

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!



April 2022

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT PHIL STICE.....

Well, it looks like spring is fully on its way and summer is coming up quickly. I wanted to take the opportunity to update you on several items.

The Ranch Manager position: We are proud to announce that we have hired a new Ranch manager. Please welcome Larry Hartley, our new Ranch Manager. Larry has extensive experience in construction and is a retired fire fighter. He has property on the Ranch and is very excited to get started. We would be remiss if we did not extend a well-deserved thank you to John Adams. On his own time, he has kept the ranch running while we conducted our search. John, thank you from the bottom of our hearts! You have once again done an excellent job. Now, go and enjoy fishing!

The mailboxes off Campfire: The Postal Service has reviewed the damage and has just informed us that replacing the damaged units would be the responsibility of the Ranch. WE are getting quotes and I have filed a claim with our insurance. We are looking at a cost of seven to 10 thousand for the replacement units. We also have to pay for the replacement of locks and keys for all units at this location. We are pushing this forward as fast as we can and will keep you informed on our progress. If you have any tips on who might have been involved, we can pass it on to the police.

The Ranch house: Aaron Henke has graciously agreed to oversee the work that needs to be done and has provided us with a list of priorities. Obviously how we fund this is a major concern to the board. WE have agreed to ask Aaron to proceed with getting sealed bids for the priority items so we at least know what we are looking at dollar wise.

Finally, I want you all to know that I consider being on the board and its current president an honor. I want you to know that I am always available to you and encourage you to reach out to me for any concern or question you might have. My contact information is available on the website, so please reach out if you have a need. Happy spring to all!

FROM YOUR TREASURER, KEN BELLINGER....

Spring is here and the temperatures are rising as are our expenses. Some examples of non-budgeted expenses for the Ranch so far this year include:

- New metering equipment for our reservoir this spring costing approximately \$20,000, \$10,000 of which is not in the budget
- Replacement of mailboxes at Campfire and Ranch Rd. after damages caused during a burglary, costing us \$2,000-\$3,000 after insurance
- Replacement of office equipment and software costing \$2,000 - \$2,500
- Structural repairs and new roofs for the Ranch House and Ranch Office, with cost yet to be determined

As we all know the cost of propane and gasoline has increased over 30 percent. That raises the costs for emptying our trash compactor, RV dump station and water delivery, too. Last year some of our picnic tables had to be removed from service due to unsafe damage. They have not been replaced. In recent years our reserve money for items like the reservoir liner replacement has gone from \$400,000 to just over \$300,000.



Since we have no budgeted income to cover these expenses, where will we get the money? As a non-profit HOA, our income comes from dues and fees which have been set for this year. We have to take money from existing line items in the budget and /or choose what needed repairs and maintenance will not get done this year. Your current board is working hard to make the best decisions, stretching your money as far as possible toward meeting these needs now and into the future.

Late Fees on HOA Dues

On April 9, 2022 the Board voted to no longer provide waivers for late dues fees for 2022. While the board realizes there are circumstances that can make dues payment challenging for some individuals, we cannot justify the added time it takes for our bookkeeper to process each individual request for a waiver; or the extra time it takes for five board members to discuss and vote on each individual request. Each year, invoices for annual dues are sent out on January 1st with a due date of **January 31st**. Dues are considered officially overdue and accrue a late fee two months later on March 31st.



This year second notices with a late fee of \$31 were sent out to just over 200 lot owners. In order to be fair to the roughly 1300 lot owners who paid their dues on time, on Saturday, April 9, 2022, the board voted 4-0 to cease waiving late fees for 2022.

FROM YOUR MEMBER-AT-LARGE, DARRYL ATHERTON....

Welcome back to all those who go south for the winter and are starting to trickle back into the Ranch for the summer. As you transition from paved to gravel roads, your driving habits should also change. Our speed limit on the Ranch is 30 mph, which helps maintain the surface of our roads better and is safer for walkers.



One complaint I hear a lot on the ranch is from people walking our roads. When people drive too fast past them from either direction, it can create a problem, from a dense dust cloud to throwing up pebbles. When I see a driver isn't going to slow down, I just turn my face away, so if a rock does get thrown up at least it can't hit my face. Just think what a rock thrown up by a car tire does when it hits a windshield and think what it would do to a person's face.

If you could be courteous and slow down when passing a walker, it won't cost you more than 20 seconds to slow down until you are 50 yards passed them. It's a small thing, but part of supporting our neighbors here at the Ranch. Surly everyone could spare that much time to pass safely.

Walkers, making gestures at drivers going too fast won't change their behavior; it will just irritate them. A friendly wave works wonders! If you are passing me slowly, I won't have to turn my head away and I can notice you and wave as you pass!

We have such great people living here on the ranch. I often see people stopping to help someone who may need assistance. And most drivers are friendly and wave as we pass each other. And with spring here, we can begin to enjoy the things we like to do outside, so be safe and sane.

FROM YOUR SECRETARY, JANICE LEHMAN.....

We are starting to put together a welcome packet for newcomers to the Ranch. We will be collecting any business information you may want included in these packets. It could include samples, pamphlets or just a business card. This will help newcomers know some of the businesses available in the Ranch. The packet also may include some businesses in BV and Fairplay. If you are interested in being a part of this committee, please email the Ranch office at RORAHOA@ghvalley.net. I will start gathering the materials to go into the bags, so let me know if you have any questions. Text or call Janice Lehman at 720.556.1762 if you have something you would like included.



From the Water Committee: Lance Richeal, Jim Pardikes, and Don Kidd....

We are working directly with the State Water Engineer to bring new equipment into our reservoir so that we are in compliance with state monitoring requirements. ROTR has budgeted up to \$10,000 for the installation of the equipment, which is on target for installation this summer. A survey of the reservoir must be completed. The engineering firm has been given drawings of the reservoir and the information needed for them to give us a proposal with our options for equipment to bring us into compliance. After we settle on the equipment option the engineering firm will ask ROTR for a letter of intent to get started on the project. To date, there is still ice on the reservoir so the upgrade process cannot get started until all ice has melted.

Special kudos: A salute to our volunteer bookkeepers, Nancy Ranfranz and Karen Ganz. They have provided many, many hours of volunteer service to this community. We can't thank you enough!

FROM YOUR VICE-PRESIDENT, GINA MADDOX....

Be Firewise!

Have you heard about the Firewise program?

Did you know Ranch of the Rockies is a Firewise Community?



FIREWISE USA™
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

Firewise is a national recognition program that provides instructional resources to help us adapt to living with the threat of wildfires and take action to reduce wildfire risk in our community. A Firewise approval means we are a fire-adapted community. It means we are informed and prepared citizens, working collaboratively with our local fire department and other agencies, gaining knowledge, and taking action to reduce our risk of wildfire loss, while still protecting our surrounding ecosystem.

What you may not know is that many home and property insurance plans provide a discount for living in a Firewise community. Some neighbors have reported getting discounts of up to \$250. If we all pitch in and do fire mitigation work on our lots, we can continue to see the benefits of lower wildfire risk and lower property insurance bills. But we need everyone to step up to help to maintain our Firewise status.

How can you help? Pick up a Firewise form from the ranch office and log in the hours and money you spend in fire mitigation activities. (You may even qualify for a tax credit.) Turn your completed Firewise form in to the Ranch Manager or Administrative Bookkeeper and we will submit our efforts to continue our Firewise status.

What can you do? Clear dead trees and vegetation that provides fuel to a fire. Remove ignitable debris and vegetation for a 200-foot perimeter around your home. Respect and adhere to any fire bans as mandated from our state and local agencies. Do not burn slash (dried wood and vegetation) on your own property. Instead, take it to the burn pit right here on the Ranch. Learn more at Firewise.org or nfpa.org

If it seems like too much work you can take my approach; I hired fire mitigation help and they did all the heavy lifting. I provided cold drinks and gladly wrote them a check at the end. The result: a beautiful, cleared Aspen grove in my backyard and much less worry about my wildfire risk.



The Manager's Corner
by _____

Just an update from me, John Adams.

I am sitting here enjoying a cool April morning and I get to see robins, blue birds and all the normal winter birds. The Wyoming ground squirrels are starting to come up out of their dens and so are the bears. We had a report of a young bear out running around on the south end of the Ranch. Time to get the bird feeders put up, and remember that bears love trash and anything in your vehicle that smells like food.

The Burn pit: We had an excellent opportunity to get the burn pit done early this year, and it should open soon. We need to first have it pushed in and dressed up. Fortunately, we had a couple of volunteers offer their time for the whole last season on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9:00 – 12:00. If you would like to volunteer for a day or the season, please schedule that with the Ranch Manager.

The Reservoir: While it is currently iced over, as soon as it opens, we will call for a stocking of fish and then open it up to the members. Please remember to have your fishing permit on you while out there fishing and enjoying all the beauty that surrounds it.

RV Dump Station: It is currently open but there will be no water available for rinsing until the nights stay above freezing.

Very Soon we will have a New Manager, I look forward to helping him out as much as I can and then going back to retirement!

Help Us Use Your Dues Wisely!

The cost for printing, folding, and mailing the newsletter is already quite high and prices are increasing. To manage our budget more effectively we are exploring the option of an online only newsletter. To continue getting a printed newsletter mailed to you, please complete and mail back this form. If we do not receive this form by **June 1, 2022**, future newsletter links will be sent to the email address we have on file for you. Please be sure we have your updated email address. The ROTR newsletter is posted on our website at rotr.org and we can email a link to you whenever a new one is posted.

Name _____ Lot number(s)** _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

We want you to stay connected with the Ranch of the Rockies and could use your help in reducing some of these costs!
Many thanks.

****PLEASE KNOW YOUR LOT NUMBER(S)!** When communicating with the ranch office your lot number is the most efficient way for us to find your information in our database. You must provide your lot number when you contact the office by phone or email. Membership and voting rights are tracked by lot number!



RANCH OF THE ROCKIES ASSOC.
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