[www.deervalleyestates.net](http://www.deervalleyestates.net)

# 2023 President’s Annual Report to the Owners

The President’s Annual Report is written and distributed to Owners in advance of the Annual Meeting, rather than verbally delivered and then included in the Annual Meeting minutes. This practice is to recognize that monthly Board meeting minutes are now distributed via email so those who choose may already know what has been happening. This is intended to shorten the Annual Meeting, but in no way cut off discussion of anything Owners wish to discuss in an open forum – either at the Annual Meeting or any regular monthly Board meeting. The meeting will be held at the Bayfield Lions Club on Saturday August 5, 2023. There will be a potluck lunch beginning at 11:45 AM followed by the business meeting at 1 PM. Due to lack of internet service, there won’t be an option of a Zoom meeting.

This report covers the past year (August 2022 – July 2023) and discusses the major happenings that may be of interest to property Owners. Again, this year much has been happening to improve Deer Valley and keep it in the forefront of premier places to live in southwest Colorado.

**New Owners**

Of our 84 lots, five have changed hands since last summer. We would like to extend a special welcome to all our new Owners. Two new homes have been built within DVE; both are nearing completion.

**Fire Mitigation Continues**

Residing within a Wildland Urban Interface comes with some unique risks not generally found in other parts of the County. One such risk is the ever-present threat of wildfire. Wildfire is an event nature uses to enhance the overall health of our forests. Fire removes dead, diseased, and overgrown vegetation, which in turn provides nutrients for new growth and improved wildlife habitat. It is impossible to prevent wildfires from impacting communities in the Wildland Urban Interface; as such, homeowners need to learn to live with that ever-changing environment without increasing the risk or subjecting their homes to increased level of threat

In 2009, Deer Valley Estates (DVE) completed and gained approval of our Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). It was one of the first in southwest Colorado and the first in La Plata County. Because of the CWPP, and the fire mitigation work that began along our roads, we received national recognition as a Firewise Communities USA program in 2010, which is part of the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA). A sign on the front gate acknowledges our continued recognition and annual compliance.

That, coupled with the United States Forest Service (USFS) prescribed burn around DVE in the fall of 2014 and 2018 plus major mechanical mitigation directly across Hwy 160 from DVE, has greatly reduced our wildfire risk. Many Owners have assisted in this effort in numerous ways, but special thanks go to Les Kole for his tireless efforts writing and updating the CWPP, writing grant requests, coordinating the mitigation activity with DVE Owners, and attending Wildfire Adapted Partnership (formerly Firewise of Southwest Colorado) as our representative since 2006. We can all be proud of this recognition. Even more important is the significant mitigation that we achieved in DVE. It truly provides a safer, more defensible environment for everyone in the event of a wildfire in our area.

Fire mitigation is not a one and done type of thing. Your defensible space needs to be maintained. Defensible space is the**buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surround it**. This space is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and it helps protect your home from catching fire—either from embers, direct flame contact or radiant heat. We have all put time and effort into protecting our homes from wildfire, let’s not let that go to waste! Maintaining your defensible space is an every year type of maintenance that needs to be completed. If you need assistance in determining how to maintain your defensible space, or need assistance fire mitigation on your property, please do not hesitate to contact Les Kole or myself who can put you in the right direction.

In spring 2022, the U. S. Forest Service began a multi-year project of logging in 300/400-acre units surrounding DVE in the Saul’s Creek area. This coming winter they intend to burn the slash piles and oak brush when there is snow on the ground. This project is another important measure that the U.S. Forest Service is doing to help mitigate a large catastrophic wildfire in our area.

**Road Maintenance**

We did not perform any road maintenance in 2022 due to the ongoing fiber project, moving the budgeted monies into our savings account. This year we combined two years (2022 and 2023) of road maintenance into one big project that took place in May. The road work in May saw all of our roads touched in some way. From grading on the smaller roads (Spur Lane, Stagecoach Road and Log Cabin Road) to full scale refurbishment of Beaver Creek Drive, Wieland Drive, Elk Valley Road and Sawmill Circle.

Thank you to the members of the Road Maintenance Committee: Michael Blankenship (chairperson), Bryan Ferguson, John Beebe and Les Kole. The committee, under Michael’s direction, spent many hours planning and executing the road maintenance work. Our roads are all in great condition!

To help maintain our roadways, please mind your speed. Remember our roads are used by owners walking, riding bicycles, ATVs, and UTVs, there are also several blind spots so please **SLOW DOWN**!

Improved and additional signage will be seen popping up in limited sight distance areas. We will also audit and perform maintenance on our signage currently in place, refinishing/restoring the original DVE street signs inclusive as part of the sign maintenance efforts.

**Fencing**

We continue to maintain areas of the fence that need repairs from wildlife, trees or cattle damage. Thank you to all of the lot owners who helped check our perimeter fencing in May and to those who helped make repairs.

**Mailboxes Project**

Thank you to the following:

1. Karl Schreiber (former resident) for getting the project started and procuring two new sets (of the five) mailbox units from the Bayfield Post Office ***at no cost to DVE***. And thanks to all of those who met at the DVE entrance to plan the project and the layout.

2. Michael Blankenship for all of his time spent drawing, redrawing, redrawing again and more redrawing (several times) of the plans to reach the final layout.

3. Those that helped with the excavation, picked up supplies needed, set up the concrete forms and the concrete pour/finish of the pad: Bryan Ferguson, Chris Gober, Michael Blankenship, John Beebe, Les Kole and Paul Romere,

4. Those that helped with the install of the new mailboxes: All of the above and Bill Swapp, Tom Angevine, Connie Blankenship (went for Subway for the workers),

5. Those who helped the day of transition from old mailboxes (that were removed) to the new mailboxes: all of the above, again, **AND** our Postal Mail Carriers Angie and Breck.

6. Thanks to Michael Blankenship and Paul Romere for the refurbishment, and installation, of the old parcel boxes. They look so much better than before!

7. Thanks to Rich Berryman for helping to install the three posts to the right of the new mailboxes. This will ensure that no one drives off of the roadway into the "ditch" during the winter season.

We will put the finishing touches on the mailboxes project this fall; installing the protective bollards, removing the old concrete patch and performing asphalt repair.

**Newspaper Boxes Project:**

Thank you to Paul Romere (for his original drawing), Michael Blankenship and John Beebe for planning all of the facets of this project from conception to design and installation.

**High Speed Internet**

Thank you to John Beebe and Les Kole who spent a TON of time from the physical start in early 2022 to the completion in September/October 2022. That does not include all of the time spent to get the project to the actual install start date.

**The DVE Website**

Thank you to Jerry Libit for all of his time spent on maintaining the DVE website ([www.deervalleyestates.net](http://www.deervalleyestates.net)). Jerry has worked to refresh and add to the website. By the time of the Annual Meeting, there will be a new “Resident Resources” tab that will contain information and web links for both new and existing residents. This will be very comprehensive and will be a great place to go for owners that are seeking out information pertaining to property ownership in DVE.

**Financial Affairs**

We entered our 2022-2023 fiscal year with a $3,929.60 carryover from the previous year and the road work monies in savings. We added 3% of our operating budget to the Reserve Fund which currently totals $26,843.44. This is reduced from last year’s total due to the capital expenditures of the mailboxes/newspaper boxes project. We were well over budget on our snowplowing this year due to the very heavy, snowy winter. We spent $22,605.00 on snowplowing.

Our Waste Management contract that went into effect on January 1, 2023 will result in a $3.00/month ($36.00/year) increase in trash fees beginning October 1, 2023. This is because of a 16% cost increase in 2023, and a 10% increase in 2024 and 2025. This amount will be included with your annual assessment notification that you will receive towards the end of August.

There is **NO** increase in our annual assessment, only trash fees.

**DVE Board of Directors Positions**

We have three vacancies to be filled on our Board of Directors this year. One Owner has submitted their statement of qualifications – Michael Blankenship. Michael’s Statement of Qualifications is attached for your review. Please feel free to reach out to Michael if you have questions for him and remember to turn in your ballot.

This will leave two Board vacancies after the August Annual Meeting. Please put some thought into volunteering to help with the administrative and management part of the Property Owners’ Association. If you are interested, please contact me and I can visit with you on the time required and an overview of the Board responsibilities. It would be great to have some of the newer property owners involved.

**Secretary Position**

We are still looking for one of our owners to volunteer to be the Secretary. In past years the Secretary had a large number of duties assigned to them. The Board has worked to reduce that workload to recording of the minutes of Board and Annual meetings and maintaining the Property Owner’s lists and the Google Groups email list. If you are interested in this position and have questions, please don’t hesitate to contact one of the Board members.

**Comments**

In conclusion, thank you all for a great year and being patient during the road maintenance project! Hopefully, you have found some of this information helpful. We are having our monthly meetings in person and have a Zoom option. You are always welcome to join any of our meetings. If you have questions, concerns or issues, please bring them to any Board member’s attention before the meeting so we can research them and provide appropriate answers. We hope that you will join us for our Annual Meeting and meet your neighbors!

Respectfully,

Mark Wagner - President