

# The Ridges Landowners' Association Newsletter

Number 20  
WINTER 2000

*In an effort to keep all landowners in The Ridges informed of the status of the development of the community and issues that may affect you, we are distributing this quarterly newsletter. We hope that you enjoy this periodic update and find it useful.*

## **RIDGES RESIDENTS HELP PLANT U.S. 285 MEDIAN STRIP**

Driving along U.S. Highway 285 between Alma Drive and I-25, one cannot help but notice the new shrub plantings in the median strip. These seem guarded by white PVC pipes sticking out of the ground adjacent to the shrubs.

Several Ridges residents braved the cold weather to participate in this highway beautification project. According to Greg Fencher, one of the directors, the project is a research effort by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The effort is to test methods of watering xeric shrubs, which have been grown from seedlings for four years. The seedlings were planted in 30 inch by 4 inch PVC tubes to promote long roots. Shrubs were initially selected for their low water requirement. Periodic watering will be carried out for three years, using the white water delivery tubes now visible in the medians. Each tube, which reaches to the bottom of the adjacent shrub, will be packed with hydrated starch for slow delivery of water to the roots. At the end of the three year watering-in period, the delivery tubes will be removed, and the shrubs will be on their own.

The NRCS received a \$175,000 grant from the New Mexico Highway Department to test such xeric methods of beautifying New Mexico highways. The results of the project will be published in *Technical Notes*, the house organ of the NRCS. The NRCS experimental farm, New Mexico Plant Material Center, (NMPMC), comprises 200 acres outside Las Lunas, and seeks to develop plant materials and techniques for conservation purposes, including highway medians.

Fencher further reports that 4 inch diameter cottonwoods and ponderosas will soon be planted along the roadside. These trees are grown at the NMPMC to a height of 15 feet. At harvest, the trees are cut just above the crown, at soil level, leaving the roots behind to resprout. The lateral branches are removed, and these "rootless pole cuttings" are then planted along the roadside, 30 feet from the road edge, to a depth of nine feet, leaving six feet exposed as a whip. Trees have been successfully planted in this manner along the Algodones exit of I-25 and the "Big I" intersection in Albuquerque.

Many thanks and huge bouquets of gorgeous (xeric) flowers to all the workers from the many U.S. 285 South communities for their work to beautify our corridor.

## **RESTRICTIVE COVENANT REMINDER AND CLARIFICATION**

Property owners who rent their homes are legally responsible for ensuring that renters are informed of and abide by the covenants. To assist in this endeavor, The Board of Directors has developed a shortened version of our restrictive covenants for use by renters. The lessor or homeowner is to present a copy of the covenants to the lessee upon signing any lease agreement. Copies of the shortened version can be obtained from either the president or secretary of the Board.

Residents are reminded of covenant section 7.04 which states that extra automobiles, trailers, boats, RVs and similar mobile structures must be screened from view by means of a coyote fence, wall or similar treatment. This reminder comes as a result of several complaints regarding violations of this covenant.

The Ridges Architectural Control Committee has adopted a clarification of the covenant regarding the placement of prefabricated storage sheds on homeowner property. The following is the directive that will be used by the Committee: "Where all of the following qualifications are met, on each residential lot in The Ridges may be placed one modestly sized, good quality storage outbuilding of a color complying with the requirements of Article 9.02b of the Covenants and in a location that is not visible from the road and that meets the approval of the Architectural Control Committee. Plans and specifications for all structures must be submitted to the Architectural Control Committee for approval prior to any such structure being placed in The Ridges."

### **PROPOSED UTILITY RATE INCREASE**

El Dorado Utilities (EDU) filed for a 54.8% rate increase with the Public Regulation Commission (PRC) late in June. Subsequently the District, through its attorney, filed to try to block or at least mitigate such a dramatic increase. The District has also contracted with Southwest Water Consultants to study the filing and examine EDU's books and records to try to ascertain whether their rate base is bloated. The Utility requested

in its filing that the new rates become effective on July 30, 2000. The fact of the District's intervention has, at a minimum, delayed an increase until at least April 26, 2001. Savings to the customers of El Dorado Utilities over that nine month period amounts to approximately \$437,000.

### **WELCOME TO TILE NEIGHBORHOOD**

We extend a welcome to Bill Farmer and Michael Larson who recently moved into a home on Immanuel, and to David Otori who moved into his home at 70 Principe de Paz.

### **A FOND FAREWELL**

Those of us who have lived in The Ridges for any time period have, at one time or another, been greeted by Felix on our walks or visited by Felix on his. Felix died last month at the age of fourteen. Our sympathies go out to Karen Embertson. He will be missed by many of us.

### **A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL**

***The Board of Directors and the Association officers are listed for your information. Please feel free to call for assistance or information.***

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>TELEPHONE</b>	<b>COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN</b>
<b>Ray Olson</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>505-466-1202</b>	
<b>Michel Marx</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>505-466-9038</b>	<b>Architectural Control Committee</b>
<b>Barry Weinstein</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>505-466-6223</b>	
<b>Jim Shanaberger</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>505-466-6909</b>	<b>Roads</b>
<b>Estee Roll</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>505-466-2827</b>	
<b>Debra Hayden</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>505-466-9026</b>	<b>285 Coalition</b>

THE RIDGES LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

Post Office Box 22352  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-2352

January 8, 2001

Landowners  
The Ridges Landowners Association  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

Re: *Storage Outbuildings*

Dear Ridges Landowner:

During recent months a landowner requested that the Architectural Control Committee approve the installation of a storage shed to be purchased from Home Depot on a lot in The Ridges. The Committee reviewed the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants with regard to outbuildings, and finding ambiguity, decided to develop a working policy for approval of plans for storage buildings in the community.

The Committee consulted an attorney and, under his guidance, developed a policy. The Board of Directors unanimously approved the following policy that shall henceforth govern storage sheds in The Ridges:

*Storage Buildings: Where all of the following qualifications are met, one modestly-sized, good quality storage outbuilding may be erected on each residential lot in the subdivision: the building must be of a color complying with the requirements of Article 9.02b of the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants and must be located such that it is not visible from the road, and plans and specifications for the building must be approved by the Architectural Control Committee prior to the erection of the structure.*

The Board of Directors also unanimously agreed that all landowners who have heretofore erected or installed storage sheds without prior Architectural Control Committee approval shall be required now to submit, after the fact, a plan and specifications for their outbuilding for approval by the Committee in accordance with Article 6 of the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants which states. "All plans for every structure to be built shall be approved as herein provided before construction shall begin."

Therefore, I ask all landowners in The Ridges to submit plans for any contemplated, or already installed, storage building which has not been approved to the Architectural Control Committee. The Chair of the Committee, as of January 1, 2001, is:

Michel Marx.....180 Principe de Paz.....phone: 466-9038.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this new policy.

Sincerely,

(s) Ray Olson

Ray Olson, President

RO:clc