

P RESIDENTS' UPDATE

From, Co-Presidents, James Jahoda and Eric Sauder

We wish you all a healthy and safe 2024! So far, it's been a busy year with the fiber optics installation and fires on the mountain! We have been on top of it all and we look forward to serving you this year. Do not hesitate to communicate any questions or concerns you may have.

We were sad to announce in February the passing of Board member and long-time resident of the Association, Al Herman. Both Al and his wife Irene Szopo have contributed so much to SMSA in past years, serving on boards and committees, and as original owners, they have provided a wealth of assistance and support to SMSA in many ways. Irene, who served on the Board in the 90's has graciously agreed to fill Al's board vacancy until the next board elections.

There will be several Board openings in 2025, so if you, or anyone you know, would like to serve please submit names now. We would appreciate your involvement.

Co-Presidents, Jim Jahoda and
Eric Sauder

FINANCE REPORT

The 2024 assessments form has been mailed out and is now on the website and we ask that if your annual dues payment has not been sent, please do so now.

As of this date, there is over \$7,500 in outstanding the 2024 assessments. We need members to pay promptly to enable us to maintain our roads and shared wells. Payment agreements are available upon request by calling 540-339-7510 or emailing sundancemtssouth@gmail.com.

SHENTEL FIBER OPTICS – How You May Be Affected

In February Shentel began installation of fiber optics cable on Sundance Mt. Road and progressed to Blue Smoke and Walden Lanes with additional cable on Shotgun and Berry Patch planned for the near future.

While we welcome the installation, it has had an adverse impact on the roads and shared wells of homeowners on the mountain. Shentel did not provide any previous notice for the installation or give a date for digging trenches or the laying of cable. We discovered that trenching for the cable was so close to our waterlines in places, that it resulted in broken pipes. Shentel has agreed to pay for all repairs. In addition, Shentel's heavy equipment has caused damage in several locations to our roads' gravel base, crown, ditches, run-offs, and culverts. Shentel said they are committed to making repairs and will be working with our road contractor. We will attempt to stay in touch with Shentel to address all issues and would appreciate owners' quick alerts to the hotline if anyone experiences a problem.

The Association can only address Shentel's damage to the main roads and shared wells. Damage on private property would need to be resolved between the property owner and Shentel. For anyone planning to get fiber optics when the service is ready, you should prepare in a couple of ways. 1) We recommend that you notify the Association a week before Shentel arrives to see that the main water line that leads to your property is marked. Any damage repaired on the main line during the installation could be at your expense. 2) Shentel says the cable to your house is only 12-24" deep, but you may want to mark private water lines to avoid damage. Shentel recommends blue stakes for marking them. If unmarked, once Shentel has scheduled the work, they will not be

responsible for repairing damaged pipes. As a suggestion, you may want to take "before" photos of your property so you can prove any damage done during the installation and show any water lines you have marked.

The cost of marking both private and shared water lines for the purpose of installing fiber optics to homes will be at the property owner's expense.

While the Association is now placing markers for water pipes near fiber optics cables, the markers may disappear over time. If you see blue markers throughout the association, please do not remove them. They can save owners a lot of money. Leaks can be repaired faster due to the plumbers spending less time locating the pipes. Less time means less labor hours. They may also eliminate the need to pay for the lines to be marked later.

Please be aware that work done on our main waterlines and shut-off valves that may affect multiple houses can only be carried out by the Association's contracted plumber, which must be initiated by calling the SMSA hotline on 540-339-7510.

Pipes that branch off a main line going to houses are the responsibility of the owner and owners may either use the Association's plumber or use their own. The SMSA plumber can be reached at 540-434-1565 and would be the most likely to know where the lines are, especially if a cutoff valve needs to be turned on or off. We have had non-Association plumbers cut off valves that affected the water in several houses.

To find out when the fiber optics service will be available call Shentel on 800-743-6835.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

A major fire broke out this month on both sides of Rt. 211 which eventually consumed over 1100 Shenandoah County acres. Homes had to be evacuated and photos submitted by SMSA members show the



wide range of the fire as it breached the crest and threatened to come our way. Rain on the 23rd helped slow

and even stop the fire in many locations,



but high winds are expected to dry up the ground again. The US Forest Service asks

all to stay alert and not have outdoor fires at this time.

ROADS

Road work will begin soon, starting with the yearly potholes. Members will be alerted in advance to watch for the workers. We may have to mark some pothole areas with cones to warn drivers to slow down in those places until the work is completed.

A few private driveways with poor drainage have caused damage to the main roads and those members are being asked to make timely repairs to prevent further damage that could result in repair at the owners' expense.

WELLS

Extensive work was done on Well 35's electrical box and wiring that was resulting in fluctuating current, which would have eventually caused major damage to the well pump.

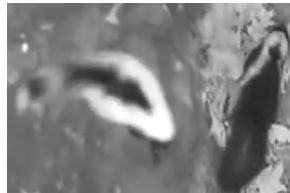
Twenty-two homes on Wells 7 and 35 were without water for several days due to Shentel accidentally cutting into the pipes. All are now back in service.

With the trenching required for fiber optics cable, we will be monitoring the KW usage closer than normal for possible leaks and we ask all members to watch for and quickly let us know if you see wet ground or suspect a damaged line.

NATURE REPORT

Rare sights! Security cams have captured two critter anomalies!

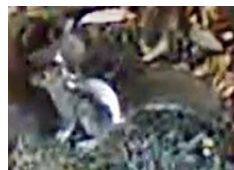
This pair of skunks were caught traveling together. One was black with two white stripes and the other white with one black stripe.



Skunks only live for about three years, mate once a year in the winter and

deliver a litter of two to 10 kits in early spring which are raised solely by the mother.

This little squirrel looks like someone swiped it with white paint!



Research has shown it is known as a "piebald squirrel", which is often mistaken for an albino squirrel.

Unlike albino squirrels that have pink eyes, piebald squirrels have dark eyes and are quite rare in the U.S. and Canada.

Welcome to Sundance Mt. South little guy!

Deer were reported munching on the azaleas at the main entry sign, but the damage was caught before they were eaten to the ground. The plants were then given a healthy dose of deer repellent. Since these azaleas are repeat bloomers, we should see color later in the year. Again this year, we thank Cathy Gregg for all her hard work on the sign area and for the spring bulbs now blooming!

SMSA BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Directors meetings are conducted via ZOOM. Members are welcome and are provided a specified amount of time on the agenda for questions and remarks.

Meeting dates and times are published on the website's EVENTS & NEWS page, so you should check that area throughout the year. Upon written request, a 14-day written notice (email or USPS) of meetings can be sent to members by emailing smsasecy@gmail.com or calling 540-339-7510.

SMSA CONTACTS

Co-Presidents:

Eric Sauder: 540-810-4840
Jim Jahoda: 631-276-5402
sundancemtsouth@gmail.com

Treasurer:

treasurersundancemtsouth@gmail.com

Secretary: smsasecy@gmail.com

SMSA Hotline: 540-339-7510

PAYMENTS:

Walk-in: (Mon-Thurs)
Valley Bookkeeping Svcs
156 N. Main Street
Timberville, VA 22853

Mail to:

SMSA
PO Box 628
Timberville, VA 22853-0628

Call-in credit card info:
540-896-3056 (Mon-Thurs)

Website dues payments:

<https://www.sundancemtsouth.org>
(Click on MEMBERS)

PRIVATE CULVERT AND DRIVEWAY WORK - We recommend our road contractor, Rick & David Moomaw at Macanie Trucking at 540-325-2616.