

Apache Plume

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

February 2024

Interested in Running for the Board of Directors? Deadline to Submit Statement of Interest is March 15

By the High Desert Nominating Committee: Tammi Dorsey, Chair, Harry Jones, Susan Camp, Mark Soo Hoo, Millie Yamada.

The High Desert Nominating Committee invites you to submit your Statement of Interest by Friday, March 15, to be considered for one of three open positions on the Board of Directors.

High Desert is known as one of the nicest places to live in Albuquerque and, indeed, the most wonderful place many of us have ever lived. For the past 20 years High Desert residents have been volunteering to help maintain our community's vision and beauty, and perhaps you are ready to contribute to that legacy.

If you have skills and experience that would make this great community even better, if you see something that you would like to fix, if you think we could forge a more perfect union, and if you want to know your neighbors and neighborhood better, now is your chance!

Submit your name for one of the upcoming three open positions for a two-year term on our Board of Directors. Experienced board directors – who are motivated by a desire to be involved, to help our community and to become more strongly bonded with its members– report a deep sense of satisfaction from their work on the board.

Board President George Marsh finds meeting with various homeowners on issues that impact everyday life and working to amicably resolve problems that otherwise might have become sources of contention and conflict as comprising some of his most rewarding years.

For example, he and another board member met with a new homeowner to discuss the homeowner's concerns regarding the construction of his home. The meeting was beneficial for all and resulted in a better understanding of the issues causing the problem. In a second example, George and other board members met with a group of homeowners to answer questions regarding landscaping in their gated community and arrived at a mutually acceptable resolution.

Not sure what is required of a board member? There are plenty of past and present experienced board members who can advise you. Call the HOAMCO office to be put in touch with a director.

If this vision ignites your desire to know and improve your community, please submit your Statement of Interest (SOI) by March 15. If you have any questions, email Tammi Dorsey, Nominating Committee Chair, at tammidorsey@outlook.com. Contact her when you submit your SOI so she will know to expect it.

The SOI template can be accessed and completed online on the High Desert website at www.highdesertliving.net. Click the State-

ment of Interest link and complete the relevant fields on the SOI. Submit the form electronically by clicking "Send Your Request Now."

Once you submit an SOI, the Nominating Committee will reach out to schedule an informational meeting with you sometime during the last week of March or the first week of April.

Meet & Greet

The Nominating Committee will also organize a "Meet and Greet" with Voting Members and other residents in April where board candidates will have an opportunity to share their motivations for becoming a board member. The process will conclude with the election by the Voting Members on Thursday, April 25, at their Annual Meeting.

Qualifications

There are four qualifications listed for nominees in the High

(Continued on Page 13)

Wildlife in High Desert



It's easy to forget that people are the "newcomers" to High Desert and that wildlife roamed our neighborhoods long before homeowners moved in. Mark Soo Hoo, Mountain Highlands, captured this remarkable photo of a bear outside his garage recently. For a different take on our fellow neighbors, go to page 7 for an article by Ilene Hartfield-Starr, Chaco Ridge.

President's Summary

By George Marsh, HDROA President



George Marsh

others are on-going.

Now that we've reached the end of the year and are moving into 2024, it might be appropriate to review our accomplishments for the past year, along with some challenges that we might face in the new year.

Our major accomplishments are in two categories: master projects which cover the entire homeowners association, and accomplishments for specific gated villages. Some of the projects have been completed and

Master Account Projects

Our community manager has confirmed with the city of Albuquerque which entity has responsibility for which sidewalks in the High Desert area. She has walked all the sidewalks and reported significant issues to the city of Albuquerque for further action. Additionally, she has identified those sidewalks that are the responsibility of the association or the particular village. This project is complete. Anyone having further questions as to their responsibilities for sidewalk repairs should contact Brandy at the office.

- The Legacy tree company has completed an evaluation of the piñon trees within High Desert. The removal of dead trees and diseased trees began in late January.
- The Board of Directors contracted with a company Pland Collaborative to complete an inventory of our stucco assets within the community and an assessment of their condition. We are expecting the results of that study within the next month. The study will be the basis for our long-range plan for stucco repairs in the coming years.
- Over this last year, we completed the stucco repairs to the western perimeter wall of Sunset Ridge along Cortaderia.
- The most recent stucco project, which is still ongoing, is repair of the northern perimeter wall along Spain from Imperata to High Desert Road. The weather has created some delays on this project.
- We completed stucco finish to the Enclave perimeter walls along Imperata.
- At the recommendation of our CPA, The Board of Directors adjusted off a number of wall deposits that had been paid to High Desert Maintenance during the 2021-22 fiscal year. The amount of the write-off was \$360,000.
- After a thorough evaluation, the board decided to change our auditor to a new company, Butler Hanson, a large Arizona-based CPA firm that has extensive experience doing audits of homeowner associations.
- The board contracted with a new company, Advanced Reserve Solutions, to do an in-depth study of our infrastructure and make recommendations for future reserve fund expenditures. Their study will include stucco walls projections, which have not been included in the past reserve studies. The study includes all of our gated villages.
- Reactivation of the High Desert Welcome Committee and its first newcomers reception in October was a great success.
- As part of the Water Authority rebate program, we replaced 300 sprinklers, added 19 flow sensors and eight smart communication devices to the controllers.
- The management company worked very closely with the Documents Review Committee in developing two new bylaws.
- The board approved an amendment to the management con-

tract with HOAMCO, extending the contract through June 30, 2025. This extension will keep the management fee the same as it has been over the last several years. An additional provision was to allow Brandy Hetherington to remain as community manager for the duration of the contract.

Gated Villages Updates, 2023

- Complete audit of all village gate entry systems.
- New security cameras for Canyons, Trillium and Desert Mountain, with on-site recording backup and mobile viewing.
- Several maintenance projects were completed at the Canyons gatehouse and entrance gates.
- The speed bump installation was completed at various locations in Desert Mountain.
- The Desert Mountain Pool bathrooms were repaired with new paint and floor coatings.
- The entry system at Enclave was upgraded.
- Stucco work was completed to an interior Trillium wall.
- Trees were trimmed at Trillium Park and two dead trees were removed and replaced.
- There are certainly many more projects that we could talk about. Some of them were small, but very important to many people in the community. For example, replacing solar lighting at the monuments, removing bees from walls and replacing pet station waste cans are some of the many small projects that were accomplished through the year.

2024 High Desert Milestones

- The Board of Directors is currently working on formulating the 2024-2025 budget. It is our expectation that there will be an increase in assessments this coming budget year. The previous budget year assessments were increased by 4.62 percent or three dollars per month.
- There will be an Annual Meeting of the Voting Members on April 25 to elect three new board members whose terms expire in April. Please consider submitting a statement of interest for these positions as they are critical to the future success of our community. We do need you!
- Probably the most significant program that we will be working on this year is the landscape contract, which is our most expensive contract by far and the one that has the most attention of the board and the management company. I have established a contract working group chaired by Bob Howell that is working on the Request for Proposals, summary of work and landscape specifications as part of the overall contract process. Stay tuned as there will be more developments in the coming weeks on this entire process.

Lawsuit Update

I would like to inform you again, in case you do not know, that a lawsuit was filed against the association, HOAMCO, Reg Rider (past High Desert Board President), and myself by a homeowner, case no. D-202-CV-2023-08430. The Board, with the approval of our insurance carrier, has selected Samantha Adams of the "Adams+Crow" law firm in Albuquerque, to represent the association in this litigation.

If any homeowner would like to receive a copy of the complaint, you may email Brandy at highdesertmanager@hoamco.com for an electronic copy of the amended complaint.

Manager's Message

By Brandy Hetherington,
Community Association Manager



Brandy
Hetherington,

***Out with the old,
And in with the new;
Happy New Year High Desert!***

We left off in our November 2023 article with a number of projects in progress. Two large long-term projects have made a good deal of progress over December and January.

Removal of 140 Dead Trees Recommended

Legacy Tree Company has completed its evaluation of the piñon trees. It has recommended the removal of 140 dead or dying trees from the common areas. Legacy has determined that lack of water and long-term drought stress is a major contributing factor to the piñon trees' decline, with drought stress exposing the trees to disease and pest infestations.

Irrigation Review

Legacy Tree is in the process of completing its irrigation review and will have its final report to the association by mid-February. Once the assessments have been completed, Legacy Trees will begin to address its recommendations for replacing the tree populations with greater biodiversity and climate-ready trees.

Stucco Wall Assessment Complete

Pland Collaborative has completed its assessments of the wall, gates, fences and monument signs throughout High Desert and has shared its draft report with the management team and Bill Pederson, Board Vice-President. At this time the draft is under review, but the initial data shows that a good deal of repairs are needed on the walls and fences throughout High Desert. Once this report is finalized, it will be used to develop the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget

for wall repairs in the community and in gated villages.

Outside Lights That Interfere With Dark Skies

Outside of general updates of on-going projects, I wanted to touch on a compliance matter that we are hearing about more often in High Desert.

There have been several recent communications to the management office about lighting or security lights being used by residents in the community that do not conform to the requirements listed in either the Builder Guidelines for Sustainability or the Estate and Premiere Guidelines for Sustainability.

The overarching goal of these guidelines, with regard to exterior lighting, is to preserve views of the night sky. Lighting might also be negatively impacting your neighbors. The night skies are so important in New Mexico that legislation exists at the state and county and municipal levels to protect it (www.darkskynm.org).

Exterior lighting in High Desert should serve three purposes, to provide safety, security, and illumination of outdoor living spaces. However, it is important to know that there are limitations to the types, styles, colors, and installation of the lighting that may be used on the exterior of the home or in your outdoor living space. For instance, safety lighting should be limited to installations below 18 inches in height and should have covers or canopies to direct the light downward to the ground. Security lighting may be controlled by motion sensors and should not be used as general nighttime lighting or as a deterrent in the evening hours because it negatively impacts the night sky. Security lighting may not exceed 1200 lumens at a color temperature between 2700 and 3000 Kelvin. The guidelines provide further information about light temperatures and designs that every owner should be aware of. Owners can access this information on the High Desert website at highdesertliving.net by searching under the Documents & Forms tab for Official Documents. If you are thinking of adding or changing your exterior lighting, please be sure to submit a Modification Request form and review the Guidelines for Sustainability as well as any applicable village documents, which can also be found on the website.

A Few General Reminders

If you're planning to make changes to the exterior of your home or yard, be sure you submit a Modification Request. Visit the High Desert website at highdesertliving.net to review information like "Modification Dos and Don'ts" and to fill out an online (or printable) modification request form.

Also, please remember to review any supplemental documents for your individual village and the Builder or Estate and Premier Sustainability Guidelines.

Requests must be submitted before the first Friday of each month to be considered in that month. Please remember that the committee has up to 45 days to review requests, unless the request is considered eligible to be fast-tracked. If you have questions about submitting a request, please reach out to the office.

If you haven't done so already, consider signing up for E-Statements and enjoy the convenience of not having to check your mail for that quarterly assessment invoice. See your most recent assessment invoice for your special email address to sign-up. If you need any assistance signing up, please reach out to the High Desert HOAMCO office at 505-314-5862.

Did You See the High Desert Bulletin This Month?

If you're not getting the monthly High Desert Bulletin in your email, then you're missing important announcements and other communications from the High Desert association. Contact us at communicationscommittee@hoamco.com and we'll help you figure out the problem.

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THE MARKET IS STILL HOT!

HIGH DESERT SALES FOR 2023 VS. 2022

There was a significant drop off of homes sold in High Desert from 2023 vs. 2022. Not in value, just in sales volume. Sales dropped about 40% year over year, but that was pretty much the story for Albuquerque, the State, and the Nation as a whole. People have asked me why such a drop? The only answer I have is "if you don't have to move, why would you give up your 3% mortgage for a 6.5% mortgage? It will take some time for that to return to normal. Here is a quick look at sales each year.

Listings Sold 89

2022

Average Sqft: 2,674 **\$/Sqft:** 84.00 **DOM/CDOM:** 10/12

O-Price: 776,872 **L-Price:** 769,747 **S-Price:** 771,787

SP % LP: 101.08

Price High: 2,000,000 **Median:** 650,000 **Low:** 351,000

Property Type Count 89

Listings Sold 54

2023

Average Sqft: 2,916 **\$/Sqft:** 289.21 **DOM/CDOM:** 20/23

O-Price: 875,370 **L-Price:** 861,041 **S-Price:** 845,360

SP % LP: 98.70

Price High: 2,298,400 **Median:** 704,950 **Low:** 380,000

Property Type Count 54



SALE PENDING

13700 Pino Ridge NE
0.69 Acres



SOLD

6519 Dawn View Drive NE
2539 SQ FT 4BR 3BA .22 Acres



SOLD

13709 Canada Del Oso Pl. NE
4037 SQ FT 3BR 3BA .98 Acres



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Albuquerque Police Dept. Crime Statistics for High Desert

High Desert Crime Statistics: Crimemapping.com	QTR 1			QTR 2			QTR 3			QTR 4			2023				Total Year			
Crime Categories	Per Month			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Qtr 1		Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Animal Call	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Call	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Missing Person	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	4
Stolen Vehicle Found	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Neighbor Trouble	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Direct Traffic	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Traffic Stop	0	2	0	9	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	1	0	13
Traffic Accident no injury	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	2	4	1	2	4	1	8
Auto Accident with injury	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	4	4
Drunk Driver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
Disturbance	5	3	3	7	1	0	4	3	3	4	1	2	11	8	10	7	7	36	36	36
Vandalism	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	7	7	7
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	5	0	2	5	2	0	2	1	3	4	0	2	7	7	6	6	6	26	26	26
Burglary Auto	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	3	4	4	4	4
Vehicle Theft	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	4	7	7	7	7
Theft/ Larceny	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	5	5	5
Theft/Fraud/Embezzlement	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	3	3	3	3
Burglary Residence	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5	5	5	5
Family Dispute	2	1	3	3	7	2	4	3	3	5	3	3	6	12	10	11	39	39	39	39
Aggravated Assault/Battery	0	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	1	0	9	9	9	9
Shots Fired	2	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	7	7	7	7
Total	16	7	9	34	15	20	13	12	17	18	10	13	32	69	42	41	184	184	184	184

These statistics come from Albuquerque Police Department's reports for calls involving High Desert for all 2023 quarters.

Board Director Camille Singaraju, Sunset Ridge, obtains these statistics from APD each month.

ACADEMY IN MOTION

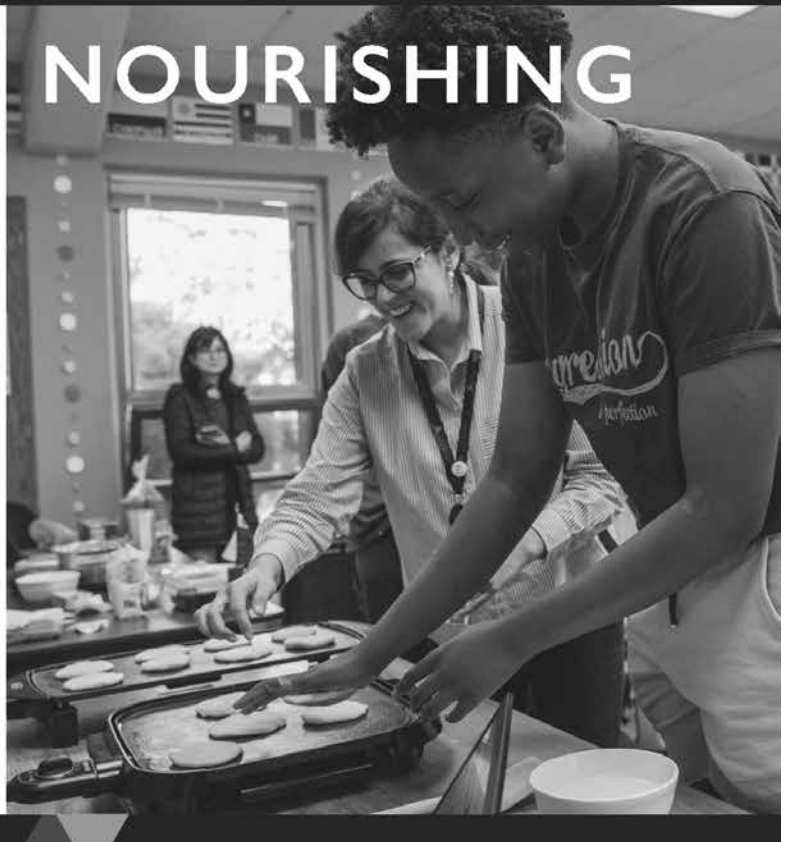
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Greetings, From Your “New” Neighbors

Story by Ilene Hartfield-Starr,
Chaco Ridge

For all residents, both long-time and new, we welcome you to High Desert. We’ve been here the longest, before there was a High Desert. We weren’t around much when you were becoming our new neighbors so you probably didn’t see us. Now, we’re back, safely “meeting” you while out and about in our shared wonderful environment.

You’ve probably already seen some of us in your neighborhoods – we are the deer you’ve spotted in High Desert Park where we like to browse on grass and bark and keep an eye on all those pups having fun there. Your dogs are very curious about us, as we are about them (staring contests!), but we know when to leave before there’s trouble. You’ve also seen us sometimes in your yards. We will generally run away or sometimes just amble when spotted. We’ve also been known to take a stroll down the streets in your neighborhood, so always check when backing out of your driveways.

Some of you may not know that we bears have come visiting you as well. We are sometimes as surprised to see you as you are to see us! Right now we’re still in hibernation until around



This fox took advantage of a pail of water outside Mark Soo Hoo’s house in Mountain Highlands. Mark leaves water outside for the animals during dry months. Photo by Mark Soo Hoo.

late March and even after that time we’ll probably stay in the mountains where we have lots of spring eats. But, if we do show up in your yard, just give us room and know we’ll move on and away from you. It’s probably a good idea to let your neighbors and the authorities know about us being nearby,

but you are pretty safe from us if you just give us space.

You may not have seen some of us at all. We raccoons and foxes are nocturnal and may come “visiting” but other than maybe footprints you wouldn’t ever know we were there. We’re pretty opportunistic though, so it’s a good idea to keep your garbage cans closed tightly. If we can’t get into them, we’ll skedaddle and look for other food elsewhere.

Coyotes! We have somewhat of a bad reputation, we know, but because we’re also generally nocturnal you won’t easily spot us. However, you can sure hear us when we are successful on our nightly hunts. We are probably the most adaptable animal here in High Desert and so are probably the most numerous of your wild neighbors, having learned to live even in cities. But here, we keep away from



Photo by John Ledwith, The Overlook

you humans as much as we can, happily looking for rabbits and other small creatures. It does mean, though, that your small pets need to be watched carefully as we are always hungry!

We smaller critters are your neighbors too – rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks and one neighbor you probably don’t want to meet: skunks! Fortunately we don’t run into you much as we’re busy foraging, but we’re here. Birds too, of all kinds, even two kinds of quail. Some of you put out seed and other foods for us which we appreciate, especially in winter. We’re the “quiet neighbors” who share our mutual home in peace.

Just like the other animals who live with you here in High Desert, all we want is to peacefully coexist with you. To do that, we ask that you do what we will do for you: give you space.

So, welcome all! We hope all of you and all of us can safely cohabit, respecting each other here in **OUR** High Desert.

Sincerely, Your “New” Neighbors

Story by Ilene Hartfield-Starr, Chaco Ridge

Go to www.highdesertliving.net to see an engaging video created by Bill Freer and Mary Martin, Desert Mountain, of more High Desert creatures filmed by Mark Soo Hoo, Mountain Highlands. From the homepage, click the High Desert Living menu at the top, then click High Desert Wildlife and select “Mark’s Critters” to watch.



A coyote ventures across a High Desert backyard during the day.

Photo by Mark Soo Hoo, Mountain Highlands



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Market Stats and more!



High Desert
Osage Orange RD
\$850,000

SOLD
in 4-DAYS

Sandia Heights
Black Bear RD
\$850,000

SOLD
Brought the Buyer

Sandia Heights
Eagle Ridge CT
\$750,000

JUST LISTED

Sandia Heights
\$795,000

UNDER CONTRACT
in 3-DAYS

High Desert
Year to Date
Market Stats

Closed Sales
80
-4.9% from 2021

Average Sale Price
\$797,721
+ 11.9% from 2021

Avg Price per sq.ft.
\$284.27

Year to date comparison 1/1/2022 - 10/24/2022 to same time in 2021

single family detached

Impact of Mortgage Rates on Home Values?

As the Fed raises interest rates to curtail demand, we are seeing a slowdown in the pace of sales and the rate of home appreciation. This trend is predicted to continue into 2023 and with buyer demand cooling the market could continue to shift and slow. The lack of home supply is still the driving factor for maintaining healthy home appreciation. If you are planning to sell, the market is still favorable, but buyers are beginning to see increased buying opportunities.

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- Odeta Kushi, Deputy Chief Economist, First American

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High Desert Patrol Report

Call Type:	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
Alarm	1	2	4
Breaking/Entering	3	5	2
Car Accident	0	2	0
Disturbance	2	3	6
Garage Open	5	4	0
Gate Malfunction or Issue	4	10	6
Graffiti	0	0	0
Wildlife Issue	2	3	4
Streetlight Out	0	2	0
Landscape Leak or Issue	0	1	0
Neighbor Complaint	1	0	0
Noise Complaint	0	1	0
Misc.	2	5	10
Police Activity	0	1	0
Pool Incidents/Trespassers	0	0	3
Property Damage	0	1	0
Speeding	0	0	2
Suspicious Activity	17	15	14
Trespassing	0	2	0
Vacation Checks	133	45	19
Vandalism	0	0	0
Vehicle Breakdown	0	0	7
Vehicle Issue/Theft	0	0	1

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

Looking Back At the Origins Of High Desert’s Development

By Reg Rider, Communications Committee Co-Chair

The High Desert neighborhood we live in has a unique history, unlike many developments across the United States. What we know as High Desert is comprised of about 1,000 acres in the foothills of the Sandias. It is one of the first master-planned sustainable developments ever created, one constructed to live with the environment of New Mexico’s “High Desert.”

The development was once a part of the Elena Gallegos Land Grant. You will recognize the name because of the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area and Open Space to our north. The original Land Grant of 35,049 acres was created in 1693 for Diego Montoya. In 1712, the grant, stretching from the crest of the Sandia Mountains to the Rio Grande, was purchased by Elena Gallegos. High Desert is within a part of the Grant that includes the Albuquerque Academy and that was purchased by Albert Simms, founder of the Albuquerque Academy. Through a series of complex dealings between the U.S. Forest Service, the City of Albuquerque, and the Academy, the foothills portion of the Grant was divided into National Forest, Open Space, the park and what is now High Desert.

This is just the beginnings of examining our history and how High Desert is constructed. See future issues of the Apache Plume for more High Desert history.

Credit to Peter Strascina whose history of High Desert can be found on our HDROA website.



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Treasurer's Report Through December 2023

By Steve Hartig, Treasurer



Steve Hartig

We have now completed half of our fiscal year through December 2023. Starting with our Master Operating Account, we are slightly above budget on our income at \$723,000 with the main difference being slightly higher fees and penalties. From an expense point of view, we are well below our

budget of \$642,000 with actual spending at \$588,000. The main reasons for this include:

- Professional fees are below budget due to reduced legal costs, security services and consulting.
- Landscaping is slightly below budget mainly due to seasonal effects as spending will pick up in the spring.
- Utilities, especially water, are well under budget partially due to upgrades made in our irrigation system to save water.
- Several costs such as our financial audit and the reserve study were budgeted earlier in the year and the actual costs will come later so we will catch up.

Tree Project

Forecasting the rest of the year, we expect to end approximately on budget due to the deferred costs, pickup in landscape spending and the decision by the board to move ahead with a major project to cut down about 200 dead trees throughout our neighborhoods. This is definitely needed and will cost about \$48,000.

Year to date, we have had spending of about \$120,000 from the Master Reserves Account for wall work by the Enclave and along Imperata and irrigation system upgrading, which is being paid for over time. The main added expense expected this year will be for the wall along the top part of Spain, which I am sure you have all seen being worked on. This will be about \$60,000.

All of the gated villages are under budget for operating costs and we have not had any major spending on reserve items.

We have earned about \$20,000 in interest from CD investments across the Master and gated villages.

Overall, I believe our finances are in a sound situation for the rest of the year.

Reserve Account Balances

	6/30/2023	9/30/2023	12/31/2023
MASTER	\$ 266,617	\$ 235,073	\$ 256,059
CANYONS	\$ 174,528	\$ 171,615	\$ 176,179
CHACO CMP	\$ 61,086	\$ 63,000	\$ 64,914
DESERT MOUNTAIN	\$ 287,330	\$ 289,984	\$ 294,335
ENCLAVE	\$ 51,254	\$ 53,173	\$ 52,300
LEGENDS	\$ 120,160	\$ 122,719	\$ 122,735
TRILLIUM	\$ 256,953	\$ 259,498	\$ 267,899
WILDERNESS CANON	\$ 22,911	\$ 24,327	\$ 25,687
WILDERNESS COMPOUND	\$ 135,529	\$ 137,181	\$ 139,049
TOTAL	\$ 1,376,368	\$ 1,356,570	\$ 1,399,157

• See more Treasurer's Reports on page 11 •



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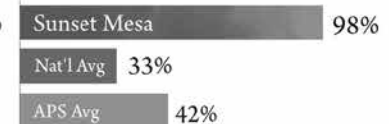
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High Desert Treasurer's Reports



HDROA Income/Expense Statement YTD as of December 31, 2023

Accounts	Actual	Budget
Income		
<u>INCOME</u>		
4100 - HOMEOWNER ASSESSMENTS	\$862,184.00	\$862,184.00
4200 - COST SHARING - ALTEZZA	\$48,538.73	\$46,939.74
4310 - ASSESSMENT INTEREST	\$1,173.53	\$900.00
4330 - ASSESSMENT LATE FEES	\$400.00	\$1,200.00
4350 - LEGAL/COLLECTION FEES	\$5,277.89	\$2,500.02
4550 - GATE REMOTES	\$359.00	\$0.00
4600 - INTEREST INCOME	\$659.57	\$120.00
4800 - PENALTIES/FINES	\$4,585.00	\$0.00
Total INCOME	\$723,177.72	\$713,843.76
<u>TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS</u>		
8900 - TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(\$80,000.00)	(\$80,000.00)
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$80,000.00)	(\$80,000.00)
Total Income	\$643,177.72	\$633,843.76
Expense		
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE</u>		
5150 - ADMIN SUPPORT PR	\$37,337.57	\$43,500.00
5250 - BANK CHARGES	\$0.00	\$75.00
5400 - INSURANCE	\$12,657.80	\$12,510.00
5530 - LIEN/COLLECTION COSTS	\$717.49	\$720.00
5625 - OPERATIONAL SUPPORT	\$258.96	\$3,300.00
5650 - BOD/VOTING MEMBER MEETINGS	\$4,132.59	\$4,200.00
5800 - OFFICE EXPENSE	\$12,830.65	\$8,400.00
8600 - RESERVE STUDY	\$5,783.65	\$7,500.00
Total ADMINISTRATIVE	\$73,718.71	\$80,205.00
<u>LANDSCAPE</u>		
6300 - LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE	\$183,693.37	\$195,040.02
6360 - IRRIGATION REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$24,646.23	\$15,500.00
6370 - PET CLEANUP	\$5,801.88	\$16,100.00
6395 - LANDSCAPE PROJECTS - MASTER PLAN	\$20,363.94	\$15,200.00
Total LANDSCAPE	\$234,505.32	\$241,840.02
<u>MAINTENANCE</u>		
6100 - GATE & GUARDHOUSE MAINTENANCE	\$3,589.53	\$1,200.00
6575 - SIGN/ENTRY MAINTENANCE	\$1,416.00	\$2,700.00
6590 - WALL REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$4,205.44	\$400.00
6595 - BAD DEBT-VENDOR DEPOSITS	\$17,427.19	\$0.00
6600 - SNOW REMOVAL	(\$706.00)	\$2,500.00
6850 - LOCKS & KEYS	\$116.78	\$250.00
Total MAINTENANCE	\$26,048.94	\$7,050.00
<u>PROFESSIONAL FEES</u>		
5100 - ACCOUNTING/TAX PREP FEES	\$6,058.88	\$7,000.00
5270 - CONSULTING	\$10,724.12	\$17,500.02
5500 - LEGAL FEES-COLLECTION/SMALL CLAIMS	\$3,472.72	\$7,500.00
5501 - LEGAL-GENERAL SERVICES	\$7,443.01	\$20,000.00
5800 - ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT	\$77,894.28	\$79,200.00
8200 - SECURITY SERVICES	\$110,236.17	\$122,892.00
Total PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$215,829.18	\$254,092.02
<u>TAXES/OTHER EXPENSES</u>		
5200 - ALLOWANCE FOR DOUBTFUL ACCOUNTS	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
5860 - COMMUNITY EVENTS	\$906.21	\$2,500.00
5870 - WELCOME COMMITTEE	\$2,097.64	\$800.00
5900 - WEBSITE	\$1,553.17	\$4,500.00
8250 - MISCELLANEOUS	\$2,291.71	\$1,000.02
8800 - TAXES - CORPORATE	\$1,360.00	\$5,000.00
Total TAXES/OTHER EXPENSES	\$8,208.73	\$16,602.02
<u>UTILITIES</u>		
7100 - ELECTRICITY	\$1,007.00	\$1,952.45
7900 - WATER/SEWER	\$28,922.17	\$40,200.00
Total UTILITIES	\$29,929.17	\$42,152.45
Total Expense	\$588,240.05	\$641,941.51
Operating Net Income	\$54,937.67	(\$8,097.75)

HDROA Gated Villages Income/Expense Report YTD as of December 31, 2023

	Actual	Budget
Canyons		
Total INCOME	\$12,887.61	\$12,870.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$3,500.00)	(\$3,500.00)
Total Expense	\$6,598.95	\$8,642.00
Canyons Operating Net Income	\$2,788.66	\$728.00
Chaco Compound		
Total INCOME	\$6,100.66	\$6,072.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$3,750.00)	(\$3,750.00)
Total Expense	\$1,511.51	\$2,125.98
Chaco Compound Operating Net Income	\$839.15	\$196.02
Desert Mountain		
Total INCOME	\$72,500.82	\$72,360.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$27,500.00)	(\$27,500.00)
Total Expense	\$37,204.23	\$46,181.50
Desert Mountain Operating Net Income	\$7,796.59	(\$1,321.50)
Enclave		
Total INCOME	\$16,261.78	\$16,236.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$8,000.00)	(\$8,000.00)
Total Expense	\$6,349.85	\$7,405.68
The Enclave Operating Net Income	\$1,911.93	\$830.32
Trillium		
Total INCOME	\$30,518.05	\$30,444.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$12,500.00)	(\$12,500.00)
Total Expense	\$24,454.38	\$17,594.64
Trillium Operating Net Income	(\$6,436.33)	\$349.36
Wilderness Compound		
Total INCOME	\$7,029.02	\$7,020.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$1,500.00)	(\$1,500.00)
Total Expense	\$2,853.07	\$4,812.22
Wilderness Compound Operating Net Income	\$2,675.95	\$707.78
Legends		
Total INCOME	\$17,018.10	\$16,992.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$3,500.00)	(\$3,500.00)
Total Expense	\$11,126.01	\$14,364.58
The Legends Operating Net Income	\$2,392.09	(\$872.58)
Wilderness Cañon		
Total INCOME	\$7,648.65	\$7,638.00
Total TRANSFER BETWEEN FUNDS	(\$2,700.00)	(\$2,700.00)
Total Expense	\$828.32	\$3,675.40
Wilderness Cañon Operating Net Income	\$4,120.33	\$1,262.60

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Interested In Running For the Board of Directors?

From Page 1

Desert Bylaws. Candidates for membership on the Board (Nominating Committee Charter): (a.) shall not have been removed as a Director by the Voting Members or the Board pursuant to Section 3.5 of the Bylaws within the

prior two years; (b.) shall not be more than 60 days delinquent in the payment of any assessment or other charge due the Association; (c.) shall not have any hearings or appeals pending before the Board, New Construction Committee, Modifications Committee or Covenants Committee nor shall they have any legal action pending against the Association or any Officer thereof; (d.) must have lived in High Desert as a resident for at least six months prior to the date of the election.

Scan this image to go straight to the SOI form on our website



The Nominating Committee looks forward to receiving your Statement of Interest.

If you don't feel you can meet the obligations for a Board Director position, please consider other volunteer opportunities on committees (such as the Nominating Committee), events, or as a Voting Member.

Bird On a Wire



Mark Soo Hoo, Mountain Highlands, caught this fellow enjoying the moon from its wire perch off a roof in High Desert.



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High Desert Studio Tour Draws Dozens of Visitors

More than one hundred visitors attended the High Desert Studio Tour in early December as High Desert artists and craftsmen opened their studios and displayed their art to their neighbors.

“We had a great tour with more visitors than ever,” said organizer of the event Dagmar Beinenz-Byrd, Highlands homeowner and fiber artist. The tour was established in 2009 by Thea Berg who oversaw the annual event until it was halted prior to the pandemic. Dagmar revived the tour in 2022.

Artist and jewelry creator JJ Parsons displayed her art at Thea’s home in The Overlook. “It was interesting how many High Desert residents came in and introduced themselves and shared how they enjoyed getting out and meeting new neighbors,” she said.

Photographer and tour participant Allen Morrison was impressed at the number of people that attended. “My wife and I were constantly on our feet talking with folks and sharing my art. As it was my first year participating in the tour, I wasn’t sure what to expect, so this certainly exceeded expectations,” he said.

This was the first year the Studio Tour had a dedicated website with artists’ details and maps. Allison Hunt, Desert Mountain and a full-time painter, volunteered to create the website.

Any artists interested in participating in the 2024 Studio Tour, should contact Dagmar at dagmarbyrd@comcast.net.



Dagmar Beinenz-Byrd, Highlands, organized the Studio Tour for the last two years. She is seen here on the left with visitor Susan Williams, who has attended the Studio Tour in High Desert for many years. Susan says she loves the fingerless mitts made by Dagmar and purchases at least one pair every year.



Photo by Mark Soo Hoo

Mary Martin, center, speaks with visitors to her home during the Studio Tour. Mary specializes in pastel and acrylic paintings and portraits. She lives in Desert Mountain.



Visitor Jan Lehmann-Shaw, above, stopped by Dagmar’s studio to show her the shawl she knitted with yarn purchased there last year.



Thea Berg, far left, welcomed more than one hundred visitors to her home in The Overlook on the day of the Studio Tour.



Photo by Mark Soo Hoo

High Desert Studio Tour visitors look at a paper sculpture by Bill Freer, Desert Mountain.



Patrick Hickey, husband of fabric artist Andrea Kilbury, entertained visitors during the Tour. They live in The Legends.

Photo by Mark Soo Hoo



Photo above: Watercolorist Paula Heffner, left, displayed her work to a visitor during the Studio Tour.

Village Spotlight

Desert Mountain is Largest Village in High Desert

*By William Freer and Mary Martin,
Desert Mountain Voting Members.*

If you're reading this, you already know that High Desert is a great place to live. After all, with 25 unique villages, each with its own personality, there's a village that is just right for you.

What you may not know is that Desert Mountain's 180 homes make it the biggest village of all. But in a way it's also the smallest, because we are a community of neighbors. With houses nearer together than many other villages, the closeness actually helps us get to know each other in very neighborly ways. We pick up that package when you're out of town, meet in the park while pushing the stroller, host an ice cream social in the driveway or outdoor movie night in the backyard.

We are a community of teachers, engineers, pilots, doctors, lawyers, artists, brokers of one kind or another, award-winning pie-bakers, even a stunt man. And lots of friends. We are moms and dads, singles and couples. We get up every morning and go to work or we're retired from the daily routine and tend to our plants and yards.

Some of us are volunteers and organizers, some are happy to let others lead. We're healthy and hiking or maybe in need of a little neighborly care. Babies in strollers and strolling seniors, empty nesters and pet lovers share the same private park just inside our gate.

Community Pool and Spa

"Desert Mountaineers" are all different and yet somehow the same, having chosen a gated community that's pretty quiet until you hear joyful laughter and splashing in the pool (we are the only village in High Desert to have a community pool and spa for our residents) or the happy sounds of a pickup game in the street.

You can read on the bench by our Little Free Library or join in our July 4th and Halloween parades, where kids and some adults dress up then wind up at a well-attended block party.

Several of our 180 homes are smallish, some larger, some with a separate casita or even a second floor bedroom, and all by a single builder so the design of the various models is unified and appealing. Of course views of the mountain are breathtaking.

Four active Voting Members and four Alternates work together as a team to make our village a little better, a little safer and ensure that our property values keep going up. These resident volunteers are Lauren Artiglia, Terri (and Tony) Beach, Brian Bowen, Michelle Croteau, Bill Freer, Laura Horton, Mary Martin and Joe Vargo.

As we've enjoyed lots of new young families with children, we find them riding and playing in the streets because some homes have pretty small yards. As a result our residents voted "yes" and allowed a few speed bumps to slow the visiting UPS, Amazon or forgetful driver, keeping our kids a little safer. Almost everyone is happy about that.

We publish an occasional newsletter, keeping residents aware of important village information, reminders, tips and events.

Of all the High Desert villages, we are happy and proud to make this one home.



Desert Mountain held a community-wide Halloween parade and block party for residents last fall with neighbors of all ages joining in.

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High Desert’s Landscape Status Report, February 2024

By Camille Singaraju, Landscape Committee Chair, Board Director

The 1,000 acres now known as High Desert were once a part of the vast Elena Gallegos Land Grant going back hundreds of years. High Desert Residential Owners Association (HDROA) manages a diverse landscape made up of over 70 acres of cultivated and maintained landscapes and 240 acres of open space. The open spaces are intended to preserve the resources, ecosystem, and natural beauty of the property. The Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control District (AMAFCA), was an early High Desert partner that helped maintain water flows off the Sandia mountains and within the High Desert community.

Landscape Master Plan

A Landscape Master Plan was developed in coordination with the Landscape Committee to (1) “Re-establish aesthetic continuity among the High Desert common areas; (2) Establish well-coordinated landscape design, construction, and maintenance principles, practices, and standards; (3) Provide guidance for increasing irrigation efficiencies and reducing water use over the life of the plan.”

In 2016, an evaluation of the High Desert landscape was made

		Acres	Estimated Costs in 2016	Estimated Costs in 2023 Dollars (27.00% multiplier)
Zone 1	Development entrances	0.6	\$132,000	\$167,640.00
Zone 2	Streets and Medians	8.79	\$1,230,000.00	\$1,562,100.00
Zone 3	Builder Entrances	1.2	\$134,400.00	\$170,688.00
Zone 4	Estate and Premier Village Entrances	4	\$182,000.00	\$231,140.00
Zone 5	Parks /Ponds	3.2	\$368,000.00	\$467,360.00
Zone 6	Sculpture Gardens			\$0.00
Zone 7	Open Space	8.5	\$365,500.00	\$464,185.00
	TOTAL COST		\$2,411,900.00	\$3,063,113.00

by Dekker/Perich/Sabatini Ltd. which concluded that High Desert needed about 27 acres of landscape improvements. Its plan, with costs, is summarized in the table above.

Due to the high cost, these improvements were never implemented. In fact, landscape costs were actually decreased starting in 2017. The chart at the bottom of the page lists the total landscape costs paid (dark bar) and compares it with the inflation-adjusted costs in 2023 dollars (lighter bar).

The current Landscape Committee has evaluated High Desert using the Landscape Master Plan’s Prioritization Matrix and found that all zones need improvements. Also, there is a need for an evaluation of the aging irrigation lines infrastructure, replacement of the dead trees, and a landscape architect redesign with an emphasis on plants that will thrive in our changing climate conditions

The Landscape Committee is developing a landscape contract that consists of a three-year plan. Year One will maintain High Desert’s landscape zones, remove dead wood to mitigate fire, and obtain expert advice on improvements. Year Two would involve maintenance and implementing the irrigation improvements. It would also include managing plants to mitigate heat intensity and flying embers if a fire breaks out. Year Three would maintain the High Desert landscape with improved irrigation and implement affordable advice from experts.

In the meantime, the Landscape Committee is working on collecting native seeds and replanting them. It has developed partnerships with the City’s Garden Center in growing plants for the entrances and working with the Pollinators Society to increase pollinator plants.

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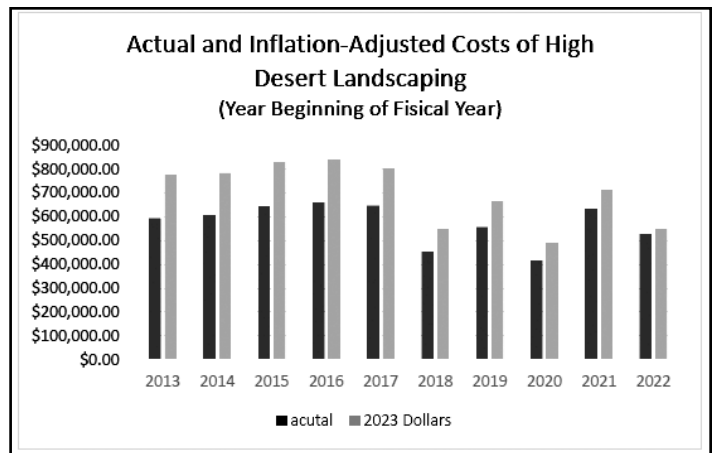
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High Desert Aware: Who You Gonna Call?



By Mark Soo Hoo, High Desert Crime Awareness Liaison
 Hello! As I start my position as the new High Desert Crime Awareness Liaison, I thought I'd introduce myself. My wife Cindy and I have been High Desert property owners for over 20 years and I have only recently become an active volunteer in our community over the past three years. I'm a Voting Member for our village of Mountain Highlands and serve on the Communications, Document Review, and Nominations Committees. Having recently retired, my favorite pastimes include woodworking, smart home technology, e-biking and refurbishing exhibits at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History.

So, back to the question, "Who you gonna call if there's something strange in your neighborhood?" Our security contractor, Vet-Sec (505-485-5658), is probably who comes to mind. While these patrol officers are a big part of our community security, they are limited in their contractual scope of service.

Their primary activity is to perform a continuous 24/7 roving patrol of all villages. They will respond to residential alarms by notifying city emergency personnel and observe and document the location of the alarm from their vehicle.

A big part of their incident reporting is on suspicious vehicles or persons. Upon request, they will conduct vacation home checks. They will not do welfare checks of residents nor become involved in domestic disputes.

Vet-Sec is also responsible for opening and closing the gates at the High Desert Park and the Emery Trailhead. Vet-Sec will call 242-COPS for police non-emergencies (suspicious vehicles

or persons), 311 for non-police notifications (for example, animal welfare and wildlife), and 911 for emergencies.

The other big part of our community's security rests with you and your awareness of something strange or out of the ordinary. So, since I have assumed this new role as Crime Awareness Liaison, there have been two recent home burglaries at the end of last year. These are in addition to eight other burglaries that have occurred in our community during the past year.

Nationwide, New Mexico has the top prize for the greatest number of residential burglaries (700 per 100,000 residents). While our community is statistically well below this number, just be aware that nationally two burglaries occur every minute of the day. More than half of these break-ins are through the front or back doors and burglars spend an average of 10 minutes inside a home and sometimes as little as 90 seconds.

My role is to make you aware of what's happening in our community and to interact with city resources that can be used to make our community more secure. I welcome your suggestions on how to make that happen, but also encourage you to be aware of anything that doesn't seem right and report it to Vet-Sec or 911 if the matter is urgent. Use your alarm when you're not home, keep your car in your garage, if possible, and make sure doors and windows are closed and locked when you're not home. With the short amount of time that burglars spend inside a home, awareness and prevention is the best defense.



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

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High Desert Community-Wide Compliance Inspections Extended



Justin Rodriguez,
High Desert
Compliance Officer

Happy New Year, everyone! I hope it's started off well and peaceful. I would like to thank you for doing all the little things that add up to being a great neighbor. I see your efforts and they are greatly appreciated.

Inevitably, visible maintenance issues will arise for even the most diligent homeowner.

It may happen that you might receive a letter from me highlighting a compliance issue that needs resolution.

Receiving a letter from me does not mean you have failed in your duty or lapsed in your responsibilities by any means. It does not make you a bad neighbor and has no bearing upon your character!

I send letters out frequently to gently remind homeowners of things they may not realize are rules, to respectfully ask them to address the issue, and to let them know I'm available to and willing to help them see the issue resolved.

With that in mind, I have revised my inspection schedule for High Desert. I am out riding around High Desert five days a week, every other week. This means I am available to come over and chat about any issues you may have noticed in common areas or otherwise that seem to have gone unnoticed or to walk you through what needs to be done in order to be compliant with High Desert regulations.

All you need to do is send me an email and I will be happy to schedule a visit. I can be reached at JRRodriguez@HOAMCO.com or via phone at (505) 314-5862. Call me to discuss compliance anytime.

We have been seeing some confusion again about rules regarding recreational vehicles. As a general rule, if you're going to have a recreational vehicle parked on your lot and you don't want to get a letter about it, please just give the office a call or send me an email to let us know.

The Declaration of CC&Rs restricts the parking of recreational vehicles and the like to places other than a stored garage, but there is an exception to allow for a period for loading and unloading for up to 72 hours. If you live in a gated village, there may be further restrictions to consider.

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Fire Preparedness Experts Meet With Trillium Homeowners To Discuss Recent Fires, Preparedness and Evacuation

On a chilly afternoon in November, the Trillium Village homeowners invited some fire preparedness experts to speak at a monthly luncheon held under the arbor in the Trillium neighborhood park.

Judy Pierson-Bonaparte, the Fire Preparedness Advisor to the Board, arranged for short presentations and a Q&A session. On hand to answer questions were Judy, Karina Hernandez, the Acting Wildfire Lieutenant of the Albuquerque Fire Rescue unit, and Rachel Bean, our advisor from the Fire Adapted Communities in New Mexico, which had recently given our association a grant to demonstrate goat-scaping.

Having had a recent home fire in their village, the presentation by Judy reviewed past fires in High Desert including the large fire in the Elena Gallegos arroyo. She noted the actions taken by the various fire units that collaborated on that fire and the subsequent damages to homes lining the arroyo.

Rachel Bean focused on steps homeowners can take to prepare one's home for the event of fire and Karina spoke about evacuation versus trying to stay in one's home to "do what you can." Her bottom-line advice was to let the professionals protect your home while you take care of yourself, your pets and valuables first.

A lively question and answer session followed the presentations. Sharon Littrell-Marsh, organizer of the event and a Voting Member from Trillium, reinforced the value of the refresher on fire safety we all need. Judy invites other villages to make requests for Fire



Trillium Village invited experts to present a fire preparedness talk to homeowners at the neighborhood park in November. Left to right: Rachel Bean, advisor to High Desert for Fire Adapted Communities in NM, Judy Pierson-Bonaparte, homeowner and Fire Preparedness Advisor to the Board, and Karina Hernandez, Acting Wildfire Lieutenant of the Albuquerque Fire Rescue Unit.

Preparedness talks or "walk-abouts" to keep their knowledge of what to do to prevent fire in their home and village "top of mind."



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Gated Village Committee Report: Gates, Snow Removal & Vegetation



Dan Kropp

By Dan Kropp, Gated Village Committee Chair
The Gated Villages Committee held its quarterly meeting on November 2, 2023, with 11 members present.

Emergencies & Locked Gates

The Legends, with the help of Brandy Hetherington, Community Manager with HOAMCO, found there is no city code requiring gated villages to have an emergency exit if the gates fail to open during an emergency.

Although the gates are supposed to “fail open” in the event of a power outage, a battery failure or broken part could keep them closed. The Legends worked with the office to install an emergency exit device to alleviate this. Other gated villages will decide if they want to do the same.

Village Liability For Snow Removal on Sidewalks

Concern was voiced about village liability for the sidewalks during snow events, as they are the responsibility of each village. Each gated village will have to decide if they want to increase their sidewalk snow removal contracted through Yellowstone.

It was reported that the snow removal contracts have been updated and are available on the website.

Vegetation Removal

Members said that there has been an increase in homeowners

trimming vegetation that was blocking sidewalks. We encourage the compliance officer to continue his checks.

Vet-Sec Visibility

Likewise, it was noted that Vet-Sec was more visible and driving at a slower speed. Our thanks to the HOAMCO office and board members who followed through on this request.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 7 p.m. All Gated Villages Committee members are invited to attend. We meet via Zoom. I send invitations to the Voting Members and Alternates and any other resident of a gated village may attend as well. Simply email me at: Gveman@gmail.com and I will send a Zoom link.



— Photo courtesy of Albuquerque Dream Homes

Wilderness Compound, above, is one of eight gated villages in High Desert with locking vehicle gates. The gates can be made to default to the open mode in an emergency. Each gated village must decide if residents wish to install an emergency exit device to allow the default mode.

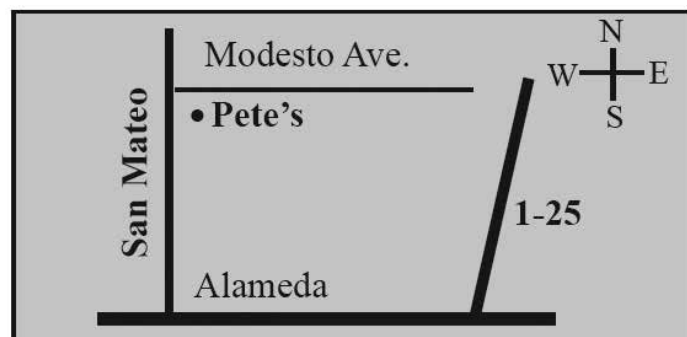
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High Desert Stucco Wall Repairs Update

By Bill Pederson, Vice President Board of Directors

I am sure most everyone has noticed the restuccoing of the Piñon Point wall along Spain. The wall had large patches of the stucco surface peeling off. When the contractor tried to restucco the wall the new stucco coating was not adhering.

The cause of this situation was that the original wall construction used a silicon-based product that has failed.

To solve this issue the contractor had to attach chicken wire and expanded metal mesh to the wall surface to provide a stable surface for the new stucco coating to adhere to. The contractor has also installed stucco stops at each of the expansion joints.

The work was halted in December because of weather. It is anticipated the work will resume in early February and will be completed by the end of February. Currently no other wall work is planned for the remainder of this fiscal year.

Lesson Learned

The lesson learned here is that we most likely have other stucco walls in High Desert with the exact same problem. Walls in the Legends and the Enclave are displaying similar problems and I am confident there will be more. Future restuccoing efforts will have to consider this issue.

Evaluation Complete

Late last year we contracted with Pland Collaborative, a landscape architecture and planning firm based in Albuquerque, to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and inventory of the High Desert walls, gates, fences, view inserts and monuments.

We have received Pland's draft report and are reviewing it. It is an extensive 50-page document including descriptions and pic-

tures of the above-mentioned assets. The report includes interactive maps and a spreadsheet.

All the wall assets are segmented into manageable sections based on physical attributes. The linear footage and square foot measurements of each asset is listed by village.

A five-point scale (with one being bad to five being good) is used to assess the severity of the asset degradation. The spreadsheet allows for entry of maintenance actions such as the date performed and by whom.

Some important facts from the report are that we have about 15.5 miles or 82,000 linear feet of wall assets, which translates into about 500,000 square feet of surface area.

This report will allow us to prepare a compressive plan for wall asset maintenance and to budget for that activity. It also provides a means to manage and track wall asset maintenance.



This portion of the Piñon Point wall along Spain is currently undergoing repair using chicken wire and metal mesh after the previous stucco failed to adhere.



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*The High Desert Gardener***Weeds, Weeds, Weeds**By Margo Murdock
High Desert Resident**Margo Murdock**

Because of the December rains and January snows we can expect a bumper crop of weeds this spring. Weed seeds prefer moist soil, light, and bare ground or newly disturbed soil. If you want to reduce the number of seeds germinating, then you need to reduce the light reaching the soil, reduce the moisture to the location, not disturb the soil, and remove bare spots. Note that in a location where weeds flourish if the variables aren't changed, weeds will continue to grow there.

How to Increase Weeds

Weeds love bare spots. Practices that *encourage* weeds include: raking your soil or gravel, using blowers to remove plant debris (or mulch), exposing new bare spots, cutting native grasses below three inches since this also opens up the bare spaces, having a low depth of gravel or other mulch (letting in light), and allowing water to sit in open areas or along sidewalks and curbs (maybe via turf overspray or missing drip emitters). Do these things and you'll have a bumper crop of weeds before you know it.

What is the Purpose of Weeds?

Weeds are the pioneer plants appearing early in the natural succession of plant growth as an area moves from tiny lichen to a mature forest. Weeds' primary function is to break up the soil so the next stage of plant growth can occur, which usually includes grasses and soft stemmed plants. As weeds grow, they provide shade and wind protection for the next stage of plants and even provide some organic matter as they die. Over time the next stage of plant growth will shade out the weeds and those original weeds will die out.

When Weeds Go "To Seed"

Weeds also typically generate huge amounts of seed each year (70,000 seeds from a single tumbleweed) and most of that seed is viable, meaning it will germinate. The period of viability may last for decades so they are very difficult to eradicate. In fact, the new practice is to "manage" and not "control" or "eradicate" weeds," which makes sense because they do have an important function.

Some weeds are annuals, meaning they go from seed to plant to seed in just one season. The game with annuals is to keep them from going "to seed" in the first place. If you let a large number of weeds go to seed, then over time they will form a bank of seed on your property that increases yearly.

To make matters more difficult, seeds have coatings or other "slowing" mechanisms so they don't all germinate in one year. If all the seeds of a plant were set to germinate in one year, then an unfavorable event could wipe out the plant – and weeds are survivors!

Biennial weed plants take two years to develop and generate their seed. Perennial weeds last almost indefinitely, putting out seed every year, but also often spread by other non-seed mechanisms such as producing runners above or below ground, by bunching or air layering or producing nutlets (a small nut or seed). To manage perennial weeds, you need to keep them from going to



Cheat grass is a weed found throughout High Desert. It is a winter annual and germinates at low fall temperatures and propagates from seeds. The roots grow during winter and is easily identified by its drooping seed heads. By mid-June the plant is dry and yellow. Cheat grass is a prolific seed producer. Hand pulling or hoeing before seeds are produced (approximately one week after flowering) will reduce seed but may not completely eliminate the infestation.

seed and you need to physically remove the non-seed mechanisms to keep them from spreading.

What Can You Do to Reduce the Weeds?

There are a number of ways to reduce your weed population. Mulch, an above ground layer like gravel or wood chips keeps light from reaching the soil and slows moisture from evaporating, which helps keep the plants you want and elbows out the ones you don't. You can also use a pre-emergent (before the seedling emerges) herbicide, the most organic of which is corn gluten meal. Note that a pre-emergent herbicide doesn't kill existing weeds, it just keeps any of those seeds from germinating. For that reason, don't use a pre-emergent in a vegetable bed you intend to seed or in an area where you want to seed wildflowers. Newspaper or cardboard can also be used under bark and will decompose very slowly over time. Another way to reduce your population is to pull the weeds. This is done most easily right after a rain. Torching weeds can be dangerous and for any weed seeds that like to germinate after a fire, it encourages rather than discourages them.

Vinegar!

Another less toxic approach to remove weeds is vinegar and has been shown with USDA research to prove effective. Researchers hand-sprayed weeds with various solutions of vinegar, uniformly coating the leaves. The researchers found that five and 10 percent concentrations killed the weeds during their first two weeks of life. A bottle of common household vinegar is about a five percent concentration. Older plants required higher concentrations of vinegar to kill them. At the higher concentrations, vinegar had an 85 to 100 percent kill rate at all growth stages. And that includes both weeds and favored plants so be careful how and where you apply it.

Solarization

If you have acres of weeds, you might want to consider solariza-

(Continued on page 25)

Weeds, Weeds, Weeds —From Page 24

tion during summer. Water the area, cover it with clear plastic and then let the sun's heat help germinate the seed. After germination the continued heat under the plastic dehydrates and kills the plants. The downside of solarization is that some deep-seated weeds (like bindweed) are too deep for the process to kill all the roots and good soil microorganisms (the life in the soil) are killed as well.



Solarization uses plastic to heat the weed seeds and kill them.

Fabric or Gravel

The use of weed block fabric or gravel is prevalent, but doesn't always work the way you think. Weed block prevents the seeds under the fabric from germinating from lack of light, but any weed seeds above the fabric germinate easily. Gravel in particular acts as a seeding medium collecting fine dust or soil and then providing nooks and crannies for the weed seeds. Condensation off the rocks helps provide some moisture. My thoughts are that if you like lots of new plants you'll spend serious time cutting holes in the fabric for them and then increasing the hole size as they grow. I only use weed block under my dry stream or under pathways for this reason – in places without added plants. Who needs the extra work?

Which Weed Is It?

The most important part of weed management is plant identifica-

tion. You need to know what the plant is, whether it's an annual or perennial, and how it spreads. There are some really creative ways plants spread. Vetch creates little pillows that explode, throwing the seed away from the parent so they don't compete for resources. Some weeds have seeds with wings that fly away. Some seeds catch on animal fur, clothing or shoes to be transported elsewhere.

Changing Weed Types in High Desert

Since we first moved to High Desert in 1999 I've noticed the weeds have changed over time. The early weeds (seen right after construction when the soil was disturbed) included primarily tumbleweed and kochia. Later, in time, hairy golden aster became invasive and London Rocket, a mustard, showed up in winter. The next weed/grass to appear included cheat grass, foxtail, and purple three awn. More recently I've seen weeds like spurge, black medic, silver nightshade, and purslane. Spurge and purslane are opportunistic weeds that appear in a wet area, so allowing the area to dry out should help reduce their number.

Other weeds I've seen in High Desert include bindweed (seen at the Academy entrance), pepper weed, barnyard grass, and horseweed. I've also seen thread grass and pink muhly in the arroyos.

Online Photos

Color photos of a number of the weeds mentioned above can be found on the High Desert website in the presentation on weeds. If you are hand-pulling, learn to recognize weeds when they're small. It's less effort to get rid of them and sometimes the prickly parts (like those found in tumbleweed) haven't developed yet.



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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 following page for names and contact information

- 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 listed below.

- **Crime Awareness Liaison:**

Mark Soo Hoo: 1drpad@gmail.com or
hdcimeprevtn@googlegroups.com

- **Welcome Committee:**

Sharon Littrell-Marsh: sharonlittrell@hotmail.com

- **Landscape Committee:** Camille Singaraju:

bsingaraju@msn.com

- **Voting Members Chairperson:**

Sharon Littrell-Marsh: sharonlittrell@hotmail.com

- **Gated Village Committee:** Dan Kropp: GVEman@gmail.com

- **Tramway Cleanup Project:**

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

- **Fire Preparedness Committee**

Position open: Contact HOAMCO if interested.

- **Communications Committee:**

Reg Rider and Susan Camp:

CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com

- **Documents Review Committee**

Harrison Jones: hddocreview@googlegroups.com

- **Natural Resources Committee**

Russ Rhoades, rrhoades10@comcast.net

- **Nominating Committee**

Tammi Dorsey, tammidorsey@outlook.com

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Director: • Camille Singaraju	4/2023-4/2025
Director: • Harrison Jones	4/2023-4/2025

Contact Board Members by emailing:
highdesertboard@HOAMCO.com

Board & Committee Meetings

• Modifications Committee Meetings:

All requests processed by email. Write HOAMCO at highdesertmanager@HOAMCO.com. For information on submissions, see HD website at www.highdesertliving.net. Submission deadlines: March 1, April 5, May 3.

• Board of Directors Meetings:

Tuesdays. Feb. 20, March 19, April 16 at 5 p.m.
 Zoom meeting
 (Note: Board meetings are now held monthly at 5 p.m.)

• Voting Members Annual Meeting:

Thursday, April 25, 6:30 p.m. Elections for Board.
 Zoom meeting. Obtain link on website

• Voting Members Quarterly Meeting:

Thursday, April 25, 7:30 p.m. (following Annual Meeting) Zoom meeting. Obtain link on website.

• Town Hall Meeting:

Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 6 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.

Management:

• HOAMCO:

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• Northeast Heights Office Hours:

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Management Staff:

- Community Manager: **Brandy Hetherington**, (505) 314-5862 bhetherington@HOAMCO.com
highdesertmanager@HOAMCO.com
- Assistant Manager: **Erin Brizuela** (505) 314-5862
ebrizuela@HOAMCO.com
- Violations Coordinator: **Justin Rodriguez**, (505) 314-5862
JRRodriguez@HOAMCO.com
- High Desert Security:
 Security Patrol: (505) 485-5658
- High Desert Apache Plume Newsletter:
 Rebecca Murphy: Editor, (505) 377-7227;
EEnews@outlook.com
 Newsletter Liaison: Susan Camp
CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com
- High Desert Website:
 Website Liaison: Bill Freer & Mary Martin:
hdwebcom21@gmail.com

The next issue of the Apache Plume will be mailed to all High Desert homeowners in mid-May 2024.

Contact Rebecca Murphy (505-377-7227) to place an ad. Or email her at eenews@outlook.com

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HIGH DESERT HOME SALES ACTIVITY

3 Homes FOR SALE average asking price \$538,300 at \$287.66 per sf
4 Homes PENDING average asking price \$638,750 at \$260.56 per sf
31 SOLD this past year (12 mo) average sold price \$616,365 at \$278.63 per sf

HIGH DESERT ESTATE PROPERTIES SALES ACTIVITY

1 Home FOR SALE average asking price \$2,450,000 at \$377.50 per sf
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