

The

# Mt. Lemmon Echoes

A publication of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association

mtlemmonhoa.org

## Don't Go Slip Slidin' Away This Winter



**Danger: Icicles at Water District office. (Photo by Michael Stanley; more photos, Page 2)**

*Snowmelt and Ice Require Caution on the Road, around Structures*

**By Dan Leade**

**Mt. Lemmon Fire District**

When daytime temperatures begin to melt the persisting snow, yet the evening mercury dips back below freezing, a new safety hazard emerges that deserves to be taken seriously: ice.

Ice can be dangerous for many reasons, including snowmelt refreezing.

As snow melts, the water disperses outward underneath the snow. In many places, that water seeps into the ground or into collection areas via drainages. But some water can trickle across freeze-prone areas and easily refreeze as temperatures drop. This can result in ice across walkway and roadways.

Temperatures may warm, but it is imperative to watch for ice, especially in the early mornings.

Another consideration is around roofs and overhangs. As snow melts, gravity pulls water underneath the snow that remains in its solid form. Once this refreezes, large sheets of ice, along with the snow weight atop, can release at a moment's notice. The same can be said for icicles. These missiles can detach as they continually add mass

*Continued on Page 2*

## Meet the Mountain's New District Ranger



Donato DelMastro is the newly named ranger for the Santa Catalina District of the Coronado National Forest.

Get to know all about Ranger DelMastro by reading our interview with him on Page 3.

## MLHOA Annual Dinner Scheduled for April 25

The Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association invites you and guests to its annual dinner on April 25, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Doubletree Reid Park, at 445 S. Alvernon Way in Tucson.

Find more information and your reservation coupon on Page 11.



# Brrrrr! It's a Cold, Cold World

*Photos by Michael Stanley*



**Top: snowbound on Turkey Run.**

**Middle: icy path on Upper Loma Linda.**

**Right: slippery slope on Guthrie Road, south from Turkey Run.**

## Watch for Ice

*Continued from Page 1*

and are dangerous for those below, resulting in fatalities annually.

Since we received a large amount of snow recently, and the immediate outlook for temperatures is for slightly above freezing, be aware of your surroundings as the potential for refreeze remains high.

“Look Up, Down and Around” is a unit in wildland firefighter training on situational awareness that I think applies to ice refreeze. Look up for ice sheets or icicles on overhanging roofs and do not traverse underneath them. Look down for ice. Ice not being present yesterday has no bearing on current conditions.

Look around for areas where water runs across roadways during the day such as Bear Wallow, Incinerator Ridge and between Mount Bigelow and Palisades. While slow-melting snow is great for fuel moistures, it is a double-edged sword.

Always remember to look up, down, around.



New District Ranger

# What's in Store for Santa Catalinas

**By Michael A. Chihak**

Donato DelMastro stood at the information counter on a busy February Friday at the Sabino Canyon Visitor Center, a welcoming smile on his face.

"How can I help you?" he asked, projecting a sincere and natural friendliness when a visitor approached.

Working the information counter, DelMastro said, is one aspect of his new job as ranger of the Coronado National Forest's Santa Catalina District that he undertakes pleurably.

"Here at the visitor center, I'm seeing how folks enjoy themselves," said DelMastro, who goes by Don. "Our high season is now ... with 3,000 people a day at the center."

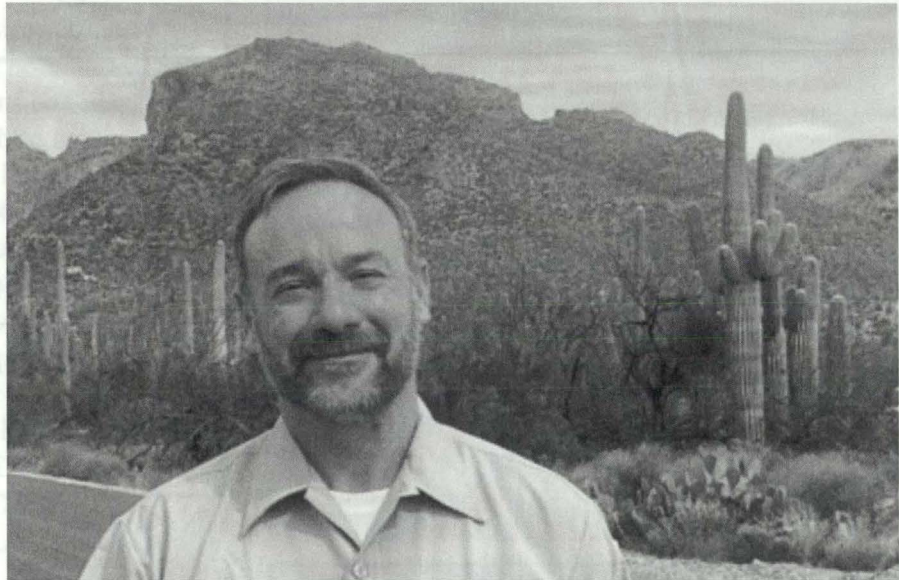
## 1.25 million annual visitors

They are among the 1.25 million annual visitors in the Santa Catalina District, which covers 200,000 acres in Sabino Canyon, the Santa Catalinas and the Rincon Mountains.

DelMastro, a native of Rhode Island, took charge of the district in December, coming from civilian work at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and before that at the Ft. Huachuca Army post.

His job as district ranger in overseeing 30 full-time employees and 800 volunteers is "to build a cohesive team and be a good leader for the Forest Service," he said.

That includes an abundance of desk work and meetings and not as much time outdoors as he would like, he said.



***District Ranger Donato DelMastro outside his office at the Sabino Canyon Visitor Center.***

"I try to get outside every day, but it's not realistic. I would say I average one day a week outdoors."

DelMastro said that includes being on Mt. Lemmon about every two weeks, including the day before this interview.

"I try to get up there every chance I get, and when I'm not working, I like to take up my daughters," he said. His daughters are ages 18, 12 and 10.

## Preparing for fire season

Top priority in the district is preparing for fire season, DelMastro said. Although there is abundant snow on the ground in the Catalinas and the Rincos, "spring comes quickly," he said.

To that end, he has begun meeting with officials of the Mt. Lemmon Fire District to work on fire prevention planning.

Other plans are to reconstruct facilities, including expanded parking and other access at Marshall Gulch, he said. Work

there should begin in the fall.

## New trail plan due in May

The Santa Catalina District also will introduce its new trail plan in May, the ranger said, with proposals to expand the trail network and to bring back into use some full trails and parts of others damaged in the Bighorn Fire of summer 2020.

In a few years, DelMastro said, he wants to see improvements at Palisades Visitor Center, including greater presence of uniformed Forest Service personnel and expanded parking to accommodate people using the convergence of trails there.

As for Mt. Lemmon residents and cabin owners, DelMastro said, he recognizes their interest in what his agency is doing.

"We want to make sure this community gets what it wants," he said. "We want to be good neighbors."

*Forest Service news and updates on Page 5.*



## March Calendar

- 1, 15, 29 - Nature hikes, Details and locations, Page 7, 9 am.
- 18 - Mountain meetings:
- ML Water District Board, Zimmerman School, 8:30 am.
  - MLHOA Board, MLCC and via Zoom, 10 am.
  - ML Woman's Club, Miller-Golf Links Library, 9640 E. Golf Links Road, 1 pm.
- 20 - ML Fire Board, Fire Station; live-streamed at [mlfdaz.org](http://mlfdaz.org), 4 pm.

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## Winter Storm Caused Big Power Outage

About 500 residential and commercial customers on Mt. Lemmon lost electrical power Feb. 22 in a wind, rain and snowstorm.

Every area of the mountain was affected except Radio Ridge and the observatory, a Trico Electric Cooperative spokesperson reported.

Wind gusts of up to 70 mph damaged numerous power poles in Summerhaven, and a possible 8 to 14 inches of snow was expected, the report said.

A Trico spokesperson said power was expected to be out at least until the next day when repair crews might find it safe enough to work. Power remained out as *The Echoes* went to press Feb. 23.

## Stay Up to Date on Mountain Information

By Matthew Grossman

Here are online resources to keep Mt. Lemmon residents informed between editions of *The Echoes*:

1. A Google Group has been set up to provide email updates. To join, send an e-mail to [mtlemmon-hoa+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:mtlemmon-hoa+subscribe@googlegroups.com).
2. The Mount Lemmon Homeowners' Association maintains a website at <https://mtlemmonhoa.org/>.
3. Go to Nextdoor.com, and sign up using your cabin street address. If you already use Nextdoor for your valley neighborhood, sign up for Mt. Lemmon under a different email address, because only one neighborhood is permitted per email address. This venue provides general information, educational benefits and timely communication, especially in critical times, such as wildfire and road closures.
4. MLFDAZ.org is the web address for our Fire Department. On the home page, under the Resources tab, is Firewise. This takes you to important information and forms, including an Action List for Property Owners, a Community Communications form, cheatgrass and bark beetle identification, and more information to help keep your cabin and community safe.

## Correction

Editing errors made the names of two people incorrect in February's *The Echoes*. The correct names are Leigh Anne Taylor and Diana Osborne.



## Forest Service Update

# Hunting for Solutions to Litter Problem

## *Ranger Seeks Suggestions; Enforcement is Problematic*

Anyone with concrete approaches to Mt. Lemmon's trash issues should contact the U.S. Forest Service, the district ranger said.

Donato DelMastro, ranger for the Santa Catalina District, said at the Feb. 18 Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association Board meeting that enforcement likely won't work to solve the problem of mostly visitors who leave tons of litter.

"We are open to suggestions about how to tackle it," DelMastro said. "We might do an adopt-a-highway plan."

Asked about citations for people who litter, DelMastro said it is difficult because "we have to catch someone littering."

The litter on the mountain in winter includes the usual discarded food and drink containers and broken sleds and plastic disks, trash-can lids and other objects used for snow sledding.

"If you have an outside-the-box solution, let us

know," DelMastro said.

At the HOA meeting, Beth Borozan of Pima County Supervisor Steve Christy's staff said Christy's office has arranged for Sheriff's Auxiliary volunteer members to distribute trash bags to motorists at the base of the mountain in hopes they will be used for trash and be brought back down by departing visitors.

Christy, in his March column for *The Echoes*, said the summer dumpster program will resume, with the MLHOA trash committee setting the location. (*Details, Page 10.*)

In other news, DelMastro said the Forest Service window for controlled burning of slash piles was about to close. After Feb. 28, the burning is banned for Mexican spotted owl breeding season. Burning could resume in fall.



**Mexican spotted owl**

### ***The Echoes Wants Your Photos of Mt. Lemmon Wildlife***

Send to [chihak.echoes@gmail.com](mailto:chihak.echoes@gmail.com) with name of species and location



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## Using Lots of Water? Your Bill May Go Up

The Mt. Lemmon Water District Board is working on a tiered rate structure that could mean households using more water will pay higher rates.

The board will hold a public meeting on the proposed new tiered rates on April 15 beginning at 2 p.m. at the Mt. Lemmon Community Center.

Water Board Chair Doug Mance said last summer in reporting a significant increase in water use that the tiered system will encourage conservation.

"If you are a conscientious water user, residential or commercial, your rates will most likely be unchanged," Mance wrote in a story for the September 2022 issue of *The Echoes*. "For others, this is not a punitive move; it is preventative, and we want to reward good water behavior."

Mance said he suspected that high water use was coming from cabin renters rather than owners, and he suggested educating them about water limits.

## ML Woman's Club update: July Parade Planning Starts

By Sandi Triplett

*Mt. Lemmon Woman's Club*

Planning for the 4th of July Parade is starting, and we need everyone's help.

The parade is sponsored by the Mt. Lemmon Woman's Club. Club members who are interested in helping should use their club rosters to contact Hazel Rugg.

\* The Woman's Club coffee in February was well attended and filled with lively conversation. It's always fun to get together and catch up on what others have been doing in winter when so many people are off the mountain.

\* The club will be well represented at the Woman's Club Southern District Spring Convention in Safford on March 11.

\* Next Woman's Club meeting will be March 18 at 1 p.m. at the Miller-Golf Links Library, 9640 E. Golf Links Road in Tucson.

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## March Hikes at Molino, Bug Spring, Chihuahua Pines



*Among wildlife species one can see on a nature hike is the greater short-horned lizard.*

Three nature hikes are planned for March, led by Sabino Canyon Volunteer naturalist Cathy Yungbluth. Please note changes in the schedule due to previous hikes being canceled for weather.

March 1's hike will start at the parking area at Molino Basin, Milepost 5.6. We will hike the unnamed trail across the road, following Molino Creek, 2 miles out and back., 100-foot elevation change. Rated easy.

March 15's hike will start at Lower Bug Spring Trailhead, Milepost 7.7. We will hike 5 miles out and back, 1,000-foot elevation change. Moderate.

March 29's hike will start at the Chihuahua Pine Picnic Area, between Mileposts 10 and 11, to an overlook near Bear Saddle. This 2-mile hike will return via the Hitchcock campground. This is a moderately difficult hike.

Hikes are canceled when Catalina Highway is closed for inclement weather or when there are vehicle restrictions. Call for road status at 520 547-7510 or email [cathy.yungbluth@gmail.com](mailto:cathy.yungbluth@gmail.com).

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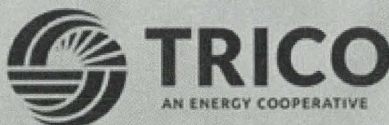
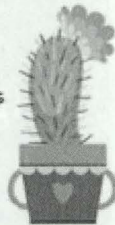
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## Tree Trimming Protects Power Lines, Community

Trico Electric Cooperative last month completed its annual tree trimming on Mt. Lemmon to protect power lines and its ability to deliver electricity to the mountain community.

In an emailed statement, Trico Supervisor of Distribution Maintenance Andy Betancourt said that Trico's contractor worked with the Forest Service and other entities to do the trimming.

"This season on Mt. Lemmon, we identified 250 hazard trees that needed to be trimmed or cut down," Betancourt's statement said. "Trico will continue to cut more in fall 2023 ... in Rose Canyon, Girl Scout camp and Bigelow areas."

Tree trimming is designed to keep power lines and poles from being damaged, which could cause outages and even fires, the statement said.

Trico said cabin owners are responsible for maintaining or removing trees on their properties in relation to power lines. The utility asks property owners to contact it at 520 744-2944 if they plan to have work done near power lines.



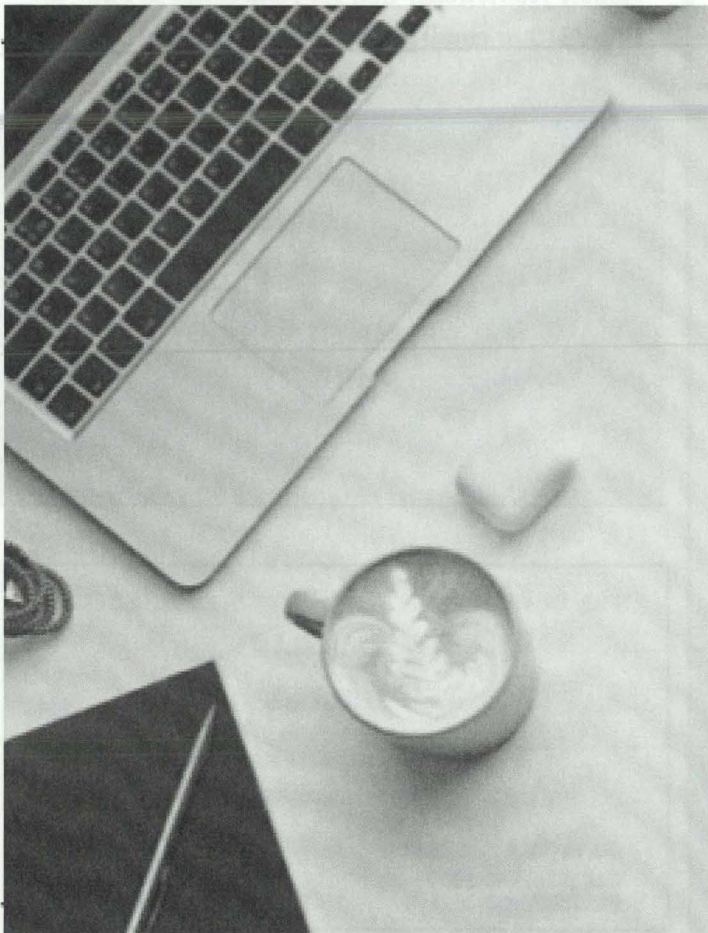
**Tree trimmer at work in February.  
(Photo courtesy of Trico Electric)**

## Trico Annual Meeting Set for April 1 in Tucson

Trico Electric Cooperative's annual meeting will be April 1, starting at 11 a.m., at Casino del Sol Resort, 5655 W. Valencia Road in Tucson.

Trico is a co-op, so its customers, or members, can attend and take part in the annual meeting.

On the agenda are the annual report on operations and election of two board members.



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## Firewise Activities Underway; Time to Make Preparations

By Sally Crum  
Firewise Chair

Your Firewise Committee has met to begin planning for the upcoming season. Dorothy Johnson and Henry Werchan have meetings scheduled so they are prepared to help you in Firewise activities this year.

We will celebrate National Wildfire Preparedness Day on May 6, with a community cheatgrass pull. Look for details in the April issue of *The Echoes* and on Nextdoor.

We will spend the time before that cleaning our lots. We are instituting a "help your neighbor" event to allow residents to assist those who might be unable to do the physical work of Firewising their properties.

May 27 will be Firewise Education Day, with a block party, vendors, Forest Service, state Department of Forestry and Fire Management and other agencies, followed by lunch.

Thanks to each of you for doing your part to reduce wildfire risk. I look forward to seeing you at upcoming events.

Make sure to provide your contact information to the Firewise team and captains, using the QR code on Page 12.

## MLHOA Membership Renewal for 2023 Is Due; Use this Form

Renew or start your membership in the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association now.

Your dues pay for a subscription to *The Echoes* and help support your association in its advocacy for the Mt. Lemmon community.

Membership gives cabin owners and leased landholders voting rights on MLHOA issues and association business.

**Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association**  
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# Taking Steps to Alleviate Trash Issues

By Steve Christy

**Pima County Supervisor**

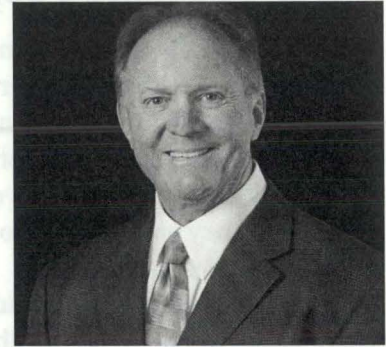
As many of you know, the Pima County Board of Supervisors' District 4 office employs a team model that is unique among the Board of Supervisors' offices. Given the size of the district, we have team members who live, work and are active in Green Valley, Vail and Corona de Tucson, the Tanque Verde Valley and on Mt. Lemmon. I am grateful that our team members, in addition to being responsive, mirror my care for our communities.

A persistent issue for mountain residents and businesses is the trash left by visitors. Traditionally, there has been a

summer dumpster program, and it will continue this year. Where to place the receptacle, generally located in Summerhaven on holiday weekends, is an issue the Mt. Lemmon HOA's trash committee is addressing.

In addition to the summer trash receptacle, my office is launching a year-round program to provide compact trash bags for mountain visitors' use. These bags will be distributed primarily by the Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers when they are deployed at Milepost 0 during seasonal travel restrictions. The bags will also be available at the USFS visitor center and the Mt. Lemmon Community Center.

Kudos to Sally Crum for



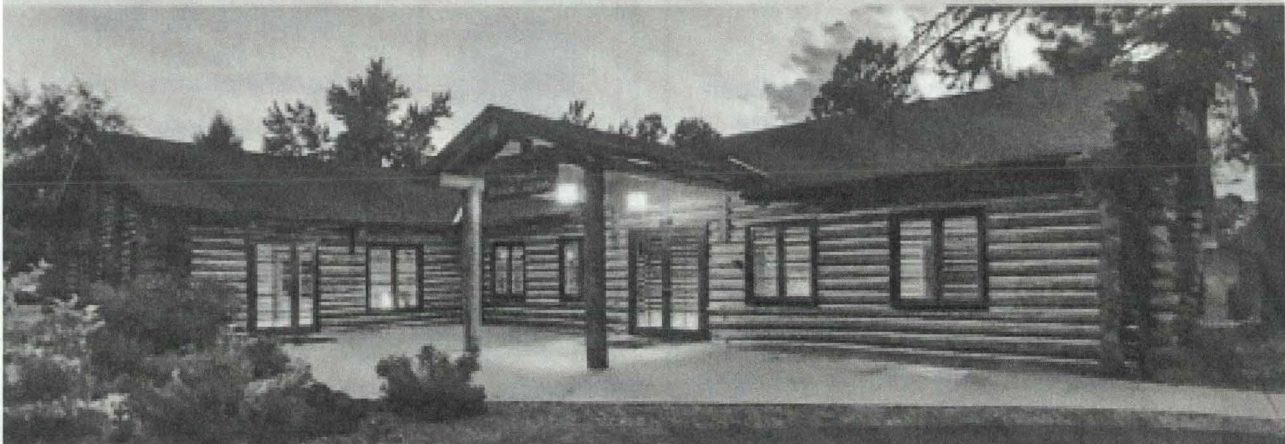
**Supervisor Christy**

reminding Beth Borozan of her idea to provide these bags, shelved for the lack of funding. Our office now has the resources to produce the trash bags ourselves, and we are happy to do so.

Contact Supervisor Steve Christy at 520 724-8418 or [district4@pima.gov](mailto:district4@pima.gov).

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# MLHOA President's February Report

**By Sally Crum**  
**MLHOA President**

Spring is around the corner, even as we continue to receive more snow.

The Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association Executive Board has begun planning events for the year.

First will be our annual MLHOA meeting and dinner on April 25. We have a wonderful new venue, the Doubletree Reid Park Hotel on South Alvernon

Way in Tucson.

While we tried to avoid it, we had to increase the price for the dinner to \$55, based on rising costs. The MLHOA is subsidizing a small portion of each meal.

Details, including the menu and the coupon to make your reservation, can be found below.

Thank you to Michael Chihak for accepting the voluntary job of editor of *The Echoes*. We

appreciate his work and for sharing his store of knowledge with everyone. I look forward to each issue.

Please take time to pay your MLHOA dues, still just \$35 for the year, using the coupon on Page 9. And make your annual meeting/dinner reservation with the coupon below

Encourage your friends and neighbors to join the association to have a voice in what happens on and to our mountain.

## The FAQ on Mt. Lemmon HOA Annual Meeting

**When is the annual meeting of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association?**

Tuesday, April 25, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Where?**

Doubletree Reid Park Hotel, 445 S. Alvernon Way, Tucson.

**Who can attend?**

All dues-paid members of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association and guests.

**What is the cost?**

\$55 per person for buffet dinner. Use the coupon below to make your reservation and payment no later than April 21. No reservations or payments will be taken at the door.

**What's on the agenda?**

5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.: Cocktail hour, with a cash bar. 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.: Dinner, speakers, door-prize drawings.

**What's on the buffet menu?**

Iceberg lettuce, cotija cheese, chopped bacon, tomato/cucumber, ranch dressing.

Pasta salad.

Chili spiced pulled pork w/ancho chili glaze, warm potato rolls.

Grilled chicken, chipotle BBQ sauce, Sonoran style ranch beans.

Fire-roasted green chili macaroni and cheese.

Yogurt jalapeno corn bread, whipped agave butter.

Fresh seasonal vegetables.

Apple pie

Choice of coffee or tea.

**Who can vote on business that arises?**

Dues-paid property owners can vote. Dues-paid renters and friends of the mountain can participate in discussions but not vote.

## Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association Annual Dinner

This form and your payment are due by April 21 -- \$55 per person

Attendees' names: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

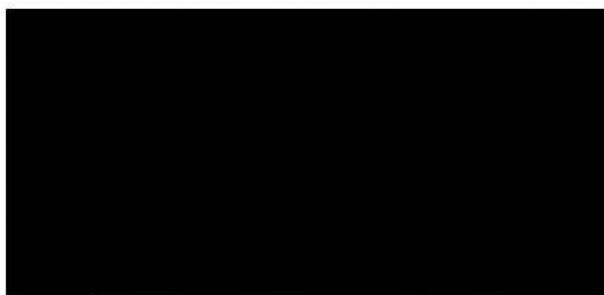
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## **Fire Prevention Is Year-Round**

The Mt. Lemmon Firewise program introduces Mt. Lemmonites Connections to keep residents and their Firewise captains in communication with one another and up to date on information to keep people, cabins and the community safe.

Scan the QR code at right with your phone to get to the Mt. Lemmonites Connections website. There, residents can get fire safety information, and they are asked to provide contact information for use by Firewise leadership and captains.

If desired, residents can request that their information be shared with the Mt. Lemmon Fire District, the Mt. Lemmon Water District, the HOA and Sky Island Kids Club.

Be Firewise: Use the QR code to scan your way to the Mt. Lemmonites Connection website, and go to [MLFDAZ.org](http://MLFDAZ.org) for the Mt. Lemmon Fire Department. There, click on the Resources tab to get complete information, including an Action



List for Property Owners, a Community Communications form, cheatgrass and bark beetle identification and more information to help keep your family, your cabin and your community safe.