

Cedar Mesa Ranches - HOA Newsletter

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PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

I would like to thank everyone for your support this past year. It certainly has been very challenging in many ways but we have accomplished a great deal. We met three of our goals this year, revising the Covenants and By-laws, increasing the dues and upgrading our roads. Our roads are in better condition and we could not have done it without the dues increase. Our road plan is on task and for this next year we have specific goals to make them even better. Your support has been invaluable to the Board. This Board has worked very hard to meet all our challenges and I thank them for their hard work and effort.

TREASURER'S REPORT

This has been a year of struggling to collect the dues increase. In the end, only 2 properties have liens placed on them. I thank everyone for making the effort to get their dues paid. With the new guidelines for dues payment this coming year, things should run more smoothly.

CEDAR MESA UPDATE

Local Activities

Winter is here and many of us enjoy the variety of winter activities available in this area.

Skiing

Our area is rich in ski resources for either cross-country or downhill skiing. Telluride is just a little over an hour drive away and has both advanced and intermediate slopes. We are a little short on snow in our immediate area but when the snow decides to finally arrive, the Hesperus ski area is a good place to start with the kids. They have snow tubing for the younger ones.

Cross-country trails abound from our local Chicken Creek trail to a variety of choices around the Lizard Head area. We have local sports stores that have both the current information and any equipment you would need.

Snow shoeing is also a wonderful way to exercise and enjoy the pristine beauty of snow. You can go off trail and enjoy this sport in your own backyard – with the availability of snow.

Snowmobiles are available for rent near Telluride and provide even a different view of the country.

Hiking is still available in the lower elevations with Sand Canyon still a good bet year around or moving further into the beautiful canyons of Utah.

Mesa Verde gets a fair amount of snow and is available to ski or snowshoe.

There are many organized activities and clubs (such as senior outdoors), which arrange local activities for people of any age.

Local Issues

Many people moving into the community are new to Colorado and are unfamiliar with the local and state laws, which govern our use of public lands and the wildlife, which live in it. Since our community borders public land it is important that we become familiar with its various laws and ordinances. There are fines associated with the violation of these regulations and we do not want to be seen as a community, which ignores these statutes.

Following are a few examples of laws that we need to be aware of:

The Use and Misuse of Public Land

Unfortunately we have recently found that people were coming into our development and cutting trees on the public land behind us. They left a terrible mess and cut live trees, which is illegal in Colorado. Colorado law states that there can be no cutting of live trees on both

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Forest Service and BLM land without first obtaining a permit. It is wise for everyone who uses public land to understand and abide by local and state regulations. There are fine for violators. To receive more information about the laws pertaining to public use of BLM and forest service land you can go to www.lnt.org or www.blm.gov that will provide specific information.

DO NOT FEED DEER!

It is illegal in Colorado to intentionally place or distribute feed, salt blocks or other attractants for big-game animals. This problem is mainly associated with deer.

In the winter, deer herds tend to move to lower elevations closer to homes and businesses. Some people may feel the deer do not have adequate food sources in the wintertime and believe that supplementing their diets with grain, corn or hay is helpful. In fact, the contrary is true.

Feeding deer is illegal, and can be dangerous for the deer. "People who feed deer do more harm than good," said Trina Lynch, a district wildlife manager with the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

According to Lynch, there are several reasons why a Colorado law passed in 1992 makes it illegal to feed big game animals. One important reason is that deer are the primary prey of mountain lions. "Concentrating deer by feeding can attract mountain lions well within the city limits. It may become necessary to kill these lions for public safety," she said.

The normal feeding behavior of big game animals allows them to spread out as they graze or browse. Artificial feeding disrupts that behavior and prompts deer to crowd together in small areas where they are more likely to be chased by dogs and hit by cars.

Deer have a complex digestive system that is not adapted to digest bread and many types of hay. "Habituation to artificial feeds that do not meet their nutritional needs often results in deer that are in poor condition," explains Bob Davies, a wildlife biologist in Colorado Springs. (Concentrating deer by putting food out can also increase stress on the deer and hasten the spread of disease.)

Although commercial feeds are available at many stores, Division of Wildlife biologists warns against using them. "Some of these products may indicate they will attract certain wildlife species, including deer," said Davies.

"People should be aware that if they place feed out, and deer consume it, they may be breaking the law." Fortunately, once people learn about the negative impacts that occur when deer are fed, most stop doing it," he said. "The few people that continue to feed cause problems for the deer and their neighbors," he added.

People who attract deer to their neighborhood also run the risk of damaging their property and their neighbor's property. "Some people are under the impression that if they supply a food source to the deer it will prevent the deer from damaging their ornamental plants. On the contrary," said Lynch; "it usually results in greater damage to your plants." Lynch recommends barriers, repellents and landscaping with native plants as more effective alternatives to prevent deer from causing damage to lawn and garden projects.

The Division of Wildlife launches controlled, emergency feeding of big-game animals only during extremely harsh winters when substantial numbers of animals are threatened. In all other cases, big-game animals are better off left to obtain their food naturally.

And most importantly – it is illegal and you will be fined.

UPDATES

Please note that the current means of communicating updates is through the minutes of the Board of Director meetings. Minutes are emailed to those that have it and sent via regular email to others. If you do not receive them, please contact Ruth Bignell.

◆ **Road Update**

The roadwork is continuing according to schedule. Please consult your minutes for specific details.

◆ **Increase in Dues**

As you are aware by now, the membership voted for an increase in dues to \$450 per year. Thank you for your support in helping keep our roads up to standard (and bringing sub-standard work up to where it needs to be). Without this increase in dues it was a losing battle in both repairing and maintaining our roads appropriately. The dues will be utilized to both increase and maintain the value of our property for everyone.

◆ **Fire/Burning**

We had a little "fire storm" ourselves while dealing with the issue of burning the slash left from dead pines. While many opinions and how the law reads were presented during this discussion there is a bottom line that we, as a community need to follow. Quite simply: *follow the law and use common sense.* In Montezuma

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County, you should report a controlled burn before even starting. However, even after legally following the steps, please be critically aware of your responsibility in conducting a controlled burn. We live in an extremely high-risk area and a fire can burn out of control in a matter of seconds both jeopardizing your own property and the property of your neighbors. And you may be liable for damage to a neighbor's property should that happen. Just recently the governor of Colorado issued a ban on controlled burns in the National Forest due to the high risk conditions we are now experiencing. It has also been local news of many control burns, which have grown out of control in the past few months. The lack of normal moisture is creating a problem both locally and state wide.

A few simple steps can help you avoid getting into trouble while burning in this area.

1. Be sure to report that you will be burning on your property. This way you can get information on conditions and what you need to do to comply with local status.
2. Have a **very** good water source available.
3. Burn when the wind is as low as possible. Wind can carry sparks for miles.
4. Make a secure fire area where the fire is contained – in a dug out area if possible.
5. Do not leave your fire until it is completely out. Use water to quench your fire. Smoldering is one of the major contributors of Forrest fires.
6. Use common sense and ask your neighbors for help if you need it. We all want to keep our community as safe as possible
7. Do not burn when a fire ban is on.

◆ Covenants and By-laws

The Covenants and By-laws were revised and passed in November. The Committee should be applauded for their efforts. Copies of the documents were sent to realtors in the Cortez, Dolores and Durango area for their use in selling property in this subdivision.

◆ Weeds and Trees

Several property owners are clearing their property of dead trees and creating defensive space around the new home they are building.

◆ Building Advisory Committee

This committee continues to help new property owners with their house designs. Submitting plans to this committee is voluntary and for the sole purpose of making sure they are within the covenants in their design of their home. This committee also monitors possible covenant violations within the subdivision.

◆ Web Site

Please utilize our web site. Nick Bird has been wonderful in helping us create and maintain this valuable

site. With participation of the membership it will provide an excellent venue in posting items of interest to the entire membership. The address is www.cedarmesarancheshoa.org

Newsletter

If anyone has an interesting article or news to put our next newsletter, please email Ruth Bignell at biggyr02@aol.com or mail to 10208 Road 35, Mancos, CO 81328. We would also love a volunteer to take over some of the newsletter duties. If you have some spare time please contact Nancy Schaufele at nschaufele@frontier.net or Ruth at the above address.

Activities and Grounds Committee

Welcome to the new Activity and Grounds Committee. Actually a few of us got together to see what we could do to help our neighbors come together with some common goals in mind. We have discussed a number of possibilities from neighborhood functions to the “upgrading and enhancement” of our front entrance. We’re looking into a neighborhood project to do some planting and xeroscaping to make the entrance more attractive. We would love some input or energy into this effort. If you are interested in becoming involved call Ruth Bignell (564-5964), Cheryl Broadhagen (565-4906) or Nancy Schaufele (565-8385). We may have a neighborhood work day in which case we will be contacting you by phone or posting a notice at the front entrance.

IN THE “HOOD”

Thanks for the fun

- Jim and Ruth did a wonderful job hosting our Christmas party. Ruth went above and beyond with her cookie swap (which ruined everyone's diets). Thanks for all your dedication Jim and Ruth.

Get Well Soon

- Janice Johnson is recovering from surgery in December.
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Key Phone Numbers

Sheriff - Emergency	911
Fire/Ambulance	911
Assessor's Office	565-3428
Sheriff – Non Emergency	565-8452, option 1
Blue Stake – Locate	800-922-1987 (Allow 2 days)
Montezuma Water	882-2226
Empire Electric	565-4444
Mancos Post Office	533-7754

ADDRESS CHANGES

Since we are providing much of our information via email, please notify us of any address changes or changes in ownership of your lots so we can make the appropriate correction in our database.

In order to save postage, we would like to email the minutes to as many as possible. Currently, we have 44 that we send by mail.

You should all be receiving the monthly Board meeting minutes via e-mail. If you are not, please let us know.

Email Ruth Bignell at biggyr02@aol.com