

Introduction

Your Board has approved the writing of a monthly article aimed at sharing with you experiences, observations and tips on living at Wildwood Recreational Village. Some of you use your property occasionally for day use, many with seasonal RVs, and about thirty-five have permitted homes with Certificates of Occupancy. Unfortunately many of you live in areas that prohibit you from using your property frequently and being able to take advantage of the many wonderful opportunities that abound at Wildwood.

For example, Faye and I have had our property since 1980 and a home that we built by ourselves, since 1985. We have never seen a more beautiful fall than this one. It started dipping below thirty-two degrees at night the first week in September with the days still in the low seventies. We had an occasional rain, once an inch fell in one day and night. That was rare and really helped the grass, wildflowers and trees. So fall came on slowly and awarded us with the most magnificent burst of fall colors that we have seen in twenty eight years. Most of the occasional users left after Labor Day and may have missed this annual event of color.

But this event is the signal that cold weather and winter will soon arrive. Now is the time that winterizing your units is paramount. We have had several different types of RVs continuously in addition to our home so we have a fair amount of experience with winterizing and the problems that resulted if we missed anything. For example, once we inadvertently left the shower valve on that normally drains automatically when you shut the shower off. We drained all of the water out of the system, poured our pink RV antifreeze in all the drain traps. Then drained our washing machine, siphoned out the toilet and poured RV antifreeze in them. Everything appeared to be perfect until we turned the water on in the spring. The shower pipe had burst inside the wall and we had water running out on the floor. We can't be too careful in our winterizing efforts. We have wonderful summers but it frequently dips to minus thirty degrees in the winter. It is easy to overlook things, like draining your water filters, any low spots in your lines, waste water traps, water heaters, removal of all liquids in containers that could swell and break such as soaps and cleaning supplies. If you leave batteries in your RVs they should be well charged to survive the extreme cold. Take them inside or home if possible. It will extend their life. Don't over look having adequately protected your motorized equipment. For example you should drain all gas tanks that are stored and or stabilize the gas with a stabilizer such as Stabil. I overlooked leaving some gas in my log splitter a few years back. It varnished up the carburetor and cost far more to correct than a small bottle of Stabil.

There is one other winterizing **must do**. Field mice and pack rats are ubiquitous at Wildwood. They can slip through any hole down to quarter size and from experience can do

considerable damage over a winter. We have tried many things to plug holes. Caulk if you can. However, some holes can't be plugged permanently. Slide outs on RVs nearly always have small cracks that let in the rodents. The best way to stop this is to plug up any known or suspected cracks with steel wool. Take a light after dark and shine up in suspected areas either from the outside or inside with someone observing from the inside or outside. Under the dashboard of motor homes are particularly difficult. I will cover rodent control in more detail in a future article. I'm sure many of you have already experienced damage from rodents.

Some of the areas I will be covering in future articles are: water resources management; power, solar and commercial; environmental planning; construction/contractor availability; tax structure; erosion control; fire protection and control; communications; PIKE National Forest opportunities, wood cutting permits and more; fun activities; emergency/safety; area recreation and interests; area insects; wildlife; birding; Colorado Bluebird House Project; Planting flowers and grass at 9500 feet elevation; outdoor cooking; and any other areas that you request that I cover. I look forward to hearing from you with requests and/or comments and hope that my articles will be helpful to both our new and older residents.

Del Bills is a 28 year Wildwood resident; past Board president; liaison with the state water engineer and district water commissioner; was instrumental in extending power through filings one and two; electrical engineer; long time Boy Scout master; a pioneering boyhood heritage with an intense interest in nature. You can contact him at www.delbertbills127@msn.com.