

The Ridges Landowners Association Newsletter

Number 36

www.ridgesla.org

Spring 2005

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.

From the President's Desk

Keeping up appearances

Upon release from this winter's icy and muddy prison, I had my first walk around my lot with springtime's approach. What I saw made me appreciate that I had some cleanup to do. That started me down the path to thinking of prompting the neighborhood in the same direction. Such was the start of a topic for the Directors meeting in April.

As preparation, the Directors held informal field meetings to survey the general appearance of properties. As a consequence of these tours, we have been contacting a few property owners to encourage them to park their vehicles out of sight of the roads, as required by our covenants, and otherwise to attend to property appearance. Part of the pleasure of living in The Ridges is the willingness of the residents to cooperate in the generally high level of property maintenance.

Director Bonwell has a note in this issue regarding the (unallowed) use of mailboxes and supports for signs. I would add a request to please consider moving your security service signs back a little from the roadway, as a step to reducing clutter. (Strictly by the covenants, such signs and no-trespassing signs are not allowed without Board approval.)

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The file of past newsletters is nearing completion, thanks to the efforts of Jack LaRowe. Click your way through some of these to find items like an accident at the arroyo crossing that left a car on its roof. Perhaps the most frequently mentioned problem is dogs.

The website has most of our governing documents posted, including our Articles of Incorporation.

Notes from The Ridges Board Meeting, April 12, 2005

The April meeting was attended by all Directors. Also present by invitation were The Ridges administrator Carolyn Cochran and the newsletter editor Marilyn LaRowe.

Priorities and status for attending to neighborhood appearances were discussed. One issue that has vexed prior Boards is storage sheds. To clarify what structures might be permitted; the ACC and Board in 2000 received a legal opinion that storage sheds would likely be considered permissible "outbuildings as are common and customarily pertinent" to our residences. The Board at that time then passed the following resolution (for more detail, see Issue 20 of the Newsletter [[from www.ridgesla.org](http://www.ridgesla.org)]):

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 existence of this policy raised the concern over maintaining accessible records of past policy decisions. For this purpose, Ms. Cochran will review the record of Board minutes and make a file of such resolutions, probably to be attached to the Bylaws as an appendix and then on to our web site. I think our assumption is that past resolutions continue in force until changed by the Board, although we did not discuss this at any length. At least an easily accessible record of resolutions might help explain why some things were done in the past.

The ACC must approve plans before any construction takes place. Contact Michel Marx (466-9038) for further instructions.

The Board endorsed the idea of a mail-in ballot attached to the newsletter to form a clearer picture of the members' preferences regarding speed bumps etc. (Choices of "speed control devices" shown on the ballot do not include speed dips, since I have not been able to find these listed in official traffic management documents. Instead, I list rumble bars.)

Olin van Dyck, Board President

Ed. Note: The mail-in ballot with built in instructions is provided as a separate sheet with this newsletter.

You will also find a new, newspaper sized, publication on living in a wildfire prone area.

Wanted alive: a few good men, or women

Two of our current board members have stated they will not seek re-election. Residents are being asked to step forward and volunteer their names or others' names for consideration to be on the board. Good management/administrative skills are but one aspect of serving on the Board. Having e-mail is a definite plus! Your reward is serving the needs of the subdivision and meeting some interesting people. Contact any Board member with your name. —Ed.

Dog problems and problem dogs

As Olin noted in his president's message, one of the persistent problems in The Ridges has been dogs. Recently, two neighbors' dogs were attacked by a third neighbor's dogs. One dog required stitches. In another incident, an equestrian was encircled by three dogs and the horse was spooked. These are serious occurrences and should be reported to County Animal Control at (505) 986-2430 as a public service.

More information will be included in the Summer 2005 issue. —Ed.

Roads

Gravel Road Work

The record-setting precipitation early this year was hard on our gravel roads and the residents thereon. However, half of the gravel roadwork planned for this year was completed in March, including, where necessary,

- ditch scraping
- crown build-up using available material

- layering with crushed stone (the gray stuff) in soft spots

While re-establishing the ditches, an old culvert was uncovered and restored to use. Also a water barrier was formed to prevent runoff flowing from the service road onto the end of Rey de Reyes. The second half of the work, awaiting contractor availability and suitable of soil moisture conditions, includes:

- grader blading to make continuous smooth crowned roadway
- topping with tan base course for color and uniformity

By the end, 160 tons of new material will be trucked in. The gravel roadwork will use about half of the budgeted 2004-05 roads funds.

Factoid #1: To cover our two miles of gravel roads with a fresh 1-inch layer of tan base course would take almost 1000 tons of material costing about \$13k, the price having doubled within the last few years.

Factoid #2: Prior to paving of Principe de Paz, the Association had planned to grade the main gravel roads 6 times per year!

Cut Cables

While scraping ditches, the backhoe cut a telephone line and a TV cable, which should be buried at least 12" deep. The ditch scraping penetrated only about 4 inches, but that didn't matter—the cables were laying in the weeds on the surface. Residents might look at their cable lines and have the service provider correct obvious vulnerabilities.

Committee Volunteers

The Roads Committee invites volunteers to join. We'd really like to get more members from gravel road addresses for input on how they would like their roads to look and work. There is some useful reading to be done on stabilization and dust suppression using new processes. Volunteer your neighbor before he (she?) volunteers you!

Charles Whiteley and Olin van Dyck, Roads Committee

When is a mailbox not a mailbox?

Several Ridges residents have complained about their neighbor's mailbox having bumper stickers placed on it, making it a sign. Thorny questions of interpretation of our covenants and freedom of speech arise.

However, mailboxes are considered federal property and subject to federal laws. The bumper stickers and security service placards which adorn mailboxes and

their supports are clearly a form of advertisement and therefore not allowed per US Postal Service regulations. Mail receptacle standard # 2.5 states: "Any advertising on a mailbox or its support is prohibited." Full details can be found at <http://pe.usps.gov/text/dmm/d041.htm>.

Brent Bonwell

How does one do this?

We recently received a call from a resident who had moved from one address to another in The Ridges and was having trouble getting the address changed to the correct one. Carolyn Cochran replied:

Call me (at work: (505) 954-7317), e-mail (ccochran@cuddylaw.com) me or tell me. In addition, once per year there is an opportunity to note changes of address on the form that is sent out about the annual assessment.

Free firewood

Twenty-nine dead piñon trees have been cut down on the subdivision community lot #11. The treetops have been chipped and the tree trunks cut into 14-inch long fireplace sized logs. Any residents of The Ridges who want free firewood can go to lot #11 and help themselves. The wood is still "green" and it should dry until next fall before burning. First come, first served.

Dave Kingston

Caution

With the wet winter we've had, there is a good possibility that the rodent population will once again explode. Should this happen, there is a likelihood of a corresponding rise in plague and Hanta virus. Use common sense around areas where mice and squirrels, among other carriers of these diseases, might be.

—Ed.

The following article was published in two parts in the November and December 2004 issues of Eldorado Vistas, the monthly newsletter of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association and is reprinted here with the permission of both Vistas and the author. Thank you Eldorado.

Unfortunately, it does not address two other common types of flat roofing: Sprayed foam and Iron On Fabric. Would someone like to take a shot at them for a future issue?

The text, type and style has been edited the minimum amount to fit the format of our newsletter and to combine it to a single installment. —Ed.

Roofing Facts and Myths—Part 1

AS A MEMBER OF THE ECIA Architectural Committee, I frequently hear residents say they prefer pitched metal roofs because flat roofs with parapets are more prone to leaks. This is more rumor than fact. Most (up to 90%) of all roof leaks are caused by failure of the flashing and/or sealants.

General – All flashing and sealants ultimately fail due to temperature changes (i.e., expansion and contraction). Metal roofing is subject to the same forces.

Flat Roofs with Parapets – Modern flat roofs are actually sloped 1/4" per foot. Where vertical elements (parapets, chimneys, AC units, etc.) extend above the roof, openings are protected by cant strips, which direct the water away from the joints. Smaller penetrations (flues, pipes, etc.) are protected by flashing only. Built-up roofing is protected by a layer of gravel. Unless damaged by foot traffic or by birds and rodents, built-up roofing will remain leak proof for up to 30 years; long after leaks will develop in the flashing and/or sealant. Even if cracks or tiny holes develop, leaking will only occur in low spots where water can pond.

Pitched Metal Roofing – Except at parapets or walls between low and high roofs, flashing is provided only at roof penetrations. Due to the difficulty of attaching cant strips to metal, chimneys and such are usually protected only by flashing and sealants. Metal roofing has continuous exposed joints between panels; the joints are either overlapped or crimped and sealed. Metal roof panels are subject to substantial expansion and contraction, depending on the orientation of the roof. Whereas a pitched roof drains water more rapidly than a flat roof, it also directs water with greater force towards vertical obstructions where leaks may exist.

Roofing Facts and Myths—Part 2

Recommendations – All roofs need to be inspected on an annual basis, preferably in May and October, our dry months.

Flat roofs

- Check that there are no spots bare of gravel. If bare, check whether the roofing is damaged or soft. If not, replace the gravel. If damaged, call a roofer for repair. If severe winds have blown away a substantial amount of gravel, have additional gravel placed on the roof.

Caution: Ordinary built-up roofs are not designed for heavy traffic; do not use for parties, playing, stargazing activities, etc. Do not allow water to pond up for summer cooling.

- Check all flashing. If there are spots where the flashing is damaged, leaving a gap larger than ¼ inch, have the flashing repaired by a roofer. Check all sealants. Apply new sealant where there are gaps or holes. Check for cracks in parapets. Apply sealant to all cracks in stucco less than ¼ inch wide; for larger cracks, other repairs including re-stuccoing must be considered.

Pitched Metal Roofs

- Use great caution when inspecting a pitched roof. For roofs with a steep pitch (Northern New Mexico style) call a roofer to make the annual inspection.
- Check all flashing and sealants (see Flat Roof, item 2). Check all seams between roof panels. Patch all damaged sealants between metal panels. Check all fasteners for proper tightness. If panels have loosened, heaved, are bent or otherwise damaged, call a roofer specializing in metal roofing to assess and repair the roof. Note: fading or damage to the metal panel finish cannot be rectified except by replacement.
- Check joint where metal roof sits on top of wall. Patch sealant if necessary.
- Check wood members on top of wall below overhanging roof. Patch minor damage to wood with plastic wood or sealant. Hire a carpenter to replace severely rotted wood.

The writer is a registered architect with many years in private practice and with designer/builder corporations. Prior to retiring to Eldorado, he served as Deputy Commissioner of Building and Zoning for the Town of North Hempstead, Long Island, NY.

— Ralph Heimberg, Architect

Snakes in The Ridges

After a couple of rattlesnake sightings in The Ridges last summer, I was asked to write about the snakes that we are likely to see here. Since they are of the greatest concern, I will start with the rattlesnakes.

First, it is important to know that the only dangerous snakes that you will see here are the rattlesnakes. All others are completely harmless.

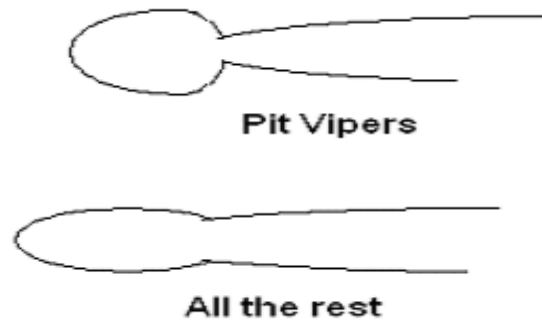
Second, it is important to know that the few snakes we have contribute a lot to the local ecology by providing some serious rodent control. Based on the newspaper reports of our area in the nearly nine years I have lived in this area, you are infinitely more likely to suffer death or serious illness from rodent born diseases (plague and Hanta virus) than from snake bite. This is based on several cases in Santa Fe County of both of the rodent vector diseases and not a single reported case

of snakebite. Most adults who suffer a bite from a small rattlesnake survive even if untreated (NOT recommended since serious soft tissue damage WILL happen) and anyone bitten who gets treatment in a timely manner will survive but may still suffer a lot of pain and tissue damage.

If you see any of our snakes, let them alone or just watch from a distance. If you are certain you have a rattlesnake and are fearful, call me and I will attempt to catch it (if it stays around until I get there) and move it away from you (no guarantees and I am not going to work very hard at it).

Besides the rattle, a major identification aid for rattlesnakes is that they are pit vipers; none of the other snakes in this area are. This means, among other things, that they will show a distinct difference at the neck-head juncture and a proportionally wider head:

(No crude comments about the drawings please.)



If you should encounter a rattlesnake in our area, it will by far most likely be a Western Rattlesnake. It is just marginally possible that you might find a Western Diamondback rattlesnake but we are at the extreme edge of their geographic range and at the very top of their altitude range.

Both of these snakes are well camouflaged for our area and tend to hunt at night or late in the day during the hotter months and hibernate during the colder months. In all likelihood, unless they are on a road or path, you will first notice them when they rattle a warning. If you hear it, you are too close. Freeze and attempt to locate the snake by sound and then move away as best you can.

The Western Rattlesnake

The Western Rattlesnake is up to 64 inches long although they would be expected to be much smaller in our area. This is the western equivalent of the Timber Rattlesnake of the east and similarly marked with well-defined greenish to brownish patches often bordered with a row of white scales. The patches may tend

toward diamond shape but are not nearly so obvious as the Diamondback.

The Western Diamondback Rattlesnake

By comparison, the Western Diamondback grows far larger than the Western, up to 84 inches, (and is, therefore, more dangerous), is heavier bodied and has far more distinct diamond pattern. This is the largest western rattlesnake and only the Eastern Diamondback is larger in the United States.

Snakebite First Aid

I have lifted the following verbatim from www.webmd.com which seems to be allowable under their copyright statement. Credit is at the end of the article.

Note that if you are bitten, even if you are sure that the snake was not poisonous, you should still seek medical aid if the skin was broken because of the chance of either an allergic reaction or infection.

Snake and Lizard Bites

Home Treatment

Poisonous snake or lizard bite

If you were bitten by a snake or lizard that you know or suspect is poisonous, **call 911 or other emergency services immediately**. Do not wait for symptoms to develop. Symptoms may progress from mild to severe rapidly.

Medication (antivenin) to counteract the effects of the poison can save a limb or your life. Antivenin is given as soon as a health professional determines it is needed, usually within the first 4 hours after the snakebite. Antivenin may be effective up to 24 hours after a snakebite.

Immediate home treatment

Immediate home treatment should not delay transport for emergency evaluation.

- Remain calm. Lie down and stay as quiet and still as possible after the bite. Any physical activity may increase the flow of venom to the bloodstream.
- If you are not sure what type of snake or lizard bit you, **call a poison control center immediately** to help identify the snake or lizard and determine the next steps to take.
- If signs of shock are present or the bitten person is not breathing, see the topic Dealing With Emergencies.

- If an extraction device is used, it should be applied within 3 minutes of the bite. Leave it on for 30 minutes. **Do not** cut the skin over the bite before applying the suction.
- Remove any jewelry on the bitten limb. The limb might swell, making it more difficult to remove the jewelry after swelling begins.
- With a pen, mark the edge of the swelling around the bite every 15 minutes so the progression of swelling can be evaluated.
- Apply a splint on an arm or leg that was bitten to limit motion and limit the flow of venom into the bloodstream. If possible, keep the bitten area at or slightly lower than the level of the heart.
- Drink fluids (not alcohol) in frequent, small amounts unless vomiting is a problem. This will help prevent dehydration and reduce the risk of shock.

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This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor.

Jack LaRowe, with reference to:

National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Reptiles and Amphibians (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 2002);
Jonathon Hanson and Roseann Beggy Hanson, *50 Common Reptiles & Amphibians Of The Southwest* (Tucson: Western National Parks Association, 1997);
www.webmd.com; and an e-mail consultation with Dr. Caroline Kingston-Trucco

The trash she is a-building

Since starting my every day or so walking regimen again in February, I cannot help but notice that the roadside trash has built up considerably again. Any time now would be a good time to patrol the roadside(s) of your lots and pick up the refuse that has accumulated. I've done mine.

In this regard, there are still some lots with construction materials remaining from long past projects visible from the road (or the neighbors). In addition, those cute little orange and blue and white "don't dig here" flags and tassels are only good for a few days (I think 48 hours but am too lazy to look it up). After that, they are just an eyesore.

Jack LaRowe

Casino Ridges

The Association owns Lot 11, dedicated to us by the developer as a permanent recreational area. There is an immensely promising use of this 4.9 acres for the benefit of our community beyond our wildest dreams. But we must act now!

To ride the wave of New Mexico's most rapidly expanding recreational activity—the state's gold rush! — we should move at warp speed to develop this property with

☆ *The Casino Ridges* ☆

This enterprise would have benefits to all that would cascade down through generations. Among the most obvious benefits would be profits to support a neighborhood infrastructure and ambience *non pareil*, including:

- Broad boulevards accommodating the state's maximum vehicle speeds
- Roadway lighting and intersection bridges so that day or night traffic can zoom unimpeded to our cash registers
- An attractive, brilliant, sign, like Casino Hollywood's, attracting all to our charms
- Enough lighting, hustle and bustle, to make the nights safe from wild animals
- A center for all kinds of activities, drawing crowds from miles around.

But it does not end there! The casino could also provide employment for the idle hands here, of which it is obvious there are many.

If we move on this *now*, we can be the only “game” — no pun! — within 30 miles. Please give this proposal the consideration it deserves.

Friend & neighbor “Slim” Deal, April 1, 2005

Ol' Slim forgot to mention the use of beautiful neon colored fake palm trees to replace our dead piñons.
— Ed.

Our Neighbors

This column is about and for the residents of The Ridges. Input is welcomed from anyone who has news to include. Items may be e-mailed to the editor at any time, titled “newsletter article” and will be included in the subsequent newsletter. We also welcome timely articles.

The mother of Carlos Trucco died recently. Our sympathy goes to him and his family.

Longtime residents Ray and Nancy Olson are moving into Santa Fe. Both are avid gardeners and not only did Ray serve as President of The Ridges but he also wrote many interesting and informative articles about plants growing in our subdivision. We wish you well in your move, Nancy and Ray.

—Ed.

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

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