



# ***It's Winter!***



January 2020

**From your President and Secretary.....**

## *Welcome Winter 2020*

During this time of year, the Board takes time to catch up on “housekeeping chores.” Some of those chores involve reviewing and enforcing rules. As new purchasers, each of us must be given a copy of the HOA operating documents and rules or pointed in the direction of the documents on our website. Over time, it is easy to forget some of the rules that we all must abide by to continue to have the kind of community that we first bought into. We thought it might be helpful to highlight in this newsletter some of the rules that members have violated during the past year. Please read through these carefully and refer to our Policies and Procedures document on [www.rotr.org](http://www.rotr.org) and sign in as a member or go to the quick link for sellers and realtors. <http://www.rotr.org/documents/current-12-month-docs-for-sellers/>

Every year the Board is required to review all documents and update them as necessary to meet either new or modified state statutes or to address issues that our members bring to the Board. This documents review meeting is held in March each year, generally following the monthly board meeting held on the second Saturday of each month. Any member can present to the Board suggestions for changes or additions to the rules. We do ask that those suggestions be submitted in writing prior to the meeting, which members may attend. Any major changes other than changes required by state law will be presented to the members for approval. Here are the rules violated over the past year:

- **All annual dues** are due by the end of January each year regardless of when you purchased your lot. It is still only \$110 for the whole year. Members who have delinquent dues are considered members NOT in good standing. A hefty late fee will accumulate after March 31st of the current year and will continue to accumulate fines until paid.

**Please note: Members NOT in good standing lose all membership privileges including: the ability to drill a well or apply for a building permit, use of the trash compactor for household trash disposal, reservoir use, use of the common facilities, RV storage, and voting rights. These rights are restored when dues and fees are paid. If fees remain unpaid, the Board will place a lien on your property and contact our attorney for collection, which will include attorney fees. If a member has substantial unpaid dues, the Board may also request that the State Water Board issue a Cease and Desist order for the use of any well on the property.**

- **If you are planning to build** on your lot, please see the policy manual for the rules on building types and appearance. Architectural plans must be submitted and approved by the Architectural Committee before applying for a Park County Building permit for any and all structures on your lot. An architectural approval form can be accessed on the website and also includes tips and guidelines for how to proceed. This also has to be submitted if you are planning to change the exterior color of your house or adding any structure or modification to your house. Please note that according to Park County, a shed cannot be the first structure on a lot unless there is an active building permit approved and on file.
- **The entire Ranch development is zoned as residential.** However, camping is permitted on undeveloped lots, but only by the owner, and the owner must be present. This is both a County and Ranch rule. Camping is permitted from April 1 to November 1, after which a limited two-week winter camping permit must be obtained from the Ranch Manager. **Lots cannot be rented out for camping.** There are also strict human waste stipulations which prohibit dumping of human waste on lots. Human waste must be properly disposed of in the Ranch RV dump station at the pavilion or in a County-approved waste system or port-a-potty. See the manual for more information.

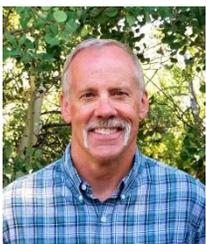


- **Burn Permits** must now be purchased before anyone can have an open fire of any type on their lot, regardless of whether it is an improved lot with a house or an unimproved lot. Permits can be purchased on line for \$10 or at the main Hartsel Fire station and requires notification any time an open fire will be used. No open fires of any type are allowed during a County-wide fire ban. This includes charcoal grills.
- **Trailers and vehicles** must be moved off your unimproved lots between November 1 and March 31. If you don't, you will be assessed a late fee of at least \$75 for the year, and you will lose your member privileges as noted in bold above. Exceptions are not made just because of an early snow. Plan ahead if you intend to rent a space in the RV lot. If it is full and snow covered, you will have to find alternative storage. While lots with homes on them are allowed year-round use and storage of trailers and RVs, Park County requires that no home have more than two trailers or RVs stored on lots at any one time.
- **Having the right to drill a well** is a benefit of every lot owner in good standing in Ranch of the Rockies. However, unless you have a well that specifies use for livestock, you are primarily limited to indoor water use only.
- **The appearance of our community** is important while we live here and when we plan to sell. For that reason:
  - Owners cannot remove living trees from their property unless the removal is part of an accepted fire or pest mitigation plan, or in the way of an approved building project.
  - No unlicensed or inoperative vehicles can be stored on any lot.
  - Trash and excessive debris and garbage are not allowed to accumulate to a degree that it impacts a healthy environment and the ability of neighbors to enjoy their lot.
- **Outdoor lighting** stipulations are outlined in the rules manual and enforced by both by the Ranch and the County to protect our beautiful night sky. Make sure your lights are not obtrusive, that they are fully shielded, and turned off overnight when not needed for walking outside.
- **No hunting** is allowed within the subdivision. No discharge of firearms is allowed except as may be needed for self-defense. This is Colorado law under Title 18 Criminal Code.



We know that our members want to protect our community's appearance and desirability. If you have a neighbor who you believe is in violation of our rules, please fill out a complaint form, found under forms on the website or pick one up at the Ranch Office. Your concern will be forwarded to the Rules Enforcement Committee and taken to the Board if further action is needed. We hope these reminders have been helpful. - **Mark Wefler and Dennis Ann Strong**

**Your HOA fees in perspective:** According to a 2008 article in the Denver Post, average HOA fees range from \$200 to \$400 a **month**, depending on the amenities they are supporting. The HOA fees at Ranch of the Rockies are currently \$110 a **year**, and give owners access to a trash compactor, a burn pit, the right to have a well, camper storage, recycling dumpsters, a pavilion and activities throughout the year. Even for owners of vacant lots, these amenities can come in handy.



**An unexpected pleasure.....**Just as the January board meeting was about to adjourn, County Commission Ray Douglas popped in for a visit. We invited him in and had a wonderful discussion about Ranch roads, which now look good but change with the weather conditions. We discussed the issues that we have heard about from members in person and on Next Door. He listened intently and respectfully. Then he offered what I believe was valuable advice: "While going to commissioners' meetings and speaking in the open mic segments is valued, if you can go and talk to the office supervisors who supervise the work that the Commissioners and departments have defined in the operating budget, you may get more immediate answers."

He went on to caution us that even when improvements are initially in the budget, they can change due to weather and budget demands from unpredicted severe weather. He's right. I remembered that some years we have heard that by March, CDOT had already fully expended its budget for plowing and putting down road gravel. Then they must reallocate funds to the highest priority. The lesson for me was that if we take time to speak with these professionals in our county in a non-confrontational but respectful manner, we might get good answers and be better served as a community.



# The Manager's Corner

by John Adams

Winter here on Ranch of the Rockies has been very good to us so far, keeping snow on the ground and allowing us to burn the burn pit!

**Christmas Party:** The Christmas party was a great success and everyone who attended had a good time. If you would like to see something different at the Christmas party, please contact your Member-at-Large, Niki Griffin, on the Board of Directors or come to one of the Board meetings.

**Getting stranded:** We are now going into the colder part of winter, and normally with that, we get wind. So far the drifting has not been that bad, but I encourage all of you who live here on the Ranch full-time to prepare for the wind events that are common to this area. Check your vehicles and make sure you have supplies for being stranded for long periods of time: survival gear, food and water, and a source of warmth (extra blankets or sleeping bags). Don't get caught in the storm without it.

**Campers on vacant lots:** Those of you that still have a camper on a vacant lot should have received a letter to remove it. November 1st was the deadline to have them off. At this point, you should just pay the fines because of the snow accumulation and drifting that has occurred. Your choice!



**Kudos to Fairplay:** As some of you know, the weather is very unpredictable up here, and there were a lot of travelers who were stranded between Kenosha Pass and Fairplay at the end of Thanksgiving week. EMS crews worked long hours rescuing them and bringing them back to town. As reported on the news, everyone in the town opened their homes, businesses, schools and hearts to provide shelter and food for these folks. Over two nights there were about one thousand stranded folks brought into Fairplay. I believe a hearty "Well Done!" is deserved, because that's what small towns do.

**Burn Permits:** Thinking ahead to warmer weather coming in the spring, I'm reminded that all paper burn permits need to be renewed using the online registration at [hfpd.burnpermits.com](http://hfpd.burnpermits.com). The annual cost is only \$10.00.

Let's enjoy the winter and welcome 2020 with open arms.

## From your Vice-president, Rich Mumm.....

I hope everyone is doing well and surviving the winter. I want to give a short update on one of the items that your Board is currently working on. We are moving toward having Ranch of the Rockies having Firewise USA certification. Firewise is a program that encourages local solutions for safety by involving homeowners in taking individual responsibility for protecting their homes from the risk of wildfire. It is co-sponsored by USDA Forest Service, US Department of the Interior, and National Association of State Foresters.



**FIREWISE USA<sup>®</sup>**  
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

It involves a three-pronged approach:

- Identifying the area for the Firewise program (Ranch of the Rockies)
- Obtaining a wildfire risk assessment
- Putting together a multi-year plan

We are in the very beginning of this process and will be passing on more information soon.



## From Chief Chris Tingle at Hartsel Fire. . . .

So far this winter, at Antero Reservoir it has hit -48; that's 48 below zero. This winter in general has been very cold, and I'm sure everyone who has a fireplace has been using it. **KEEP IT CLEAN.** Make sure your chimney pipe is clean along with the spark arrestor at the top of the pipe. Keep in mind the longer the pipe going to the outside, the more chance there is of it plugging up and causing a chimney fire. For those of you who have direct vent propane stoves, make sure the vent is clear and not plugged up with snow. With the wind we get around here, it could happen.

On another winter note, be prepared to be stranded. Winter is far from over; we still have plenty of snow coming. If you are out and about doing errands, have blankets and food in case the roads get bad enough that you're stuck for a few hours. Just be prepared. Here in the mountains of Colorado, the weather can change within minutes

You'll notice that we have gone totally online for the burn permit process. If you go to <https://hfpd.burnpermits.com>, you can create your burn permit there. You will also have to call the 855 number to let us know when you burn. The online process also allows the fire department to notify you when we put a burn ban on and when we lift it. It's just another way for the department to get information out to everyone.

As always, we need volunteers for the fire department and the auxiliary. If you have any questions please feel free to call at 719-836-3500. Hang in there. Summer will be here soon.



### **Ranch of the Rockies Assoc.**

492 Ranch Road  
Hartsel, CO 80449-8502  
USA

*Address Service Requested*

**STANDARD A  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 80449  
PERMIT NO 004**