3: Get the area marked for utilities. This is a simple phone call and can save you a lot of pain as well as liability.

Step 4: Remove unwanted plants. If someone else is doing this, make sure they understand how you've marked the ones you want to either remove or keep. In some cases you can cut the roots near the center and just leave them in the ground.

Step 5: Start with the underground parts of irrigation. See if new PVC or valves are needed and take photos of where those are. You want to deal with the underground parts before adding any hardscaping like patios, walls, fireplaces and other difficult-to-remove structures over the top. The underground parts of your old system may be able to be saved if it was zoned correctly and built of long-lasting materials. There are a number of theories about how to zone your irrigation. Mine was zoned by north, east, south and west so we had four drip zones. If I had to do it over, I would put all my trees on one zone and it would run longer, but less often than perennial zones. And I would not use drip emitters for trees. I might use bubblers or a ring system (like an electric burner on the stove) of above ground soaker hose.

You can also zone by how much water is to be delivered and then plant groupings e.g. oasis zone, transition zone, xeric zone.

Step 6: Install hardscaping. Pour concrete, lay tile, build trellises, storage structures and anything else you want that's non-living. Be sure to protect tree roots while this is happening to reduce compaction.

Step 7: Layout plant material, but don't plant yet. If you want to

improve the soil (adding organic material like compost) or seed or sod grass after adding organic material, do this at step 6 1/2. New plant material can be laid out while still in the pots. If you don't like the look or want to change it to the plant's "best side," it's easy to move or turn the pot. Once you like the layout then plant (usually trees, then shrubs, then perennials or ornamental grasses). You can add organic material in areas where the plants to be installed need it. Xeric plants generally don't need organic amendments. Consider – if a plant is growing in the nearby open space, it probably doesn't need organic amendments in the soil.

Step 8: Install (and photograph) the above-ground parts of the irrigation, 3/4-inch poly tubing, spray heads, drippers or soaker hose. Dig a small trench so the poly tubing is not exposed to the elements. Now you'll actually run the smaller tubing from the poly tubing direct to the plant. Keep drippers visible (above ground, but maybe under mulch) if you change or add plants often. Choose how much water to deliver (amount) by the "xericness" of the plant.

Step 9: Add an organic or gravel mulch on top. Remember that trees are forest plants and like organic mulch. Many Mediterranean plants prefer a gravel mulch since that's what their native soil is like. It prevents root rot. Note that gravel mulch is hotter for humans and pets!

Other Considerations

When is the best time for you and the plants to make changes? Fall, especially September, would be my choice for installation so do your planning before that. There are many books and internet articles on landscaping. Hopefully I've hit the questions you have most often. If not, email me! (murdock@swcp.com)

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— **Bill and Sherri McConnell,**
Desert Sky

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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. 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. At the top, click on "Villages" and choose the village from the dropdown menu. Residents can also call the office at 505-314-5862 to learn their village representative. High Desert Committee chairperson contacts are below.

- **Crime Awareness Liaison:**

Position Open: Contact HOAMCO if interested.
hdcrimprevtn@googlegroups.com

- **Welcome Committee:**

Amy & Bill Stein: (404) 987-5254: alsypula@gmail.com
Robin Troy; (505) 967-5119; TRY_RBN@YAHOO.COM

- **Voting Members Chairperson:**

Harrison Jones: (505) 440-8198 (cell): [hvvmchair@gmail.com](mailto:hvdmchair@gmail.com)

- **Gated Village Committee:**

Position Open: Contact HOAMCO if interested.

- **Tramway Cleanup Project:**

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

- **Fire Preparedness Committee**

Judy Pierson: (505) 220-9193: Judy@judypierson.com

- **Communications Committee:**

Reg Rider and Susan Camp:

CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com

High Desert Security Provides Vacation Watches for HD Homes

Are you leaving on vacation or business and would like High Desert Security to keep an eye on your home? You can call the patrol service directly or fill out a form and submit it electronically.

Go to the High Desert website at www.highdesertliving.net. On the homepage, go to the bottom under Important Forms and click on Vacation Watch Form. Residents can fill the form out online and submit it directly. Or, call High Desert Security directly at (505) 485-5658.

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Rachael.Flance@cblegacy.com

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• 2022-2023 •
**High Desert Residential
 Owners Association
 Board of Directors**

		Term:
President:	• George Marsh	4/2021-4/2023
Vice President	• Neil Wetsch	4/2021-4/2023
Treasurer	• Steve Hartig	4/2021-4/2023
Secretary:	• Bob Howell	4/2022-4/2024
Director:	• Ray Berg	4/2022-4/2024
Director:	• Bill Pederson	4/2022-4/2024
Director:	• Camille Singaraju	4/2021-4/2023

Contact Board Members by emailing:
highdesertboard@HOAMCO.com

Management:

- **HOAMCO:**
 8700-A Education Pl. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87114
 PO Box 67590, Albuquerque, NM 87193-6590
 (505) 888-4479 Fax: (505) 888-4483
 For Accounting and Billing Questions:
 Website: www.HOAMCO.com
 Email: HOAMCO@HOAMCO.com
- **High Desert Office (Northeast Heights):**
 10555 Montgomery Boulevard NE
 Building 1, Suite 100 87111
 (505) 314-5862 Fax, (928)-776-0050
 (Located on the north side of Montgomery, west of
 Juan Tabo between Savoy and El Patron restaurants.)

 After-hours emergency maintenance phone contact:
 Call (505) 221-0189 (an on-call staff member will
 answer or return your call shortly.)
- **Northeast Heights Office Hours:**
 Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Management Staff:

- Community Manager: Lynnette Rodriguez,
lrodriguez@HOAMCO.com
highdesertmanager@HOAMCO.com
- Assistant Manager: Erin Brizuela
ebrizuela@HOAMCO.com
- Violations Coordinator and Administrative Support:
 Justin Rodriguez,
justinrrodriguez@hoamco.com
- **High Desert Security:**
 Security Patrol: **(505) 485-5658**
 (See page 5 for details on calls.)
- **High Desert Apache Plume Newsletter:**
 Rebecca Murphy: Editor, (505) 377-7227;
EEnews@outlook.com
 Newsletter Liaison: Doug Weigle
CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com
- **High Desert Website:**
 Website Liaison: Bill Freer & Mary Martin:
hdwebcom21@gmail.com

Board & Committee Meetings

• **Modifications Committee Meetings:**

All requests processed by email. Write HOAMCO at
highdesertmanager@HOAMCO.com. For information on
 submissions, see website at www.highdesertliving.net.
 Submission deadlines: Sept. 2, Oct. 7, Nov. 4.

• **Board of Directors Meetings:**

September 20, 2022 at 2 pm; Nov. 15 2022 at 2 p.m.
 Zoom meeting
 (Note: Board meetings are now held every other month.)

• **Voting Members Quarterly Meeting:**

Thursday, October 27, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
 Zoom meeting

• **Town Hall Meeting:**

Thursday, October 20 at 4 p.m..
 Zoom meeting. Obtain link on website.

Note: For a complete list of all upcoming events and meetings,
 see the website calendar at: www.highdesertliving.net.

**The High Desert Apache Plume newsletter
 (including all publishing and postal delivery costs)
 is entirely paid for by advertising.
 Please support our advertisers!**

The next issue of the Apache Plume will be mailed to all
 High Desert homeowners in mid-November 2022.
 Contact Rebecca Murphy (505-377-7227) to place an ad.
 • Ad deadline for the November issue: Oct. 24, 2022
 • Copy deadline for the November issue: Oct. 31, 2022

The Apache Plume is published quarterly by the High Desert Residential Owners Association.
 The Apache Plume is endorsed by the Board of Directors and is the official publication of the Association: © 2022
 High Desert website: www.highdesertliving.net; Management Company: HOAMCO: (505) 888-4479
 Community Association Manager, Lynnette Rodriguez: highdesertmanager@HOAMCO.com: (505) 314-5862
 The Apache Plume is edited by Editorial Enterprises, Rebecca Murphy: EEnews@outlook.com: (505) 377-7227
 Communications Committee, Co-Chairs Reg Rider, Susan Camp: CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com



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To learn more about Sharon's real estate service call today for a free consultation on how to sell your home or buy a home.

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