

# The Ridges Landowners Association Newsletter

Number 54

[www.ridgesla.org](http://www.ridgesla.org)

Winter 2011

*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

Every new year brings a new board. This year we say goodbye to Fred Strauss and Ken Ferjancic who have served nobly as Co-Presidents for the past two years. Thank you Fred – Thank you Ken! And, to our newly elected members, Victor Hesch and Stephane Ligtelyn, we extend a hearty welcome aboard! The makeup of this year's board is:

Tim Haggerty, President  
Victor Hesch, Vice President  
Dick Altman, Secretary  
Stephane Ligtelyn, Treasurer  
Mary Elizabeth Eisenberg, Our Ambassador to the State of Arizona

One of the major issues the board will contend with this coming year will be the upkeep and maintenance of the roads. As some of you know, a new Roads Committee has been formed.

After many, many years of dedicated service, Dave Kingston and Tim Ames have decided to rest on their laurels and let someone else have a stab at it. Thank you Dave – Thank you Tim! The major difference in the new committee's approach is that all roadwork: paving, maintenance and improvement of gravel roads, snow removal, mowing and speed bump modification (we all know which one), will be done by outside contractors. I am happy to announce that we do have a snow plow guy in Eldorado who will make plowing The Ridges first priority in the event of a snowstorm.

Of course this brings up budgetary concerns and their impact on our yearly dues. We are very mindful of this and will proceed with everyone's pocketbook in mind. All of the projects we hope to accomplish this year can be done within the present budget and with money left over. Future projects will be put on a schedule so as not to strain the budget in any given year. For more on the Roads

Committee, see Charlie Whiteley's report in this newsletter.

The ACC also has its challenges. With solar power becoming more popular, it is time to review the criteria for what is an acceptable solar installation and what isn't. A Green Energy committee was formed last year to work with the ACC to update the guidelines for solar installation. This is still a work in progress, and we hope to have some working guidelines in the reasonably near future.

Then there is the perennial issue of communications. In the past, the board and the committees have not communicated well and that has led to misunderstandings on both sides. To remedy this, the board has requested that a member of each committee attend each board meeting to report on current and future projects. This way we can sharply reduce the chance of surprise or misunderstanding.

And finally, there is the issue of communications between the board and the community. To ensure transparency, the board will post a synopsis and the minutes of each board meeting on The Ridges website ([www.ridgesla.org](http://www.ridgesla.org)). The exact interval has not been worked out, but two weeks after each meeting seems about right. You will be notified of each posting by email. Also, if you have any concerns, suggestions or beefs, you can always write to the board at [board@ridgesla.org](mailto:board@ridgesla.org)

Speaking of email, if you are not on The Ridges email list – get on it! To do so, write to [board@ridgesla.org](mailto:board@ridgesla.org) with your name and email. This list has proved to be a vital link to all of our neighbors in situations such as imminent security risk, snow removal and most recently, the gas outages. All communications are “blind cc's”, so your privacy is ensured.

In closing, I would like to say that I take the position of President very seriously and hope to make a real difference in this community in the coming year.

*Tim Haggerty*

## Reminders

The annual association fee was due January 31, 2011.

All residents should have personal liability umbrella coverage insurance on their property.

## 2011 Roads Committee

Serving on The Ridges Roads Committee for 2011 will be Dick Carlson, Ted Schooley, Olin van Dyck, and Charlie Whiteley with Tim Haggerty acting as liaison to the Board of Directors. A big round of Thanks should go out from The Ridges community to all the prior Roads Committee members and especially Dave Kingston who has served as the Roads Committee Chairman for the past several years. Enjoy your peace and quiet, you earned it. The new committee members will soon learn to appreciate the personal time devoted to serving our community by the retiring members.

While we're on the subject of "Thank You", Tim Haggerty deserves major "Thanks!" for handling snow removal and sanding of the Principe toboggan run during the transition to a new committee. He has spent countless hours on the phone finding plowing services and organizing sanding the hill including manning a shovel himself in sub-zero temperatures.

The new committee met for an organizational meeting on January 23 and established a list of initial tasks. The Roads Budget represents over 70% of the annual Ridges Landowners Association Budget and over time we have made significant investments in road improvements and maintenance. In order to protect property values and, more importantly, maintain safe roads for our residents and visitors, it is imperative that we adhere to a maintenance plan that supports those priorities. Our primary legal responsibility as landowners is to maintain our private roads in a safe condition. As an initial task and for educational advice for new Committee and Board members, we plan to review these responsibilities with our legal counsel with attention to those issues that expose the Association to potential liability concerns. A recent lawsuit against another Santa Fe Association emphasizes the need for attention to this priority. This will be the foundation for then developing a maintenance/improvement plan that supports the Association's property value, safety, legal responsibility and cost/budget priorities.

Another topic discussed at the organizational meeting was the need to maintain a close communication link between The Ridges Board of Directors and the Roads Committee. The Board is entrusted with the responsibility to identify and fully provide for future known and unknown financial needs of the Association. The Committee is responsible for developing and presenting the roads maintenance plan, cost

estimate and decision criterion to the Board for review and approval and then implementing those actions approved. The plan given to the Board will identify short term maintenance requirements (current year budget), as well as future major maintenance expenditures such as repaving projects for the Board's use in forecasting future budget requirements.

Other priorities discussed were the need to identify reliable suppliers, establish long-term supplier relationships and communicate the Committee's activities to the landowners to promote involvement and enhance transparency.

*Charlie Whiteley,  
Roads Committee Chair*

## ACC

The ACC asks that residents planning any changes to their property to contact the chair, Jerry Fornell, 466-0588, even if they don't think the project needs ACC approval. This helps the ACC know how to respond when a complaint is lodged about work being done. And remember, certain projects definitely need ACC approval.

## Security

Suspicious activity in The Ridges has been blissfully rare in recent months, but we all need to remain steadily vigilant in the hopes of keeping that way. Break-ins do continue in Santa Fe and the southeast part of the county, so it's no time let out guard down.

Volunteer patrols in our community will continue in 2011, but they only provide a visible presence for a short time each week. If you see something unusual happening, please don't hesitate to contact the Sheriff's Office immediately.

If you're leaving town, the offer stands to notify me by email at [Merrick3055@Comcast.Net](mailto:Merrick3055@Comcast.Net). I will make a special effort to cruise by your home and watch for any unexpected visitors or vehicles.

Let me know if you have other ideas that will help keep The Ridges a safe community.

*Art Merrick,  
Neighborhood Watch*

## Change in reporting suspicious activity

Should you see a suspicious vehicle or person, [Tim Haggerty](mailto:Tim.Haggerty@ridges.com), 466-0985, should be called immediately. It is very helpful to have a description of the vehicle (color, make, model, license plates, etc) or person if at all possible. The sheriff's office should also be called.

Tim will then verify the facts and send a broadcast e-mail to all residents via our message system and also notify Art

Merrick, Security Coordinator. They will work together to help keep the area safe.

And remember, **always call 911** if there is a crime in progress. Neither Tim nor Art are expected to deal with criminals.

## **R sticker: a security reminder**

A few years ago in response to several break-ins a Neighborhood Watch Committee was created to discuss security in The Ridges. Among other measures, it was agreed to introduce a way of identifying cars that belong to residents of The Ridges. A white **R** sticker placed on the driver's side, inside lower left corner of the windshield, was custom made in clear static-cling vinyl to be unobtrusive and reusable.

The problem now is that with new vehicle purchases, stickers seem to have stayed with the old car. Please contact Karen Embertson at 466-2486 for additional stickers at \$2 each, and remember, **reusable**. It may be tiny but it works... and it works best if everyone participates.

*Karen Embertson*

## **Welcome**

Karen Ericson is our new welcome person, taking the reins from Eva Kingston. Thank you for volunteering, Karen, and thank you, Eva, for being the welcome committee of one for several years. If you have new neighbors, check with Karen (466-3552) to make sure she knows about them. Or even invite them to your home for a meal or snacks.

## **New Board member**

### **Victor Hesch**

I am a native New Mexican born in Santa Fe on January 27, 1934. I attended St. Michael's High School, St. Michael's College, The University of Phoenix and George Washington University. I hold MS and MA degrees in Program MGT. and Organizational Behavior and Human Relations.

I started working in the engineering fields in 1953 as a COOP student at NMSU. Later I worked for architects, civil and electrical engineers and finally went to work at Los Alamos National Laboratory in 1966 and retiring in 1999. I designed control panels for a nuclear reactor, did weapons design, worked as an electro-optical-mechanical engineer for most of my career at LANL. The last six years I worked as an environmental scientist helping categorize and remediate various sites at LANL involved with toxic chemicals, materials, electro-magnetic radiation and radioactive materials.

After retiring from LANL I worked for Johns-Hopkins University as a consultant. My wife and I moved to The Ridges in March of 2002. My wife Yolanda is also a native of Santa Fe. We have been married for fifty-two years.

## **Code of the West**

Recommended reading: The Santa Fe County Commissioners have published a document entitled:

**"Code of the West"**

**or,**

**"How to Avoid Surprises and Be a Good Neighbor  
When You're Buying, Building, or Developing  
in Santa Fe County"**

which may be accessed at:

<http://www.santafecounty.org/userfiles/CodeoftheWest2010.pdf>

## **Mystery chicken**

While walking her dogs in December, Selene Sinclair discovered a raw chicken, split down the middle, by the side of the road on Principe de Paz on Lot 54, near 55. By the time she notified Patty Sciarrotta, there were only feet left. Concerned about poison Patty put them in her freezer, reported this incident to Animal Control, and had a sheriff's car arrive in 30 minutes(!). No testing was done for poison. The officer gave us a case number for future reference.

Several days later some ribs turned up in the same location. We, local residents with dogs, have speculated on whether this was to harm our pets or feed coyotes or what. In my 18 years in this house such a thing has never occurred. If anyone in The Ridges has information, or has had a similar experience, please contact me (466-2486) or Patty (466-4047) with details. If you want to feed coyotes, please do so on your own property and not near a road.

*Karen Embertson*

## **Plants in danger**

When spring and hopefully warmer weather come this year, residents may find some vegetation that survived in the past could not make it in the unusual cold this winter. While snow cover might help insulate them, some plants hardy to USDA Zone 5, which is purported to be the zone we live in, could be affected, especially if the temperature dropped below -20° F as it did on the west side of our home (-26.3° F at 0630 on 3 February) and remained below -20° F for any time.

Conventional advice is to give plants time to recuperate when spring comes before replacing them. Sometimes that's all that's needed.

## Critters a'plenty

Gophers, snakes, raccoons, bobcats, deer, roadrunners. The list goes on. We live with wildlife every day and have received numerous reports of animals in our midst. No surprise there—many of us moved here for the junipers and piñones and natural settings that are so peaceful.

Gophers have become a big problem lately. The Truccos have found a man who traps them. Their property was being overrun with gophers and of course there was the subsequent damage to vegetation. They highly recommend Richard at FTG Gopher Extermination, 310-0909. They have found him to be reasonable, very knowledgeable about gopher habitat, habits, etc., and very good around children and dogs.

Which brings us to snakes— there have been many reports this past year concerning snakes. Richard recommends having snakes on one's property as the best deterrent to gophers. Bull snakes are also called "gopher snakes" for a reason. If there are snakes around your property, they probably are enjoying a good source of food: mice, rats, gophers.

There have been some reports of residents killing snakes. Please don't. They are opportunists and if they're around, there is food for them.

If snakes absolutely terrify you, do as Dick Altman and call animal control. An officer came and captured a rattler from his front entry, giving it a lot of respect, Dick reports, and said it would go to the landfill where there is undoubtedly plenty of food for snakes. Rats love landfills!

Bobcat sightings have been numerous. One incident reported the bobcat was extremely close to the observer and did not seem to fear her. Deer are plentiful in parts of The Ridges too.

Contrary to previous opinion that raccoons need immediately available water, we have had several encounters reported over the last few years including a studio invaded by a mother raccoon and her three babies. Evidently she had the babies in the chimney and eventually they fell into the room. Cute as they were, they also made a complete shambles of the place. After the babies were removed and relocated, and the studio cleaned and back in order, the mother came back looking for her offspring and got into the studio through a slightly open window and made another mess.

And then—there goes the neighborhood: caught on film (actually flash card) below, last Fall, our neighborhood peach thief pilfering poor Dave Kingston's peaches at about 0545 on September 20th.

We hope to have more wildlife pictures in the future. Residents may send them to the editor at any time and they will be included if they are appropriate and newsworthy.



**El Bandito terrorizing local farmer's crop**

## Our neighbors

Thank you to Karen Embertson, who every year prepares the map of The Ridges with names and phone numbers of all residents.

And thank you to Patty Sciarrotta for once again facilitating the 2010 annual meeting. While on the annual meeting, it was so good to see some faces that have been missing from the attendees for the past few years. Welcome back!

To Rae Paretzkin, our sympathy on her husband Shelley's death last summer; and to Ken Ferjancic, whose mother passed away, our condolences.

## Found

Binoculars were found in the wilderness area; to claim call John Brown, 466-4817.

## From the editor

Last year there was only one newsletter as there never seemed to be items that warranted an edition, except for the critters. We hope to have four editions this year.

Thank you to all the contributors of this edition for their input and articles. —Ed.

**The Board of Directors and the Association officers are listed for your information.  
Please feel free to call for assistance or information between 9 A.M. and 7 P.M. Monday  
through Friday, or email**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>TELEPHONE</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>	<b>COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN/LIAISON</b>
Tim Haggerty	President	505-466-0985	board@ridgesla.org	Concerns & Suggestions Committee Liaison
Victor Hesch	Vice President	505-466-3265	board@ridgesla.org	
Dick Altman	Secretary	505-466-4399	board@ridgesla.org	
Stephane Ligtelyn	Treasurer	505-466-6880	board@ridgesla.org	
Mary Elizabeth Eisenberg	Director	602-885-8378	board@ridgesla.org	
Jerry Fornell		505-466-0588 Office: 505-466-2612	ACC@ridgesla.org	ACC Chair
Henry Lanman		505-466-4591	ACC@ridgesla.org	ACC Vice Chair
Charlie Whitely		505-466-4138	roads@ridgesla.org	Roads Chair
Art Merrick			Merrick3055@comcast.net	Security Coordinator
Carolyn Cochran	Administrator	505-466-1082	P.O. Box 22352 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-2352	Legal Notices, Land Transfers, Address and other records changes

*Newsletter by: Marilyn LaRowe 466-1864,  
e-mail: jrlarowe@msn.com*

<p><b>Fire or Medical Emergency:</b> call 911 <b>To report a crime in progress:</b> call 911</p> <p style="text-align: center;">◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶</p> <p><b>Santa Fe County Sheriff's Dispatch (Non-emergency):</b> 428-3720</p> <p><b>County Animal Control:</b> <b>At large animals and bites:</b> 955-2700 <b>Barking and Information:</b> 955-2701</p> <p><b>Santa Fe Police Dispatch (Non-emergency):</b> 428-3710</p>	<p><b>EAWSD (Water) Emergency telephone numbers:</b> <b>Working hours:</b> 505-466-1085 <b>Nights, weekends, holidays:</b> 505-780-0090</p> <p><b>PNM (Electricity) 24 hour Emergency Number, 365 days a year:</b> (888) 342-5766 (888) DIAL-PNM</p> <p><b>NMGASCO (Gas) Emergency Number:</b> (888) 664-2726 (888) NMGASCO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">◀◀◀◀◀◀◀◀▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶</p>
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