

Ponderosa News

The Newsletter of the Ponderosa Hills Community Association

Fall 2015

www.ponderosahills.org



Recap of PHCA Annual Meeting

The Ponderosa Hills Community Association (PHCA) meeting was held on September 16th at the Parker Senior Center. About 30 PHCA members and other residents attended in addition to the Board members and invited guests.

Solar

Guest Speaker Mike Kopp of IREA spoke about what's new with IREA and about the new solar energy laws going into effect Jan.1, 2016. Solar energy is here to stay with the cost getting more affordable to the average homeowner. IREA has adopted new rates for its new customers or if current customers upgrade their meter, starting in January. Current customers will stay the same. They are not predicting a rate increase in 2016-17.

If you are interested in solar energy for your home, you can contact Bill Lucas at Stellar Solar: bill.lucas@energy-contractors.com (303-495-3515).

Traffic

The roundabout to connect Inspiration Drive with the new Inspiration Lane and then to Gartrell Road is nearly finished. One indirect turnout on the roundabout will lead into Ponderosa Hills on Antelope Trail. The development north of Inspiration Drive, now called "Inspiration Colorado", is busy building 2000 single family homes, including a section for the 55+ age group with attached and detached homes. This major growth, as well as new developments along Pine Lane near Lincoln Avenue, are increasing traffic volumes around the neighborhood, and drivers are finding it harder to enter and leave PH. The County's traffic engineers have told us they are updating their road volume studies in the area.

Also, residents remain deeply concerned about the ongoing speeding throughout the neighborhood, and the obvious danger this poses to everyone. Really people, is it so hard to just slow down?

Cont. on next page

You Care About Ponderosa Hills - So Why Not Join the Board!

The PHCA Board met on Oct. 21 and elected its officers for 2016. The four current Board Officers were re-elected to their current positions:

Cathy Lichty –President
Bruce Conklin –Vice President
Sandy Fish –Secretary
Janet Finer – Treasurer

The other Board members are:

Terry Jenisch
Steve O'Connor
Carmen Wilkes

Three Board positions remain open, and we need you! The PHCA Board is privileged to interact with our neighbors on a wide range of neighborhood issues. We receive a steady stream of inquiries, comments, and helpful input on items large and small. Often this input comes in the form of truly in-depth thought and analysis, and sometimes downright serious research and legwork on the part of individual PHCA members.

Why not channel your energy, brainpower, and enthusiasm for Ponderosa Hills directly into the neighborhood?! Being involved is rewarding, interesting, fun, and couldn't be easier: the PHCA Board meets once a month, typically on Wednesday evenings.

Join the Board! You know you want to!
board@ponderosahills.com



Recap of PHCA Annual Meeting (cont.)

Fire

Sooner or later, a wildfire of some size in the neighborhood is practically inevitable. The best thing everybody can do is clear brush and dead trees from around your house and property. Take part in neighborhood and local emergency preparedness exercises, and plan ahead with a “ready kit” just in case we need to evacuate. Note that there are only 4 roads exiting the neighborhood, and a major wildfire will likely block at least one. What is your plan? Einar Jensen of the South Metro Fire Rescue Authority is a wonderful resource and is available to inspect your property for fire prevention and safety. He can be reached at 720-989-2273. This awesome service is free!



Covenants

Even though we are not a Home Owners’ Association (HOA), there is a set of Covenants that are recorded and attached to every property title in Ponderosa Hills. The Covenants have remain unchanged since the neighborhood was formed in the early 1960s (100% of all property owners would need to approve any change). Board President Cathy Lichty gave a brief review of each and every one, and there was consensus that not only are the Covenants in no way onerous, they are vital to maintaining the truly special character of Ponderosa Hills.

**PHCA Treasurer’s Report
Oct. 2015**

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Checking | \$5,837 |
| <u>Savings</u> | <u>\$2,653</u> |
| TOTAL | \$8,490 |

Message from the PHCA Board

We have been fortunate in 2015 to have a goodly amount of moisture fall most of the year. We are not always so lucky.

The PHCA board has been making efforts over the past several years to increase awareness and participation in fire prevention in our area. So it is no surprise that when we see fires burning, even in metal cans that are watched and attended, we become concerned. Recently we received several reports of fires like this burning on properties in Ponderosa Hills. In calling 911, South Metro Fire dispatch was able to provide assurances that the property owners had secured the appropriate permits for burning.

However, appropriate permits are little comfort to neighbors who can see sparks flying and flames jumping above the top of the cans. Neighbors, we live in a fire vulnerable area. One errant spark could destroy hundreds of homes.

The trash providers in our area do collect leaves and branches as long as they are bagged or bundled. Please use the trash providers as your means of disposing of these items rather than burning. You will calm the fears of your neighbors and we will all sleep better.

**Any Interest in a
Neighborhood Garage Sale?**

We are gauging interest in scheduling a coordinated neighborhood-wide garage sale, with multiple residents holding sales at the same time. This has been a successful event in the past, with seemingly increased interest and activity at all the sales versus what they might experience alone.

Would you like to participate with your own sale? Email us at board@ponderosahills.com.



An Appeal for Safety and Common Sense!

The Board was recently contacted by a resident with the following account that the Board unanimously agrees is very disturbing:

Dear Ponderosa Hills Board,

I am writing to you as a concerned neighbor, an owner, and one very angry Mom.

On Saturday, late afternoon, I heard two very distinct gunshots all too clearly. The second prompted me to ask my husband to check it out. When he did not return and I heard a third shot and then a fourth, I went to check in with him. He was in our back pasture. I took note of two things, husband was staying behind the cover of our barn and there was a doe down in the yard caddy corner to me. She was alive. As I approached my husband he told me to stay behind the barn as a bullet had whizzed by him. I watched the neighbor then walk across his yard and fire a hand gun (appeared to be a .22 revolver) at the doe's head four more times and walk away. She did not die, prompting what I assume is the neighbor's wife to come out and again shoot the deer in the head with the revolver twice more and she walked away. She wasn't dead yet as when he and wife tried to grab her legs to pull her out of the pasture; she kicked out at them. He finally ended her misery slitting her throat. They then pulled the deer across their property and I realized that they had shot two deer (one was dead up by the house).

Acreage or not, this is still a residential neighborhood and I am NOT OK with anyone firing a weapon (unless protecting self or property) or hunting anywhere near my property or even within Ponderosa Hills. I have children (they had been playing in our back pasture until just 30 minutes before I heard the first shot) and I have animals. I have been hunting and know just how easy it is to "miss". I have no issue with hunting (as long as it is done legally in a place deemed safe for hunting), I have no issue with folks owning guns. I have never had an issue with the neighbors and do not know them. I am not trying to cause a problem with my neighbors and wish no ill will towards them but I am not ok with their actions on Saturday or any hunting in our neighborhood! A weapon (two in this case) was fired 10 times within a relatively short amount of time. Any one of those shots could have hit a person, the horses two houses down, a house or beloved pet, never mind that it could easily have been my husband or CHILDREN!

I bought my house 10 years ago as I felt Ponderosa Hills was a very safe neighborhood and would be ideal for my family. I liked the fact we had a (neighborhood association) that was for the owners and now I am hoping that (association) will hear me when I say there is nothing safe about hunting in most, if any, of our neighborhood.

Message from the PHCA Board

Ponderosa Hills is a beautiful area with acreage and wildlife. We may not always appreciate the abundance or variety of wildlife we have, especially when they are munching our roses. The animals however, are an important part of why our subdivision retains its country feel. Though not hunters ourselves, we can appreciate the sport of stalking and tracking an animal in the wild. We can also appreciate the need of some who may be looking to bag an animal to fill up meager stores. All that said, we don't view our residential subdivision as either an appropriate or safe hunting area. Nor is it much sport or a demonstration of skill to shoot down animals who are so tame that they will stand only a few feet from people and who follow an established circuit in their travel each day.

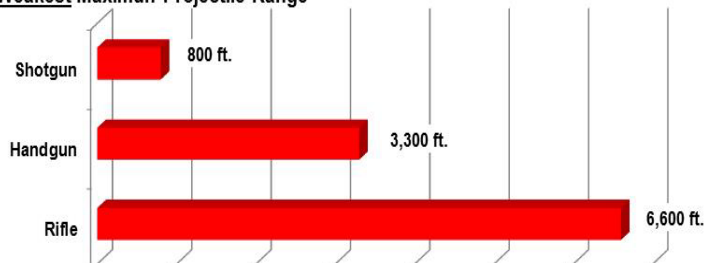
The recent incident reported to the Board involved long-time residents who shot two deer on their property. We fully acknowledge that this was not an illegal action: appropriate hunting licenses and tags were secured. However, in our opinion the residents demonstrated a very clear lack of sufficient regard for the safety of their neighbors. The neighbors were forced to take cover behind their barn as bullets whizzed by their heads.

Luckily these residents have bagged their limit this year, but they are not the only PHCA residents who have licenses and tags to hunt here this season. We plead with you hunters; unless you never miss and can bring down your prey with a single shot, please exercise your sport in an area where you can safely discharge your weapon without endangering any person. We may have 3 and 4 acre lots in our area but, as shown below, that is insufficient space to fully exhaust bullets from modern hunting guns. You might also try your hand at truly wild animals instead of the half tame ones around Ponderosa Hills. Think about the repercussions if you injure or kill a neighbor. We would not be able to think of this act as an accident.

PLEASE, PLEASE BE SAFE, AND USE YOUR COMMON SENSE!!

The 'maximum projectile range' tells you at what distances your firearm's projectile could cause injury or damage to persons, animals, or objects.

Weakest Maximum Projectile Range



SOURCE: Colorado State Hunter's Education Course

ISSUE: Group Homes

At the end of September, considerable discussion arose in the neighborhood over the issue of “group homes” as they relate to Ponderosa Hills. To be clear, there is no known proposal to establish a new group home in Ponderosa Hills. Nor is Douglas County proposing a specific change to its Estate Residential zoning classification (the zoning for our neighborhood). Rather, the County is proposing to make what it characterizes as technical modifications to its overarching zoning code definitions to bring the code in line with federal requirements. Ultimately, the County’s intent to broaden its definition of a “family” drew particular attention from several PH residents, as the new definition does not specify a limit on the number of people, related or not, who might occupy a single-family residence and call themselves a “family”.

Here is the County’s clearest, most recent explanation of its intent, as stated in an email from the Planning Department to the PHCA Board and other interested residents:

“Any time the County limits the number of residents for a non-genetic family, we face the possibility of discrimination claims if we do not place the same limits on genetic families. As a result, County staff is not proposing an absolute number limit for a family. The County’s proposed definition of family is intended to be broad enough to cover the vast array of

It’s Time for the 2015 Holiday Mailbox Decorating Contest!!

Decorate your mailbox in a winter or holiday theme!
(Decorations must not interfere with mail delivery.)

Judging will take place
December 19-20
(the weekend before Christmas).

Prizes are awarded!!



potential modern family household units. While this definition would be consistent with federal requirements for all protected classes and would therefore not unintentionally discriminate, that is not its only focus. This is a definition the County has created after considering a variety of other definitions and the approaches of numerous other jurisdictions.

The word ‘habitually’ is used to place parameters on the duration of time a person resides in a dwelling. If the make-up of a family in a neighborhood is changing constantly (e.g. daily) then it may be a situation worth further inquiry. Deleting that word would make the definition of family much broader.

The proposed amendments will not change any single family home designation to become multi-family homes. Nor will the proposed amendments change the ability for a neighborhood to have and enforce their own private covenants. Douglas County cannot advise you of what you may or may not be able to do through covenants or a lease. These are private contracts and you would need to seek legal advice from your own counsel.

All comments received will be reviewed and forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners.”

Order Seedlings for Spring!

Once again, the Douglas County Conservation District has a wide variety of seedling trees for sale to landowners, to be planted for conservation uses such as windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snow fences, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and reforestation.

Contact Pam at the Conservation District:
303-688-2042 ext. 100 or
DCCDistrict@gmail.com

Ponderosa Hills Services Directory

This directory of services is provided as a service to PHCA members and does not constitute an endorsement by the PHCA Board of Directors. Send your ad requesting or providing a service to board@ponderosahills.com. If you no longer need the service, please let us know. The editor retains the right to edit or reject any advertisement.


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