

Ponderosa Newsletter Summer2013

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Contact any of us with questions or concerns or mail all of us at board@ponderosahills.com

PHCA Civic Association Board Members

It is time to start thinking about running for the PHCA Board. We have many open positions and current members may not be running again. Don't wait for *Someone Else* to stand up and take on this responsibility. Do your part and serve. Terms are one and two year periods. We have a good environment and structure in place to make this an excellent time to do your part. Contact any current board member for information.

President's Message

I'd like to share two items of note and then a "report card" on how the board is doing on our priorities for 2013.

- Overall PHCA membership is up, but board membership now stands at 6 (of 10 seats). The annual meeting is just around the corner (September) and some board members will not be renewing. Without a few folks to step into board membership, there won't be a viable PHCA. So please consider joining the board. It will involve somewhere between 4 - 8 hours a month and you will get a lot out of it (I did). You'll make new friends, and you'll have an understanding and in many cases an ability to influence issues that affect your quality of life. Future communications will let you know how to declare your interest.
- Inspiration realignment (see sketch in this issue) is still an active PHCA concern and Jerry Banks is our representative monitoring the situation. Dealing with the Aurora government has proven difficult; communication is spotty and sometimes conflicting. So please – if you receive any information, forward it to Jerry at Jerry-Banks@aol.com

Our 2013 report card

- (1) Fire-preparedness is central to this issue of our newsletter –take the time to read over this information and take steps to improve your state of readiness.

- (2) Improved communications – we've reinstated the quarterly newsletters (special thanks to Nan Galligan for assisting the board in getting the service directory updated for this issue); and we've received a lot of positive feedback on the monthly e-blasts (if you aren't getting these, email me at greg@ponderosahills.com).
- (3) Speeding abatement – have you seen the additional police patrols in our area? Please see a related article in this issue.
- (4) Membership is now up to 156, which is at an all-time high, so thank you very much for your support.

I hope to see you at the July 27th 9-11am pancake breakfast social.

Greg Waltz

Table of Contents

President's Message.....	Page 1
Board members.....	Page 1
Annual Social.....	Page 2
Roads Update.....	Page 2
Fire Prevention.....	Page 3 & 4
Water issues.....	Page 5
Services Directory.....	Page 6

Pancakes anyone?

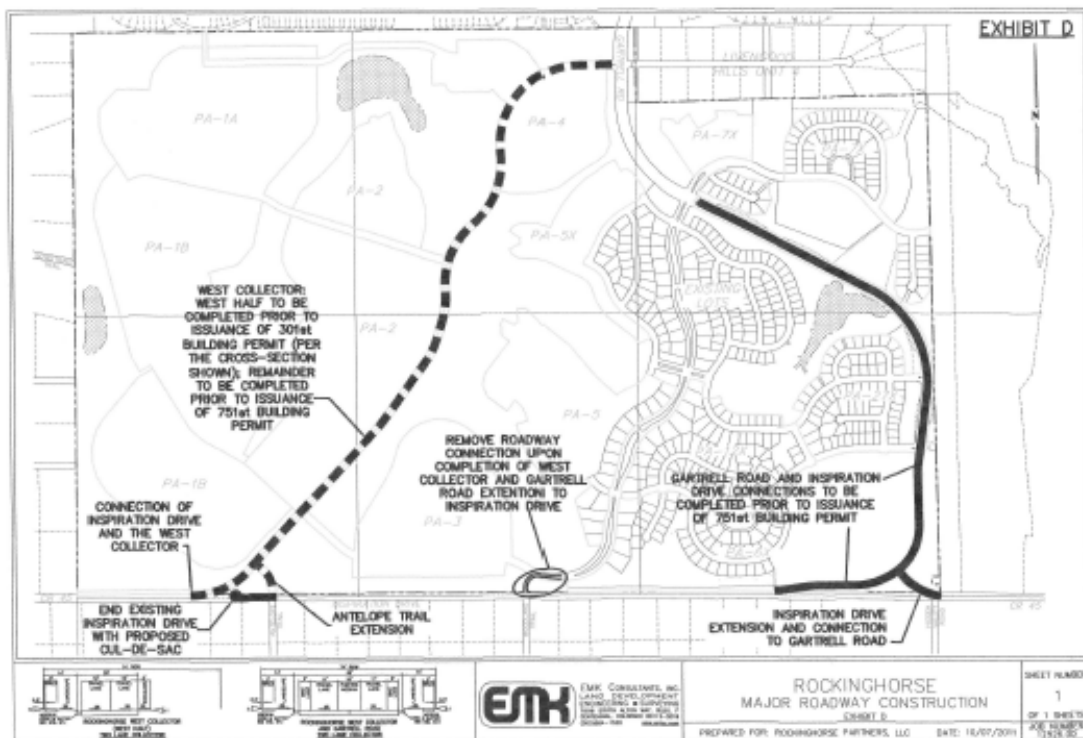
Pancake breakfast Date: July 27th, Saturday

Time: 9am to 11am

Location: Ponderosa Park, Piney Creek and Woodland Trail

Please let us know if you are bringing children or horses so we can plan for them.

PH Roadway Update



When the home sales hit 751, the connector opposite Woodlawn Trail is going away and Rocking Horse Pkwy then connects to our Western Collector Rd opposite Antelope Trail.

For questions or discussion please contact Jerry Banks, JerryBanks@aol.com

Proactive Fire Prevention

Lori Gahm & Cathy Lichty

Fire preparedness for Ponderosa Hills is one of main focus areas for the 2013 PHCA Board. Board members have been working with Einar Jensen from the South Metro Fire Rescue Authority to get fire risk information. Recently he performed a fire assessment on Cathy Lichty's property here in Ponderosa Hills. Below are notes from his walkthrough. We encourage you to contact him yourself to do an assessment on your own property.

ROOF – this is the place to start the assessment. Fiberglass Class A shingles have the highest rating for fire resistance. This is the point of highest vulnerability so you want the highest resistance you can get.

GUTTERS – clear out leaves and Pine needles at least twice a year. Foam or metal inserts can be installed to keep debris and embers out. Also check all roof protrusions (sky lights, exhaust fans, etc.) to clear out debris around them.

SIDING – wood siding is a risk but not too terribly high. Chemical treatments may be available to reduce the risk but check out how long they provide protection and don't wait until you are at risk to apply. Reducing the amount of heat impacting wood siding is a better investment.

WOOD DECK/PORCH – these do present a risk. To minimize the risk clear all decorations, flower pots, deck furniture and store inside during evacuation. Clear out all debris from under or around the deck and around/in the window wells.

LANDSCAPING – junipers are considered **green gas cans!** Junipers, Arborvitae, Cedar, Pfitzer, Purgo and Mugo Pine shrubs are all bad ideas. Instead use: Callistemon, Ceratonia siliqua, Myoporum, Teucrium chamaedrys. See the PH web site for a more complete list. Bark mulch is a fire fuse; substitute pea gravel, rock or other synthetic mulch or try ground cover or ivy.

PINE NEEDLE DUFF – the build up on the forest floor of Pine needles, dead branches, grass and leaves should be cleared at least 30 feet from the house. This stuff loves to burn. Thirty feet of trimmed grass around the house greatly improves the situation for fire fighters.

DECIDUOUS TREES – these leaf out in summer and go bare in winter. They actually carry water during the summer and help to create a water curtain around the house. The water in the leaves and trunk must burn off; evaporate, before the tree actually ignites so they help to reduce fire danger. If they grow over the roof, trim the branches to create an 8 ft gap between the roof and the branches.

CONIFEROUS TREES – Ponderosa Pines are fire resistant. Trim lower branches to create a gap between the grasses and shrubs. Ours grow very close to the house in some spots but we only need to trim them up not cut them down. One exception, trees near power lines need to be professionally removed. Austrian Pines are Not fire resistant and are not a good substitute for Ponderosa Pines. Cut any dead standing trees and clear out dead branches.

GAS LINES – know where and how to turn these off if evacuated. Let only the gas company turn them back on.

CURTAINS – any window coverings older than 5 years will likely absorb the heat and can catch fire right through a closed window. Open drapes and blinds before you evacuate.

LAWN WASTE DUMPS –if you have a dumpsite on the property for grass clipping and Pine needles, etc. keep this well away from the house. Fire fighters call this a jackpot as it erupts into a grand bonfire with just a spark.

EVACUATION PLANS – have two escape routes planned and don't delay if you are notified to evacuate. Register for the reverse 911 at DCSheriff.net. This changed recently so re-register to be safe. Have a plan in place for animals. Put identification tags on animals before you need them. Have a communication plan using someone out of the area and a call in site. This way if communications go down in the area there is one contact point that all who need to know information can reach.

HELP FOR THE FIRE FIGHTERS – the ladder trucks need 15ft of clearance height to get close to your house. Trim or remove obstacles if you need to in order to provide this clearance. If you have time before you evacuate, and only if you have time, pull out your ladder, chain saw, hoses, shovels for the fire fighters to use if they need them. Leave the porch light on so even in heavy smoke they can find the front of your house. Register electric gate pass codes by calling 720-258-8911.

Address Numbers – PH Board may be starting a campaign to get PH owners to start using uniform 4in reflective metal address numbers to assist fire and emergency responders to locate addresses. Look for an example at the pancake breakfast.

Mr. Jensen is available as a resource, please use him, he is terrific. (720-989-2273 or Einar.jensen@southmetro.org). If possible Mr Jensen or someone from the South Metro Fire Rescue authority will be at the pancake breakfast to answer questions and provide information.

The PHCA Board is in the preliminary stages of planning a PH evacuation drill and also investigating working with a chipper company to assist homeowners in getting rid of tree debris.

SPEEDER ALERT



ATTENTION PONDEROSA RESIDENTS

There is not a train coming through Ponderosa Hills but instead an increased number of surveillance vehicles to monitor the 25 mile speed limit in the area. The Douglas County Sheriff's department is especially keeping an eye on Ponderosa Drive. They will be enforcing the speed limit as it is posted. Please observe the rules and avoid being ticketed. Additionally, if you observe a speeding vehicle, you can report it to the Sheriff by calling 303-660-7575.

Thank You, Norm Scheffel, PHCA Board Member.



Water Issues

Don Gray

On June 8, 2008, the Douglas County Conservation District and the Rural Water Authority of Douglas County sponsored a Rainfall Harvesting Workshop. The objective of the workshop was to get the word out about rainfall harvesting, describe how it works and demonstrate the equipment needed for a capture system at your home. The two main speakers of the workshop included Mr. Hari Krishna and Mr. Billy Kniffen both associated with The American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association and have been promoting rainfall harvesting since 1994.

Rainwater Harvesting

As drought conditions increase here in the western US, many people are turning to harvesting rainfall as a way to reduce their water bills, lessen their dependence on regulated utilities and keep a healthy landscape around their homes. Rainwater harvesting is the process of intercepting storm water runoff and putting it to beneficial use. Rainwater is collected from house, garage or shed rooftops and is typically stored in rain barrels, or above ground or below ground plastic containers. The stored water can be used for a variety of uses including, home drinking water, showers, toilets, car washing, livestock, lawns and garden watering.

Rainfall harvesting systems vary from simple to complex and costly. The simple collection systems include gutters, downspouts, and storage tanks with gravity fed drip systems. The more complex systems are set up to provide home drinking and landscape water and include water filtration, disinfection units, pressure tanks, pumps, timers, large underground storage tanks, solar powered pumps and additional roof collection areas. During the workshop, Mr. Kniffen provided pictures of his home collection system in Texas where he can provide a whole year of home and landscape water on as little as 5.5 inches of rainfall.

Colorado Rainwater Harvesting

The diversion and use of rainwater in Colorado is subject to the state Constitution, statutes and case law. Colorado water use is governed by the prior appropriation doctrine and is often referred to as the priority system or “first in time, first in right”. In 2009 the Colorado General Assembly passed Senate Bill 09-080, and allowed certain property owners limited collection and use of rainfall if they meet the following requirements:

- The property where rainfall collection takes place is a residential property;
- The landowner uses a well for water supply;
- The well is permitted for domestic use;
- There is no water supply available in the area from a water district;
- Rainfall is only collected from the residential house roof; and
- The water is used only for those uses allowed and identified on the well permit.

If you meet the above listed requirements and would like to install a rainfall collection system all you need to do is complete Colorado Division of Water Resources Form GWS-78 dwrpermitsonline@state.co.us. There are no fees associated with this type of application.

Capturing rainfall water is a smart and efficient use of water resources. A simple collection system can provide much needed water for landscaping needs, pets, horses, and livestock. This is a beneficial use of our water resources and will offset the effects of our drought conditions and keep our homes looking beautiful.

A list of references and web pages for additional information can be found below:

Rainwater Harvesting in Texas; B Kniffen, Water Resources Specialist, AgriLife Extension, The Texas A&M System, July 2008;
Graywater Reuse and Rainwater Harvesting; R. Waskom and J. Kallenberger, Colorado State University Extension, Natural Resources Series Water, Fact Sheet No. 6.702;

American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association www.arcsa.org
Colorado Division of Water Resources, www.water.state.co.us
Colorado State University Extension, www.ext.colostate.edu
Rainfall Harvesting Texas AgriLife Extension Service; <http://rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu>
Rainwater Handbook, Conservation Technology, www.conservationtechnology.com
Rural Water Authority of Douglas County, www.rwadc.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 editor@ponderosahills.com. If you no longer need the service, please let us know. The editor retains the right to edit or reject any ad. Special thanks to Nan Galligan for assisting the board in keeping this section of the newsletter up to date.

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