

Our Pandemic Summer



July 2020



From your President Dennis Ann Strong.....

Annual Meeting and Picnic Saturday, August 8, 2020, 9:00 a.m.: What a crazy year 2020 has been so far! Just when I think things may be returning to some level of normal, another event or situation comes in, bringing different ways of thinking or acting. That is exactly what is happening with the Annual Meeting and community picnic at Ranch of the Rockies. I will explain how we think the meeting will go. In her article, Niki Griffin will explain about the picnic part of our gathering. These plans are based on the rules from the state and county regarding the corona virus and the health of our community. Watch our website and social media for updates.

Under current rules and guidelines for large, outdoor gatherings, masks are required when you cannot maintain a social distance of approximately 6 feet. This is important because we have many members who have fragile health conditions, or are in vulnerable age groups. We will gather at the Pavilion at 9:00 a.m. for registration and seat arrangements. **If you wish to bring a specific concern to the members, you must sign up during registration, and will be given three (3) minutes to speak at the microphone near the beginning of the meeting. Only members who have signed up will be recognized to speak.**

The picnic tables will be spread out to allow for social distancing. Tables seat about 6 people, so you may be able to sit with family or close friends with whom you already have established social interaction. **If not, please keep your mask on for the safety of others attending!**

Bring your own portable seating. We will use microphones to address the whole group, and the speakers will be arranged so you can hear them outside the pavilion. If you wish to ask a question during the meeting, **wear your mask and go to the microphone stand.** This is the only way we can ensure that all can hear and still maintain social distances. As in years past, we will have several guest speakers with updates for our members, including information on our new Firewise Community education.

Please vote: HOA members will elect two board members at the meeting. The candidates will speak early in the meeting; and voting will close shortly thereafter. **If, because of health concerns, members decide not to attend, they can vote before the meeting. Vote for two of the candidates or assign your proxy to the Board. Drop the ballot by the office or mail it to the office. It must be received by August 7, 2020. Even in this crazy year, your vote is very important!**

From your Secretary, Mark Wefler.....

In March, the Board held the annual documents review meeting. Several changes and additions were proposed to our Policies, Procedures and Rules document. You should become familiar with that. The proposed 2020 changes have been posted to the Ranch website at www.rotr.org for members to review. There is also a quick link to the document in my June 20th monthly update summarizing the changes. Members can comment on the changes by emailing rorahoa@ghvalley.net with the subject 2020 PPR Comments.



FROM YOUR TREASURER, GARY D. WOIRHAYE...

Outstanding dues: Over the past year we have worked with many members to help them catch up with the HOA dues. We have been able to negotiate several contracts for monthly payments. Last year we collected just over \$64,000 in past dues. The primary reason we collect dues is for the upkeep of the reservoir and the ranch.



Our reservoir: We have to report to Denver Water and the State on water that goes in and out. The reservoir has a liner to prevent water seepage. It has a 25-year life span, which we have exceeded. We are obligated to keep a repair fund of about \$500,000 against replacement of the liner, which is estimated to cost around \$1,000,000. Currently, our CD's and money markets just about get to the \$500,000 mark. That liner will need to be replaced in the not so distant future.

Other dues expenditures: We have also had to spend about \$18,000 this year to repair flood damage to the Buffalo Creek inlet from the Weston Pass Fire two years ago. As your Treasurer, I will do everything I can to make the right investments to ensure that we have the money for the reservoir and all repairs in the future.

Why You Should Know and Care About the Ranch of the Rockies Water Augmentation Plan

All Colorado water augmentation plans, including ours, are required by State law to replace stream depletions caused by well pumping. In 1965, House Bill 1066 was passed and gave the State Engineer the authority to evaluate the use of ground water and deny a well permit. Then in 1969 the Colorado General Assembly enacted the Water Rights Determination and Administration Act which, among other things, introduced the concept of plans for water augmentation. These plans allow for water diversions by replacing the water a new well owner consumes. This replacement water must meet the needs of senior water rights holders.

Before the Ranch of the Rockies Association (RORA) existed, the community was developed and platted as Western Union Ranch (W.U.R.) in the early 1970s by the real estate arm of the Western Union Corporation. At that time, in order for a developer to subdivide an area and sell residential building lots in Park County, Colorado, one of the requirements was that a Water Augmentation plan (mentioned above) had to be engineered and submitted to the Colorado Water Court for approval prior to any sales. The original RORA water augmentation plan was applied for on the last day of 1975 and approved in August of 1977. Since then, there have been eight legal decrees modifying the plan in various ways.

Originally RORA and Campground of the Rockies (CORA) were one entity. Then in the early 1980s, Western Union Real Estate decided to separate them, so an agreement (which runs to June 30, 2035) was worked out to share the Buffalo Creek Reservoir and the water augmentation plan. Through the following years, various decrees changed the number of lots (and the number of wells) from 2167 to 1501 in RORA, and provided augmentation rights for 2,246 horses on RORA. So far, we are augmenting for about 30 or 40 horses, so we should be fine for quite a while.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s there were several issues affecting RORA and how the augmentation plan was being administered. RORA paid a water engineering firm to put the procedure for the annual report into a written format that we must follow to maintain the plan. Since that time, we have reported annually and worked with the Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR) to ensure that we remain in good standing. This annual report is one of the primary responsibilities of the HOA and one of the main reasons we have an HOA.

R.O.R.A. is required to prepare and submit extensive reports to the District 1 Commissioner each year. These reports include such things as the water level of the reservoir at certain times, number of residences, and the number of horses on the Ranch along with the appropriate calculations to determine our water consumption.



The ROTR's water augmentation plan allows for basically two kinds of well permits:

- Household use only, which means water use only within the walls of a home
- Household use with the addition of 1000 square feet of outside irrigation

RORA is only allowed 230 well permits allowing outdoor water use. A third type of usage in the augmentation plan allows for the outside watering of a horse on both types of wells. If you are unsure of which well permit type you have, please contact Tom or Clay at rorahoa@ghvalley.net

Bottom line: Translating the legalese, the plan says if we violate the water augmentation plan, we can lose our water rights, which could mean forfeiting the right to have wells, even those already in use.



The Manager's Corner

by John Adams

Time to Say Goodbye.....



Summer is here, and I see a lot of folks and their families getting out to enjoy the mountains. I have lived here for just about 10 years, and I can tell you these have been some of the most enjoyable years of my life. After ten years as Ranch Manager, it is time for me to move on and retire. I would truly like to thank all of you for your kindness and support to both me and my wife over these years, and another thanks to all the volunteers who have stepped up when I needed them. You guys are the lifeblood of RORA. Working at Ranch of the Rockies is the most rewarding job I have ever had. After all, where else can you mend fences and mingle with the wildlife? Living in the mountains has taught me how to be humble, and to respect the spirit of people that make it work every day.

I am not going far. I will be living on the Ranch and may see you from time to time; but for now I just need to retire and take it easy. It is with a very heavy heart that I leave this position, but I know that the Board of Directors will hire the right person for the job. In

closing, thank you to all the board members I have served with; and thank you for your support while I was in the hospital. So long everybody! Live at peace while you are up here in God's country, and enjoy your time here.

FROM YOUR MEMBER-AT-LARGE, NIKI GRIFFIN....

Our 2020 RORA (Pandemic) Meeting and Picnic:

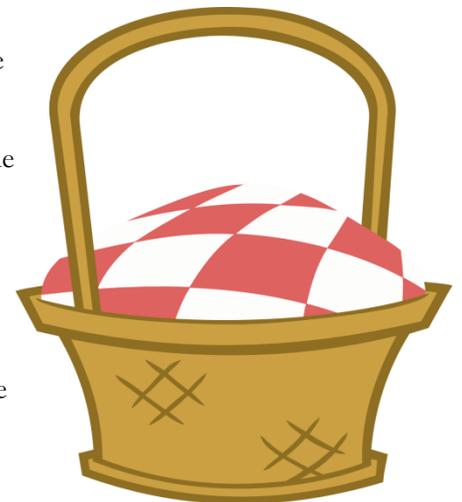
Our president outlined the particulars for the Annual meeting so we will focus here on a very important part of the day: Lunch!

Well, lunch will look a bit different this year. Instead of bringing a dish that is for all attending to enjoy, we are going to be focused on your personal safety by eliminating the food lines and taking the picnic lunch to the table level. Tables will be distanced apart with maximum seating of 6 at each table. You'll still bring a dish to share, but this year your dish will be intended for those at your table. The look and feel will be much like the BV Strong dinner for those that have attended.

The Ranch will provide the meat, plates, service, drinks, and appropriate bread or buns. We have so many new residents here at the Ranch this year. Please be sure to get to know them from a respectful distance.

It is important that we follow all state and county recommended safety precautions while attending this event. The health of all residents is paramount. You will be asked to wear your mask and we will be physically distancing during the meeting.

More details will be provided on our RORA website, Nextdoor, Facebook (Ranch of the Rockies Community), and information posted on the bulletin board at the trash compactor. As the event nears, we will update information for any changes in conditions or state and county restrictions. This should not impact our ability to have fun! See you there.





From the Hartsel Fire Protection District. . . .

There is currently a Burn Ban in effect at this time.

The following acts are **PROHIBITED** on **ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY** until further notice:

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire, including charcoal
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials
3. Operating motorized vehicles off designated roads or trails
4. Blasting, welding or other activities which generate flame or flammable material
5. Fireworks and model rocketry
6. Target shooting and recreational shooting
7. Operating a chain saw without a 10lb ABC or 2 ½ gallon pressurized or equivalent fire extinguisher, and large size pointed shovel readily available for quick use



Ranch of the Rockies Assoc.

492 Ranch Road
Hartsel, CO 80449-8502
USA

Address Service Requested

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