


The Ridge Rambler

President's Message

Wow, fall came quickly this year! We may still have a few warm days pop up, but it seems, at least to me, that we went from hot to cool really fast. Although I am saddened by the shorter days, I do love autumn. UT football, sweater weather, and the colors we can see from our porch — what's not to love?

Your new board is hard at work. The fall cookout is on the calendar (which sadly, I will miss because we will be out of town) and the fall cleanup day will be scheduled soon. All committees are working, and our two new board members, Michael Gass and Keith Shuster, are up to speed and great additions to the team. We appreciate the feedback we receive from all of you, and your good ideas! Don't hesitate to email me, or any of us, if you have questions, concerns, or good thoughts about ways we can help make Saddle Ridge an even better place to live.

You may have noticed Hugh Pearson working on the gate lately. He is doing a great job of keeping it working for us as efficiently and for as long as possible. As you can imagine, gate repairs are expensive, and replacement would be far more so. We appreciate Hugh being so willing to spend his time and expertise for our benefit. Thanks, Hugh!

If the acorns in our woods are an indicator, this is going to be a great year for mast for the bears. That often means more cubs born, so we may see our bear population increase next year. Take this as an early reminder — they are fun to see but they are wild animals who can hurt you, especially if you get too close or between a mother and her cubs. Enjoy them safely from a distance!

Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas — I love our fall/winter holidays! Then comes the long winter of hunkering down, especially here in Saddle Ridge. I've been told from someone who reads the "signs" — things like the height of spider webs and the fuzz on woolly worms — that this might be a mild winter. That would bring no complaints from me! Whatever comes, we're blessed to live here, where we have both beauty and wonderful neighbors who look out for each other.

Enjoy the fall and the holidays, and if you travel, be safe!

—Janet Kolarik, President

Fall Cookout



The fall cookout was a lot of fun. There were over 40 in attendance and the weather was great. Big thanks to Dale and Karen Richardson for helping set up and especially for taking care of the fire. Everyone brought delicious side dishes and desserts to go with our hot dog roast. It was nice to reconnect with long-time neighbors and meet new members of Saddle Ridge.

—Beth Koella, Chair of Events Committee

Road Report

Fall is here! Hopefully that will help cut down on the dust. Mowing and other trimming has begun; you may've seen the signs already.

Speed limits! The speed limit is 20 miles per hour throughout the community. The slower you go, the less impact you'll have on the roads (like contributing to washboarding). And, of course, please use extra caution on sharp curves and hills. Please be considerate of your fellow community members. We're all neighbors here.

Road glue. The Road Committee is investigating a road fixative that could help us make our roads more durable and reduce the need for frequent grading and addition of new rock, and a related product to help with dust. To be clear, it might work out, it might not! It might be great but cost too much, or just not work for us, I don't know yet. But if you see something that looks like a water truck watering the road, that's probably what it is.

Let me know if you have any road problems or requests. Text, email, or even (gasp) call. 813-765-5537, larry@theclapp.org.

Thank you, and please drive carefully!

— Larry Clapp, Chair of Roads Committee

Treasurer's Report

Saddle Ridge Property Owners Association
Budget Variance Analysis

	<u>FIRST QTR</u>	<u>F/Y 2023 BUDGET</u>	<u>OVER/UNDER</u>
Operating Inflows			
SRPOA Assessments			
Current	\$75,599	\$85,200	\$9,601
In Arrears	839		-839
In Advance	0		0
Other - Road Fees	1,500		-1,500
Total Operating Inflows	<u>77,938</u>	<u>85,200</u>	<u>7,262</u>
Operating Outflows			
Road Committee			
Road Maintenance	9,950	50,000	40,050
Leaf Blowing / Vegetation Removal		1,500	1,500
Gate Operations		1,000	1,000
Special Projects		7,500	7,500
Environment Committee			
Garbage Operations	2,250	10,000	7,750
Lawn Mowing	900	2,000	1,100
Special Projects		2,000	2,000
Equipment Committee			0
Equipment: Fuel and Maintenance		10,000	10,000
Purchases		3,500	3,500
Events Committee			
Annual Meeting	200	300	100
Other Group Activities		300	300
Other Non-Committee Outflows			
Legal	0	5,000	5,000
Telephone	337	1,400	1,063
Electricity	265	1,000	735
Accounting and Reporting	137	500	363
Miscellaneous	155	500	345
Insurance	0	1,650	1,650
Property Taxes	397	450	53
Total Operating Outflows	<u>14,592</u>	<u>98,600</u>	<u>84,008</u>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	<u>\$63,346</u>	<u>-\$13,400</u>	<u>-\$76,746</u>
		<u>7/1/22</u>	<u>09/30/22</u>
Cash		\$36,612	\$99,958
Certificates of Deposit		\$32,585	\$32,587
Total Cash Holdings		<u>\$69,197</u>	<u>\$132,545</u>

— Sally Whelan, Treasurer

High Speed Internet in Saddle Ridge

Kind of. Maybe. Sometimes.

by Larry Clapp

[I am not affiliated with Starlink or SpaceX and none of the below information is definitive or guaranteed, by me or by the Saddle Ridge POA. These are my own experiences with the service and my own opinions as a private citizen, outside of my capacity on the Board of the POA. I do not get a commission on sales or even a discount on referrals.]

We recently got Starlink. If you're not familiar, Starlink is a satellite-based Internet service for rural areas using a new fleet of very-low orbit satellites, by a sister company of SpaceX. We put down a deposit in March of '21; at the time, Starlink said it might be available mid-to-late '21. Then it was early '22. Then it was late '22. Now it's mid-'23. It's *still* not fully rolled out, but they *are* offering what they're calling a "Best Effort" tier of service. (Or at least, they offered it to us.)

What the heck is "Best Effort"?

Best Effort is sort of "Starlink lite". Their regular "Residential" tier of service is supposed to be 50-200 Mbps; their "Best Effort" tier is 5-100 Mbps. "Mbps" means "megabits per second", and is the term networking geeks use to talk about bandwidth. 8 megabits per second is approximately 1 megabyte per second. Even if you don't know what any of that means, you can still see that 5-100 Mbps is 2-10x slower than 50-200 Mbps.

You can read more here: <https://www.starlink.com/legal/documents/DOC-1002-69942-69>.

So Best Effort is slower. Theoretically. Sometimes. What they really mean is just that Residential data is prioritized over Best Effort data.

It turns out that that can still be pretty good! In the past three days, we've frequently seen speeds in the 50 Mbps range, and once saw as high as 190 Mbps. By comparison, on our 4G AT&T cellular hotspot, we get 50 Mbps if we're lucky, or more often less than 1 Mbps, when we aren't. Our 5G iPhones sometimes get as high as 120 Mbps, with average speeds more in the 2-5 Mbps range.

That's not bad, but I get better speeds on my phone. What's the benefit?

Data caps. There aren't any.

If you do *all* your online work on your phone, and your phone has unlimited data, and it's fast enough for you, you probably won't see any benefit from Starlink.

If, on the other hand, you have a cellular hotspot, or you do a lot of work on a laptop "tethered" to your phone, and those services have data caps, then Starlink is worth looking into.

Or if you have children or grandchildren that visit and whine about the crappy Internet, maybe then, too.

If I already have AT&T fiber ... ?

Stick with it. Starlink is better than a cellular hotspot, but not nearly as good as fiber.

How much does it cost? What else do I need?

\$550 up front for the hardware (a satellite dish, some cabling, and a wifi router), and then \$110/month. (This is actually the same price as Residential-tier service.) They may add more in fees and taxes, like my AT&T bill, or they may not.

The hardware is returnable for a full refund within 30 days. (They'll still probably charge you \$110 for that month, though.)

You need a clear view of a large portion of the northern sky. (Northern? Yes. Not southern? Right. At least, that's where our dish pointed itself!) Starlink offers poles and mounts to elevate the dish or attach it to your outside wall or roof. A few trees do not seem to completely break service, but certainly the fewer the better.

Upgrading to full Residential

When they do finally get around to providing full Residential-tier service in this area, Best Effort customers will be upgraded automatically, at no charge. (So says Starlink, anyway.)

What's the service like?

Surprisingly good. We've been able to use the web, upgrade our phones and laptops, stream Netflix and Youtube, and do Facetime video calls.

There are drawbacks, which we're still exploring. The Starlink satellites change second-to-second, which can affect service. Weather changes more slowly, but that can also affect service. Yesterday and today, in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian, were pretty cloudy, but Starlink has been pretty good. In concrete terms, that means we have brief service outages that can last anywhere from fractions of a second to many seconds. According to the Starlink app on my phone, in the past 8 hours we've had 43 minutes of interruptions, with the longest being 58 seconds.

One thing we haven't tried yet is a Zoom or Slack video conference. Given the outages discussed above, Starlink might be terrible for that. (As I said, though, a brief Facetime call worked okay, so it depends.)

Geeky details

ssh works surprisingly well, for "satellite Internet". A brief trial Friday 9/30 seemed pretty similar to my phone's tethered Internet.

I pinged [google.com](https://www.google.com) for 45m between 1-2pm Friday 9/30 and got ~8% packet loss. Ping summary: round-trip min/avg/max/stddev = 22.392/86.345/1642.829/76.581 ms.

Sunday afternoon (10/2), latency has been 20-100ms.

Learning more

Starlink.com, of course, has lots of information. I also found this article helpful and informative: <https://www.pcmag.com/news/curious-about-starlinks-best-effort-tier-early-users-give-rave-reviews>. In fact, without it, we probably wouldn't have tried Starlink at all. You can also Google "starlink best effort" and find several more articles about it.

Signing up

Here's where things get a little uncertain. Sorry about that!

You can definitely sign up for service at starlink.com, and put down a deposit (\$100). What I'm not sure about is whether they'll offer "Best Effort" service to new sign-ups. They might not! And all this will have been in vain, in which case my heartiest apologies.

Please let me know if you do try to sign up, and what you find out, either directly or on my Facebook post.
Thanks for reading and good luck!

Saddle Ridge Trash Barn Rules

Allowed

Only household trash that is bagged and tied. Please place in the back of the trash barn where the floor is painted gray.

Not Allowed in Trash

- Construction waste
- Yard waste
- Large batteries bigger than size D
- Wet paint (even if contained)
- Motor oil
- Household oil-based liquids
- Large electronics or TVs
- Medical waste
- Tires

Recycling:

GLASS IS NO LONGER ALLOWED in recycling

Please place bagged recycling in trash bins at the front of the shed. Plastics, aluminum, cardboard, paper, and tin are all accepted. Make sure all cardboard is collapsed.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE TRASH BARN IS CLOSED UNTIL 1PM ON MONDAYS FOR CLEANING

SR Facebook Group

The Saddle Ridge members [Facebook group page](#) continues to be a great source for information within our community. We regularly post messages,

alerts, concerns, and needs to this page. Living in this rural community, we don't often see each other, so the Facebook page is a way to communicate timely news such as power outages, fire alerts, wildlife sightings, events coming up, lost pets, or even suspicious traffic.

Contact Michael Gass at cmichaelgass@gmail.com, to be added to the group. Please remember, this page is strictly for people who own property in Saddle Ridge.

Contact your SRPOA Board

President: Janet Kolarik 865-805-0348

Vice President:

Treasurer: Sally Whelan 508-847-9140

Secretary: Betsy Smith 615-631-1173

Board Members:

Michael Gass 253-651-9943 Communications Committee

Joan Jackson 803-257-2649 Environmental Committee

Judy Pearson 865-982-5729 Architectural Committee

Larry Clapp 813-765-5537 Roads Committee

Beth Koella 865-705-0455 Events/Hospitality Committee

Keith Shuster 609-320-3983 Equipment Committee



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