

Apache Plume

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

May 2020

Annual Meeting Moved to August 6 Due to Shutdown: Four Directors to Be Elected By Voting Members

The Voting Members' Annual Meeting has been moved to Thursday, August 6 at Hope Church. It was originally scheduled for April 23. Due to the state prohibitions on meetings of more than five persons due to the coronavirus, both the New Mexico state government and the Office of Neighborhood Coordination directed the Board of Directors to move the meeting to August. The Annual Meeting can have an attendance of more than 50 Voting Members.

"Our bylaws require a quorum of Voting Members representing their villages to elect the new directors and to review the budget," said Clay Wright, Board President. "We could not do that virtually on Zoom or any other platform. We need to meet in person for the vote and the Board agreed that early August looks like the safest point at this time." He said social distancing will be practiced if required at the meeting. Clay also added that if circumstances change, the Annual Meeting will be rescheduled.

Each year at the Annual Meeting, Voting Members elect new Board directors and review the annual budget presented by the

Board. Voting Members can reject the budget as proposed. If they do this, the Board must present a revised budget at a later date.

This year, Voting Members will elect four Directors to the seven-member Board of Directors. Directors each serve two-year terms which are staggered with three or four positions opening every year in April. Current directors whose terms officially expired in April 2020 are David Bentley, Jr., Tom Murdock, Dr. Janet Brierty and Robin Troy. These directors have mutually agreed to continue serving on the Board until the August Annual Meeting. There will be three new terms expiring in April 2022 and one in 2021.

The Board will elect its own officers in August shortly after the Voting Members' Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will take place at Hope Church, 4710 Juan Tabo, NE. at 6:30 p.m. on August 6.

Statements of Interest were accepted earlier this year for the four positions. The Nominating Committee interviews all applicants. The Committee will present a slate of candidates to Voting Members to accept or reject. In addition, nominations can be accepted from the floor.

High Desert Residents Stay Home During Coronavirus Quarantine As Parents Homeschool, Retirees Garden... and Everyone Waits

It has been a spring like no other in High Desert. Since March 23, residents have been under state-mandated stay-at-home orders due to the global coronavirus pandemic. Schools closed in mid-March in New Mexico bringing children home for virtual lessons supervised by their parents who were often working themselves from home. While exercising outside is permitted, social distancing recommendations of at least six feet have kept neighborhood interactions to a new minimum with many people wearing gloves and masks outdoors or to the grocery store. High Desert streets appear busier during the day now than they used to be when many people left for work early each morning. Now, dog-walkers, runners, and people out for a stroll zigzag across the streets to avoid coming into close contact with their neighbors. Other residents, often retirees without children, spend much of the day in their yards.

"My garden looks better than it has in years," said Margo Murdock, homeowner and Master Gardener. "It's never had this much attention." In fact, she had so many new plants starting in pots that she offered them to neighbors for sale, using curbside pickup.

In other High Desert homes with children, homeschooling is the order of the day. "Remote learning has been challenging," said Lan Chang. She and her husband Peter are now working virtually at home while supervising their two children ages 7 and 4. Peter

(Continued on Page 15)



Driveway visiting. These High Desert residents sit outside in their driveway on a warm April evening as they practice social distancing while visiting their next door neighbors from afar.

President's Summary

By Clay Wright, HDROA President



Clay Wright

Hello Neighbor,

As I was walking the dog around my village the other evening, I stopped to talk with a family I had not met before. We have all lived in the community for a number of years, but the flow of life never allowed our lives to intersect. In the chaos of our current world, the scene was soothingly normal. The children were playing in the driveway while the mother watched. The dad

was doing some yard work. I stepped toward the mother to say hello and introduce myself as a neighbor. During the conversation she said something quite profound. I asked how they were coping with our new reality. She replied with, "There are good things happening, we focus on that. We are thankful to be here in High Desert."

Later I reflected on her words. She is right. Good things are happening in High Desert. While thousands of businesses have been forced to close, every High Desert vendor immediately obtained legal designation as being essential to the safety and well-being of our community. All adopted bioprotective measures to protect themselves and our residents. I believe keeping people on the job is good for the economy, obviously good for the employed, and maintains a continuity of service to all our association members.

Even though officials have told us we cannot have our An-

nual Meeting until late summer, without any hesitation every sitting board member agreed to stay on until we see this thing through. Our many committees continue to do their work, adapting to seemingly endless changes on how they can meet.

Most of you are also making the best of a challenging situation. You are doing what we have been told to do – stay at home and at a social distance. But from what I've seen, that doesn't mean you are sequestering yourself in a hermetically sealed vault. People are re-discovering our miles of wonderful trails and enjoying our parks and open spaces. Lots of folks are turning their attention to all those nagging little maintenance issues around the house that there wasn't time to fix before. Home exteriors are getting the kind of attention to detail that enticed you here in the first place.

I also see the very definition of community being embraced. Neighbors are checking in on each other's well-being. Nearly everyone I pass on a walk smiles and says hello. We are all sharing a common experience and a goal to persevere.

When this is all over, we should all remember how forced separation has brought us together.

Be well. Be Safe.

— Clay Wright

"Most of you are also making the best of a challenging situation. You are doing what we have been told to do – stay at home and at a social distance. "



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High Desert Remains Open and Vendors on the Job



By *Lynnette Rodriguez,*
Community Association Manager

First of all, I want to reassure all High Desert homeowners that despite the massive stay-at-home orders due to the coronavirus, your community is functioning as usual. All High Desert committees continue to meet virtually to conduct business and every contracted vendor is stepping up to their obligations. Leeco crew members continue to maintain the property, G4S security patrols High Desert each day and night and our HOAMCO office is staffed and answering phone calls. If you need a gate key, just give Erin a call at 505-314-5862 and schedule a time to stop by the Montgomery office to pick it up. Our new compliance officer, Joseph Anguiano, is touring the property each day and issuing any necessary violation letters. While this may not be the easiest of times for any of us, High Desert continues to operate at full capacity.

The city has asked that no face-to-face business meetings take place until August 1, 2020. To that end, the Annual Meeting was postponed until August 6 and all committee meetings will continue to take place via Zoom until August 1.

Common Walls Re-Stucco

The work to re-stucco miles of common area walls in the community continues. We have tried to prioritize the areas most in need of work. If you want us to review an area of concern, please email me with photos and cross streets at highdesertmanager@hoamco.com.

Common Area Drain Holes

And speaking of walls, please do not plug up the drain holes found in your common area walls. Those holes are put there to allow adequate drainage during rainstorms. We've noticed some residents plugging up those holes with rocks to block rodents. A better alternative is an inexpensive mesh product found in local home-improvement stores.

In addition, make sure your own sprinklers are not spraying your back walls. Sprinklers undermine the integrity of the structure. Water spraying the stucco day after day discolors the walls and weakens them.

Vines also impair the structure of the walls. Please remove any greenery that is climbing your back walls. Vines have an amazing ability to bring down heavy walls. We rely on you to do your part to keep the common area walls strong and stable.

Inspect Your Property!

With all of us at home now, this is an excellent time to walk your property with fresh eyes. High Desert is no longer a new community. Many of the homes are more than 20 years old. What do you need to do to make your home reflect the high standards we have here in High Desert? Does your house need new stucco? Are the sprinklers working correctly? Are there weeds in the corners or do your rock areas need freshening up? What about your driveway? A good pressure-washing can do wonders. Take the time to walk around with a paper and pencil and jot down the items that catch your eye. Then follow up as soon as you are able. Your neighbors will thank you!

High Desert Homeowners Association Says "Thank You!" to Its Loyal Vendors

The HDROA Board of Directors expresses its appreciation to all of the vendors who have dedicated themselves to continuing service to our community under difficult and constantly changing circumstances.

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ASK GREG

Q: Hi Greg. What's happening with the Real Estate Market since the Governor issued a "stay at home" order in March? Is it a good time to sell my home in High Desert, and look for a new one there?

A: The Real Estate market is still quite active, since all Real Estate related functions are considered an "essential service" by the Governor. So, I'm still listing and selling homes in High Desert. There were 1,301 new listings taken in March, and 1,284 sales sold over the same period in the city. So, that shows me, that the market is still moving.

I am taking extra precautions when listing and showing homes. I am offering gloves, masks and booties for all of my listings, and meeting Buyers at a home in separate cars and keeping at least 6 feet away from them, while wearing gloves, masks and booties.

I think once everything gets back to normal (or the new normal), the Real Estate Market in High Desert will have a lot of pent up demand, and rebound nicely!

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High Desert Patrol Report: January-March 2020

Call Type:	Jan.	Feb.	March	Call Type:	Jan.	Feb.	March
CRIMINAL/				(Lost) Property	0	3	0
CRITICAL EVENTS:	-	-	-	Gate Issues	6	11	4
Assault/Fight	0	0	0	Street Lights/Maintenance	1	0	0
Breaking/Entering: Home	0	0	0	OTHER:	-	-	-
Breaking/Entering: Vehicle	4	0	5	Animal Control Calls	0	0	0
Construction Site Burglary	0	0	0	Abandoned Vehicle Calls	0	0	0
Dwelling Fire	0	0	0	Snake Calls	0	0	0
Vehicle Fire	0	0	0	Vacation Home Checks	21	32	25
Grass/Wild Fires	0	0	0	Security Inspection	126	143	147
Medical Emergency	0	1	1				
Alarms	6	3	3				
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	8	12	17				
Vandalism	1	4	4				
TRAFFIC EVENTS:	-	-	-				
Vehicle Crash	1	1	1				
Parking Violations	1	3	4				
PREVENTION & NUISANCE:	-	-	-				
Loud Music/Party Noise	0	1	1				
Salesperson/Solicitor	0	0	0				
Open Door/Window/Garage	11	17	25				
Notices Posted on Residences	0	0	0				
Pool Issues	0	2	0				
QUALITY OF LIFE:	-	-	-				
(Lost and Found:)	-	-	-				
(Lost) Children	0	0	0				
(Lost) Pets	2	0	0				

Security Contact Numbers:

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



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High Desert Dermatology Welcomes Niki Manole Ninopoulos, PA-C

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



Niki Manole
Ninopoulos, PA

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

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

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Patrolling High Desert During the Statewide Shutdown

High Desert streets are definitely more crowded these days. Sometimes, G4S Site Supervisor Ivan Bencomo has a challenge driving through the knots of pedestrians, joggers, children, and the construction and landscape vehicles found daily on High Desert streets now as the statewide shutdown continues. “The streets used to be pretty empty during the day,” he said. “But not now. Now it’s sometimes really crowded.”

Everywhere, there are more people out walking the streets, playing in yards, or flying kites in High Desert Park. Every day, Ivan sees cars filling the lot at Michial Emery Trailhead. In the evenings, when the weather is good, he frequently sees homeowners sitting in their driveways, visiting from a distance with their neighbors who are also sitting in their driveways in lawn chairs. “I never used to see that,” he said. “People just went to each other’s houses. But now they can’t.”

And all those people who used to be at work all day, and who are now at home, notice strange cars and people who might not belong in the neighborhood. “We get a lot of phone calls now,” Ivan said. High Desert homeowners are always encouraged to contact G4S if suspicious persons or vehicles are spotted. But most of the trucks and people don’t turn out to be potential burglars or trespassers. “We go out and investigate every call,” said Ivan. “But most of the time it turns out to be a construction truck, or a landscaper or a homeowner’s relative.”

Not all of the calls are easily managed. Calls about children driving golf carts on High Desert streets have recently been phoned into Ivan. “I get it,” he said. “Kids are sick of being cooped up. They are itching to get out and move. A golf cart is just plain fun.

“If you have kids in a golf cart, the kid behind the wheel has to have a license. And all of them need to be wearing helmets.”

But if they don’t have a driver’s license, it’s illegal. If you have kids in a golf cart, the kid behind the wheel has to have a license. And all of them need to be wearing helmets.”

With so many houses occupied, James Gage, Operations Manager for G4S, says there have been fewer burglaries. “Actually, with people in their homes, you’d call it a ‘home invasion,’ not a burglary,” he said. “We have caught a few people eying houses for possible break-ins, though.”

Vacation house checks by G4S are not as prevalent these days now that nobody is going on vacation. “We do have a few High Desert houses that are second homes for people out of state,” he said. “We keep an eye on those places.”

There have been a couple of incidents of graffiti vandalism this last month in cement arroyos in Mountain Highlands and Desert Highlands. “We don’t know who did the graffiti,” Ivan said. “We immediately call the city to have it removed.”

Exercising, which is permitted, brings residents and non-residents to the High Desert trailheads with parking spaces often impossible to find.

“It is legal to get out on the trails to exercise and get some fresh air,” said Ivan. “But be smart about it. Go with a family member. Don’t go out alone. You never want to be a target of opportunity for someone.”



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Compliance Issues of Concern for the Spring

By Joseph Anguiano, Compliance Officer

All year long, residents, volunteers and vendors of High Desert work to maintain its high standards. Landscape maintenance crews work to maintain a natural environmental state in the common areas and homeowners have similar responsibilities in their personal properties. From the color of our stucco, to the plants, trees and bushes planted, residents are expected to keep that New Mexico high desert look. In order to maintain this natural look, here are a couple areas to pay special attention to while the weather is warm.

Stucco

While we are in this pandemic, stucco workers are still allowed to be out and working, so please take advantage of this situation. If your home has cracked or bubbled stucco issues, they need to be resolved. Any walls that are stuccoed also may need to be cleaned. If you have a plant that is staining your walls or hanging over the walls, this will get a courtesy notice (violation) delivered to you. Stucco on mailboxes needs to be maintained as well.

Re-paint and Re-stain

This is perfect weather to get out there and get the trim touched up. Many stucco homes are exhibiting stained areas above garages, windows, and doors. Please have someone out to take care of this issue. If your paint is getting old and flaking away, please get this taken care of as well.

Driveways

There are plenty of High Desert driveways that have deteriorated due to age, snow melt problems, and other factors. This is a violation and needs to be resolved. If you have tire or oil stains on your driveway, please have them cleaned. If your driveway is starting to chip and flake away, it's time to have it repaired. A damaged driveway takes away from the property value of the entire village you live in.

Plants, Bushes, and Trees

Everyone knows that you cannot have overgrown plants. If there is a common wall with vegetation growing over the top, this plant is now considered overgrown. If the common wall next to a tree is starting to crack, it is more than likely due to the tree's roots. Your plants should not touch the walls. This leads to deterioration of the walls.

Trash Cans

This one is simple. If I can see them from the street, I am sending out a courtesy notice. If you have a physical disability, let someone in the office know so I can make a note of it that you are getting special help with the trash cans.

Weeds

If there are weeds growing in the spaces in your driveway, in your yard, or anywhere on your property, you will receive a courtesy notice for this.

Thank you for paying attention to your property!

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High Desert Treasurer's Report: 3rd Quarter Fiscal Year 2019-20



By Tom Murdock
Treasurer, Board of Directors

Tom Murdock

For the first three quarters of the 2019 – 2020 fiscal year, the Master Association had an income of \$992,154.86 which was \$44,679 (4.72%) more than initially budgeted. Mandated transfer to reserves of \$46,912 resulted in a net income of \$945,243. Expenses totaled \$915,985.03 and were \$72,772 (8.63%) over budget, resulting in an operating net income of \$29,257.

Gated Villages

The Gated Villages had a combined income of \$226,354. Expenses of \$183,109 and reserve contributions of \$84,224 totaled \$267,333 which yields a combined gated village operating net loss of \$40,979.

Reserve Accounts

The Association reserve accounts remain healthy and fully funded as mandated in the current reserve study. The Master Association had a balance of \$703,789 in its reserve checking and CD accounts. The Arroyo Reserve account balance was \$104,729. The gated villages had a combined reserve checking and CD balance of \$1,084,001.

Eleven CDs matured in March, and were reinvested in fully insured CDs with maturities of 6 months or one year. As CDs mature, the current market interest rates for brokered CDs will be evaluated when renewing CDs.

Other

As of March 31, 2020, the High Desert Residential Owners Association had cash assets of \$2,835,484.

Overdue Accounts

As of March 31, 2020, 104 owners had accounts receivable balances totaling \$143,367 which is a delinquency rate of 6.4%. Of note is the fact that the top eleven delinquent owners (those owing \$2,000 or more) account for 83.8% of the total receivables.

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

• See more Treasurer's Reports on page 11 •

HDROA Reserve Account Balances

as of 31 March 2020

Master	703,789.58
Arroyo	104,729.22
Canyons	189,325.22
Chaco Cmpd	53,890.65
Desert Mtn	246,701.41
Enclave	117,930.16
Legends	110,026.33
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HDROA Income/Expense Report

YTD as of 31 March, 2020

INCOME	
HOMEOWNER ASSESSMENTS	\$ 876,420.00
COST SHARING - AL TEZZA	\$9,055.75
ASSESSMENT INTEREST	2197.87
ASSESSMENT LATE FEES	3800.00
LEGAL/COLLECTION FEES	37407.08
GATE REMOTES	-
INTEREST INCOME	4,832.85
UNREALIZED GAIN/LOSS	644.00
RECOVERY OF BAD DEBT	-
PENALTIES/FINES	4,797.31
OTHER INCOME	3,000.00
INCOME	992,154.86
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	-46,912.50
Total INCOME	945,242.36
EXPENSES	
ADMINISTRATIVE	
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PR	\$41,529.62
BANK CHARGES	\$90.00
INSURANCE	\$11,438.28
LIEN/COLLECTION COSTS	\$957.82
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT	\$8,344.47
BOARD/VOTING MEMBER MEETINGS	\$2,003.40
OFFICE EXPENSE	\$941.73
POSTAGE	\$500.66
PRINTING	\$3,909.43
MAILINGS	\$3,575.52
BILLING STATEMENTS	\$6,171.91
RESERVE STUDY	\$0.00
COMMON AREA	
STREET REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$5,281.56
LANDSCAPE	
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE	\$165,836.50
LANDSCAPE REPLACEMENT	\$16,129.72
LANDSCAPE OTHER	\$21,144.25
ARROYO & POND MAINTENANCE	\$31,736.50
EROSION CONTROL	\$7,798.50
IRRIGATION REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$18,538.18
PET CLEANUP	\$23,271.92
TRAIL MAINTENANCE	\$3,120.80
LANDSCAPE PROJECTS - MASTER PLAN	\$37,074.21
PROFESSIONAL FEES	
ACCOUNTING/TAX PREP FEES	\$6,364.63
CONSULTING	\$44,772.85
LEGAL FEES - COLLECTION/SMALL CLAIMS	\$56,205.27
LEGAL - GENERAL SERVICES	\$16,199.70
ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT	\$105,825.42
SECURITY SERVICES	\$160,999.36
SECURITY - APD	\$12,779.50
TAXES/OTHER EXPENSES	
ALLOWANCE FOR DOUBTFUL ACCOUNTS	\$1,114.39
COMMUNITY EVENTS	\$6,231.92
WELCOME COMMITTEE	\$1,013.83
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MISCELLANEOUS	\$1,126.33
HDROA OFFICE	\$6,999.30
TAXES - CORPORATE	\$12,508.84
UTILITIES	
ELECTRICITY	\$2,292.06
TELEPHONE	\$765.00
WATER/SEWER	\$44,446.21
Total EXPENSE	915,985.03
OPERATING NET INCOME	\$ 29,257.33

High Desert Treasurer's Reports



HDROA Gated Villages Income/Expense Report
YTD as of 31 March 2020

Canyons	
INCOME	\$ 22,259.92
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(7,911.75)
EXPENSES	10,964.01
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	3,384.16
Chaco Compound	
INCOME	\$ 9,229.71
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(3,482.25)
EXPENSES	9,814.69
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	-4,067.13
Desert Mountain	
INCOME	\$ 84,431.51
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(31,025.75)
EXPENSES	78,568.67
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	(25,162.91)
The Enclave	
INCOME	\$ 22,124.99
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(10,962.00)
EXPENSES	13,636.70
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	(2,473.71)
Trillium	
INCOME	\$ 38,295.65
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(11,466.00)
EXPENSES	30,846.19
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	(4,016.54)
Wilderness Compound	
INCOME	\$ 12,418.81
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(3,816.00)
EXPENSES	13,963.14
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	(5,360.33)
The Legends	
INCOME	\$ 26,813.85
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(11,466.00)
EXPENSES	20,743.94
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	(5,399.09)
Wilderness Canon	
INCOME	\$ 10,780.21
TRANSFER TO RESERVES	(4,095.00)
EXPENSES	4,572.31
OPERATING NET INCOME (LOSS)	2,112.90
Total Gated Villages Income	\$ 226,354.65
Total Transfer to Reserves	(84,224.75)
Total Gated Villages Expenses	183,109.55
Total Operating Net Income	(\$ 40,979.65)



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Erin Brizuela Is New HOAMCO Office Coordinator



Erin Brizuela

Erin Brizuela began her new job as Office Coordinator at the HOAMCO office on Montgomery, NE just a month and a half before statewide shutdowns left her as one of just two people in the office.

"It's very quiet in here," she said. Only she and Joseph Anguiano are physically present in the office each day. Everyone else works virtually from their homes. Erin is on hand to answer all High Desert phone calls, handle vendor calls and community

access, pre-screen and assemble Modification Committee material and direct any necessary inquiries to other office members, Board Directors or committee chairpersons.

One of her main jobs now is to be on hand to distribute keys to homeowners in gated villages, something that cannot be done by working from home during the shutdown. New homeowners, or homeowners can make an appointment with Erin to stop by the office to be given their keys to pedestrian or village gates. Erin also manages gate holds when winds are high and gates could be damaged.

Erin was hired to replace Joseph when he was promoted earlier this year to Compliance Inspector and Assistant Manager to Lynnette Rodriguez. Joseph continues to do daily inspections of High Desert and distribute violation notices from the HOAMCO office.

As an essential worker, Erin leaves her westside home each morning, dropping off her two small children with her babysitter. Her husband, a Verizon employee, is working from home during the shutdown. She said her half hour commute is a breeze these days

with very little morning traffic.

Erin is not new to the community management business. She was a portfolio manager for nine communities in Albuquerque for the past three years. "I'm really enjoying interacting with just one community," she said. "And even though it's a little weird right now with the shutdown, I'm really liking it."

Born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, Erin moved to Albuquerque with her parents as a baby and graduated from Sandia High School. She headed off to college in Texas but returned a year and a half later to care for a family member. She attended UNM and CNM.

Erin worked as a preschool teacher for five years and then as an operation manager for MVD Express for 11 years. "That job prepared me for almost anything," she said. She moved into community portfolio management for three years, but with two small children she wanted a position that required fewer night meetings.

"This position is just right for me," she said. "I enjoy interacting with the people in High Desert every day, but I don't have to take this job home with me every night."

Party in The Park Postponed to 2021

The annual High Desert Party in the Park event has been postponed until next summer. Brenda Gossage, homeowner and coordinator of the event, decided to postpone given the amount of pre-planning involved and the current coronavirus crisis and possibilities of extended closures. She consulted with Board President Clay Wright before making the decision in late April.

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Crime in Albuquerque



Dr. Janet Brierley

Pandemic Security and Safety

Most of us are spending much more time at home at the moment, but despite this we must all maintain vigilance to ensure security and safety. Thieves generally target homes on weekdays when they think the homeowner will be out at work, but obviously this has changed over the last few weeks. Criminals are focusing their attacks on commercial property because it is more likely to be empty.

Safety at Home

This does not mean that we can relax. The weather is getting warmer and opportunist thieves are lying in wait, ready to take advantage of open doors, garages, and windows, even though the homeowner may be in the house. There has been a big increase in the number of parcel deliveries, and it is very easy for criminals to follow the various delivery vans on their rounds, helping themselves to goods left on porches. Do ensure that you bring in your parcels as soon as they arrive. Wash your hands thoroughly after you bring them in and consider sanitizing the packages.

Safety while Exercising

Many High Desert residents are taking advantage of the neighborhood streets and trails and there are generally more people out walking, running, and cycling than usual. Most of us are trying to follow social distancing guidelines and this frequently means stepping off the sidewalk into the bicycle lane. Take extra care when doing that; we certainly don't want to cause a bike to have to swerve into the traffic to avoid pedestrians. Be particularly cautious in the early morning or in the evening when the light level is low; there have been some near misses involving pedestrians walking in the road. If at all possible, pedestrians should stay on the sidewalk.

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

Safety in the Parking Lot

The parking lot at the Michial Emery trailhead is owned by our High Desert Residential Owners' Association and it is always a busy area. There has been increased utilization with people accessing the foothills trails over the last few weeks and at times all the parking spaces are taken. It is important to understand that it is illegal to park on the road outside the lot. Not only does it obstruct bike lanes, creating danger for both cyclists and pedestrians but it also creates an impediment for emergency vehicles on 911 calls. Should you find the area full, then there are several alternative access points to the open space, such as Elena Gallegos and Embudito Trailhead. Please remember to lock your vehicle and never leave items on view to attract a thief. They will steal anything. Last month a criminal stole the toilet paper and hand sanitizer from the portable toilet that we provide.



Safety in Your Family

It's a sad fact that incidents of domestic violence increase when families are not only stressed but also in close contact for prolonged periods. Nobody, whatever their circumstances, is immune to this risk and it should not be tolerated. There are many resources available to help and these can be accessed through the DVRC (Domestic Violence Resource Center) tel: (505) 248-3165. If you feel in immediate danger, then call 911.

We are all very fortunate to live in an environment that makes this time of isolation not only bearable but even pleasant. Let's take care of ourselves, our property, and our neighbors and get through this in the best way we can.

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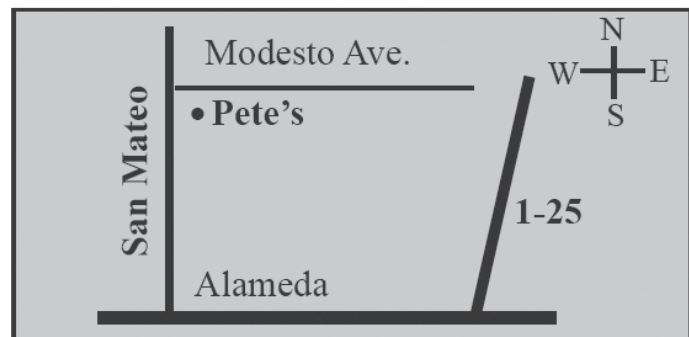
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High Desert Residents Stay Home

—From Page 1

is a scientist with Sandia National Laboratories and Lan is a pediatric ophthalmologist with Eye Associates of NM.

Their son is a first grader at Georgia O’Keeffe and he has been able to connect with his teacher and classmates online. Lan and Peter’s daughter is in Pre-K at La Luz Early Childhood Center. Her teacher has been hosting circle time and Show & Tell on Google Duo with the class twice a week.

“We’ve adjusted our work schedule since we’re home, and we try to stagger online activities based on the kids’ schedules,” said Lan.

Bacon Chocolate Chip Cookies

Judy Pierson and her husband Paul Bonaparte are retired and live in the Highlands. Judy has been gardening and growing a bumper crop of vegetables this spring. Paul has taken to the kitchen where he recently produced a tray of bacon chocolate chip cookies. “They were really pretty good,” says Judy.

On any sunny afternoon, High Desert Park has plenty of children and adults taking advantage of the open space to play, practice their tennis or ride scooters and bicycles. The Michial Emery Trailhead parking lot is usually full and the dogwalkers, bicyclists and runners dodge each other on the path.

The New Mexico stay-at-home orders are set to expire sometime in mid-May barring any new outbreaks. “I’m really looking forward to getting out and about,” said Dr. Janet Brierley, Board Director. “We’ve been very fortunate in High Desert with our large properties and access to trails and space. But I am definitely ready.”

Noisy Wind Chimes & Springtime

Do you have wind chimes hanging in your yard? While some of them are lovely, others can be downright irritating to your neighbors.

According to one High Desert homeowner, a new neighbor recently moved in and installed four sets of large wind chimes in his backyard. The noise they produce is not a gentle, delicate tinkling. “It is a loud discordant cacophony,” she said. “I used to enjoy working peacefully in my yard but now I have to wear ear plugs to block the racket. The owner of the chimes appears to spend very little time outdoors to enjoy his installation.”

So...maybe think about it before you install wind chimes in your yard this year. Sound carries and your neighbors may not like the constant noise.

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Now is the Time to Mitigate Your Risk of Fire With Yard Clean-up, Plant Choices & Clearance

By Lieutenant Brian Fox, Wildland Coordinator Albuquerque Fire Rescue; Camille Singaraju, Chairperson of the High Desert Wildland Fire Prevention Working Group (WFPWG); and members Kate Mitchell and Judy Pierson

We have a history of fire in High Desert. In the last five years, a fire has occurred each year. This is the time of year to mitigate fire risk in your property and arroyo.

Cleaning your yard to create a fire-safe buffer zone should include the following:

- Remove dead wood from trees and shrubs
- Remove flammable debris (e.g. large leaves and pine needles)
- Reduce grass height
- Thin all twiggy growth and remove lower branches of woody plants
- Thin the number of plants
- Trim back overhanging branches to a distance of at least 10 feet
- Store firewood and other combustible materials at least 30 feet away from the house, garage or deck.

Maintaining your yard to reduce the flammability and lower the fuel load requires the following:

We have a history. In the last five years, a fire has occurred each year.

Date	Location	Road to fire	Acres		Issues
9/17/2015	Balsam Glade Fire		2 acres		
7/25/2016	Embudito Trail Head	Trail Head Road	Small fire	Lightning	Cars blocking Fire trucks
2017	Desert/Mountain Highland area		1-2 acres	Burning out gophers in yard	Fire went into open spaces
5/15/2018	Highlands & Desert Highland arroyo	Desert Zinnia & Elena Gallegos PL	11 acres		21 homes evacuated 13 threatened 3 fire damage
6/11/2019	In open spaces South east of Open Space gate	Open space near gate on Canada del Oso Fire hydrant	53 acres		

- 1) Irrigate regularly to help keep plants vigorous.
- 2) Choose plants with a high moisture content. These plants burn more slowly and less intensely. Herbaceous plant material (with soft stems) typically have a higher moisture content. Succulent plants contain more moisture. The use of groundcover plants instead of wood-based mulch reduces fuel for fires.
- 3) Use a low growing habitat. Plants that are closer to the ground reduce the risk of spreading fire into tree canopies. They have shorter flames and provide less fuel.
- 4) Choose deciduous plants. They have a higher moisture content than conifers because they drop their leaves.
- 5) Conifers drop pine cones and needles all year. Their sap has flammable chemicals that turn into combustible gases. It is best not to plant these next to structures.

High Desert's Fire Prevention Working Group

The Fire Prevention Working Group (FPWG) is tasked with educating and encouraging High Desert residents to reduce wildfire vulnerability on their property and to be properly prepared in event of wildfire.

Working with the High Desert Board and Landscape Committee, Leeco's landscape contract was modified to include the following:

- (1) Maintain a three-foot clearance around the fire hydrants
- (2) Provide a five-foot clearance around all Builder walls
- (3) Remove all large bushes that are within 10 feet of the wall, including, for example, chamisa and fourwing salt bushes.

A member of the FPWG will be contacting the Voting Members in each of the Premier/Estate villages. The purpose is to set up a fire mitigation plan for each village. This will include looking at all the yards and arroyos for fire risks.

Albuquerque Fire Rescue has literature on wildland fires. This material includes:

- Understanding and creating a defensible space around the home
- Creating a family disaster plan
- How to be prepared to evacuate and when to evacuate
- Strategies on exiting High Desert at Spain and Academy Roads during a fire

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

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Leeco to Begin Renovation of Kiva Park As Landscape Maintenance Continues During Lockdown

Renovation of Kiva Park at Spain and Imperata will begin shortly. Leeco, High Desert's landscape vendor, will begin implementing a new design incorporating new plants, tree removal and irrigation not to exceed a \$38,000 limit set by the Board of Directors.

All the plants in the park will be replaced, flagstone in the flower beds will be refurbished and new irrigation installed. Buffalo grass will be pulled and replanted as necessary. Invasive plants will be removed. A paved bus stop on the curb for children will be built. Struggling aspens will be taken out and replaced with maple trees. Redwood bark mulch (which poses a fire hazard) will be removed and replaced with more fire-resistant cover. The project should be completed by the end of the summer.

Shortly after the governor of New Mexico issued the stay-at-home order for citizens, Leeco applied and was granted essential status as the landscape maintenance vendor for High Desert. As such, all regular Leeco High Desert crews have stayed employed and on the job since late March.

"Keeping our people on the job in High Desert is a very good thing," owner Jeremy Humphrey said. "If we had to let people go then we'd have to rehire and retrain them to care for xeriscape landscape found in High Desert. That takes time and money."

The new coronavirus regulations have changed how Leeco operates. Leeco's Journal Center office is closed to the public and staffed by just two employees. Only three crew members are allowed inside at a time each morning to collect equipment and instructions. A six-foot distance must be maintained between every-

one at all times. Only three crew members are allowed per Leeco truck en route to job sites with two in the extended cabs up front and one sitting behind. All trucks are disinfected daily along with the office and shop, Jeremy said. "We have 80 people working at Leeco and we've not had any layoffs at this time," he said. "We've also had no cases of COVID-19."

Contracts Committee Recommends G4S Contract Be Extended One Year



By Lynn Claffy, Contracts Committee Chair

The initial three-year term of High Desert's contract with our courtesy patrol provider G4S will expire June 30, 2020.

The Contracts Committee sampled the local courtesy providers and found no new vendors.

Lynn Claffy Additionally, High Desert received an unsolicited proposal from a vendor who had not been asked to bid in the past. This proposal was more than three times our current cost. Based upon these two factors, the Contracts Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that we exercise an optional one-year extension allowed by our current contract with G4S. The Board approved the recommendation. A modification to the contract will be signed in June extending the term one year so that the courtesy patrol contract with G4S will now expire June 30, 2021.

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National Night Out Moved From First Tuesday in August To October 6, 2020 Due To Pandemic Concerns

Communities across the country are strongly urged this year to move National Night Out neighborhood events to October 6. In past years, the event is normally held on the first Tuesday of August. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the national organization is asking neighborhoods to celebrate in October instead.

National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while encouraging a sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.


Each summer a number of High Desert villages celebrate National Night Out with block parties, potlucks and park parties. The Association will provide up to \$100 per event if the village properly applies to the Board.

Each interested village must first register their event with the city. The village must provide proof of the registration and apply to the Board at least one month in advance of the event.



Last year in early August, Pinon Point homeowners got together on the evening of Neighborhood Night Out for a potluck block party that included plenty of neighbors and several Albuquerque Police Department representatives. This year, High Desert neighborhoods may need to keep social distancing in mind as the event is moved to October 6, 2020 this year.

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*The High Desert Gardener***Fire and Landscape in High Desert**By Margo Murdock
High Desert Resident**Margo Murdock**

All plants are fuel and will burn under the right conditions. The question is: What can we do with our landscape to slow ignition and reduce the chance that fire moves either laterally or vertically - especially near a home?

Creating a defensible space near your house suggests:

- Removing leaf litter and organic debris as a source of fuel.
- Having bare ground or non-burnable materials like boulders and gravel nearest the house.
- Removing all dead wood from trees and shrubs, removing lower limbs to keep fire from rising vertically, and cutting your grasses low to keep fire from spreading
- Reducing the use of wood mulch to 1-2 inches, especially under trees as it's another source of fuel. The wood mulch should be kept moist.
- Moving trees and shrubs at least 10 feet away from the house or other structures.

Most of the information about defensible space was developed as a result of people building homes or cabins in the forest, so fire transfer from the ground to trees and then from treetop to treetop is one of the most important factors to eliminate. Fortunately, High Desert as a development is not a forest environment unless you created one in your personal landscape.

Some thoughts about soil improvement and water or energy conservation that go counter to creating defensible space include:

- To build good soil you need to leave leaf litter and grass cuttings on the soil to decompose.
- To control weeds and reduce erosion you should cover bare ground with grasses and plants so weed seed germination doesn't occur and so soil doesn't erode with wind and rain.
- To attract wildlife, you should leave a dead branch or two as a snag, keep branches of shrubs near the ground for shelter, and have taller grasses for nesting.
- To protect trees from drought you should use wood chips (not bark) as a mulch underneath the tree. Trees especially prefer wood chip mulch which acts as a fertilizer when it decomposes.
- To conserve energy, you need to plant shade trees near the house especially on the south or west side and conifers on the north side to slow cold winter air.

Knowledge is Your Friend

From the differing ideas above you can understand that if you want to create a defensible space, you're going to have to make some tough decisions. You need to decide what your priorities are and then make some common-sense decisions about changes you might want to make. In this, knowledge is your friend. What you should take away from this article is how plant choices, location, and cultural practices can affect what you decide.

Some plants have inherent characteristics that either encour-

(Continued on page 21)

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Fire and Landscape

— From Page 20

age or delay ignition and may slow a burning fire from spreading. Where plants are placed in the landscape also affects the transfer of fire from the plant to nearby structures. And regardless of what a plant's inherent characteristics are, if it is not maintained (watered or pruned of dead wood), it can become a torch.

Starting With The Existing Landscape

Because most people have an existing landscape, the “selecting the right plant” and the plant location decisions have already been made —unless you decide to create a more defensible space. So let's start with cultural practices that can reduce the amount of fuel in your landscape because this can be done even if you don't make plant or location changes.

1. **Removing dead plants.** Always do this or put them in a compost pile.
2. **Removing deadwood from trees and shrubs.** This can be removed any time of the year.
3. **Removing flammable debris:** This includes large leaves, pine cones, and especially pine needles.
4. **Reducing grass height.** Note that some native grasses like blue grama don't like to be cut although you may choose to cut it to a four-inch height. You can cut buffalo grass to a three to four inch height. Most grasses, but especially blue grama, may die if the grass is cut too low (in other words— scalped).
5. **Thinning twiggy growth or removing lower branches of woody plants.** This may keep a fire from rising.



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6. **Reducing the number of plants through removal of some so there's not as much fuel to burn.** The bigger the plants the more important this is.

7. **Irrigating regularly to keep plants vigorous.**

These are practices you can do now, before a fire begins. Where these practices conflict with soil building or attracting wildlife, you have to decide which is more important to you.

Which Plants to Choose?

For plant choices you can go to the numerous lists of fire resistant or fire encouraging plants, but some of these lists are anecdotal and not science-based. And who ever brings the list when going plant shopping? But if we consider a plant's inherent characteristics, the choice is easier – there are only three characteristics to remember. Choose those plants that reduce the risk of starting and spreading fire:

1. **High moisture content.** These plants burn more slowly and less intensely.
 - Herbaceous material (non-woody stems) typically have a higher moisture content.
 - Succulent plants like the ice plant contain even more moisture.
 - Deciduous plants have a higher moisture content than conifers both because they have larger less resinous leaves and because for part of the year they have no leaves at all.
2. **Low growing habitats.** Plants that are closer to the ground reduce the risk of spreading fire into tree canopies. They have shorter flames and provide less fuel. Choose smaller denser plants under two feet in height at maturity rather than taller more open ones.
3. **Plants that lack flammable chemicals that turn into combustible gases.** Deciduous trees do not contain these chemicals while conifers typically do.

Location, Location, Location!

Remember: location, location, location. You want to reduce plantings near structures, so plant location is very important.

- Planting under air vents allows fire embers to rise into the home. Consider using non-flammable materials such as native stone boulders or gravel instead under the vents.
- Keep large trees and shrubs away from structures.
- If you have a perimeter wall and plant material hangs over it, you just moved the fire from outside the wall to inside. Having plant material hanging over your roof makes even less sense. Planting trees and shrubs in islands is one way to move them away from structures.
- Using shorter plants is also a good strategy to keep fire lower reducing what's known as ladder fuels that carry fire from the ground to the tree canopy. Ground cover plants can be used instead of wood mulch, but the plants do need to be well irrigated.
- Consider tree and shrub spacing – give them room and thin the spacing if it starts to become overgrown.

Hopefully this information helps you make some of the tougher decisions. A good source of readable material is this brochure: <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/27530775/choosing-the-right-plants-for-northern-nevadas-high-fire-hazard-/3>

Sources of information on defensible space and fire-wise plants vary greatly. Rely on those that have a scientific basis with known credibility.

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. Click on "Contact Us" and select Voting Members from the left hand menu. Residents can also call the office at 505-314-5862 to learn their village representative. High Desert Committee chairperson contacts are below.

- **Crime Prevention Liaison:**

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

- **Welcome Committee Co-Chairs:**

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

Robin Troy: 505-967-5119; TRY_RBN@YAHOO.COM

- **Voting Member Chairperson**

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

- **Gated Villages Committee:**

Kitty Smith: 505-821-1790; kitty.h.smith@gmail.com

- **Tramway Cleanup Project:**

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

- **Landscape Advisory Committee Chair:**

Position Open

- **Communications Committee Chair:**

Dr. Janet Brierley: (505) 856-5390

CommunicationsCommittee@HOAMCO.com

G4S Provides Vacation Watches For High Desert Homes

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

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

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High Desert Residential Owners Association Board of Directors

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Treasurer	• Tom Murdock <i>murdock@swcp.com</i>	(505) 822-9410	April 2018 - April 2020
Director:	• Dr. Janet K. Brierley <i>jkbrierley@comcast.net</i>	(505) 856-5390	April 2018 - April 2020
Director:	• Robin Troy <i>TRY_RBN@YAHOO.com</i>	(505) 967-5119	April 2019 - April 2020
Director:	• Neil Wetsch <i>neilwetsch@gmail.com</i>	(505) 944-6000	April 2019 - April 2021

Management

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

Board & Committee Meetings

- **May 21, June 18, July 16, 2020 at 4 p.m.**
Modifications Committee Meeting
Location: High Desert Office, 10555 Montgomery, NE
- **May 19, June 16, July 21, 2020 at 2 p.m.**
Board of Directors Meeting
Location: High Desert Office, 10555 Montgomery, NE
- **Thursday, August 6, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Note new time.**
Voting Members Annual Meeting
Location: Hope Church, 4710 Juan Tabo. NE
- **Meeting dates to be announced**
Landscape Advisory Committee Meeting
Location: High Desert Office, 10555 Montgomery, NE
- **All Committee meetings will be held virtually through early August.**

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

*The High Desert Apache Plume newsletter
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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: © 2020
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, Dr. Janet Brierley, Chair: CommunicationsCommittee@hoamco.com



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SELLING YOUR HIGH DESERT HOME IN 2020?

The High Desert Real Estate Market Update: homes are selling, buyers are looking, families are moving and it is the buying season. The Real Estate market in 2020 will continue to be a steady market with home values remaining stable and with a continued low inventory of homes available to buyers. High Desert Homes are selling while safety for all is practiced during this covid 19 time. Realtors, Buyers and Sellers are adjusting to the Covid 19 issues and are taking precautions for each other's safety during showings. Realtors have a Covid 19 showing protocol. Safety for all is the important issue in making buyers and sellers feel secure to continue to move up in the real estate market.

Now is the time to sell your High Desert Home in the buying season while the market values are stable and interest rates very low!

High Desert Market Update

18 High Desert Homes are FOR SALE with Average Asking Price of \$728,106 and \$225 Asking price/sf
 10 High Desert Homes are PENDING with Average Asking Price is \$502,680 and \$209 Asking Price /sf
 28 High Desert Homes have SOLD Since January 1, 2020 to date. Average Sales Price was \$618,000 at \$210 Sold Price/ sf

Great Interest Rates! Conventional 30-year rates are hovering around 3.5%. Now is the time to buy with such great rates.

