



Picacho Hills Property Owners Association
PO Box 51
Fairacres, NM 88033

NEWSLETTER

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President's message

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2015 is upon us and I hope that everyone had a joyous holiday season. We wish all of you a prosperous and happy new year! The past year was a challenging one for your Board of Directors and I want to thank all of them for the time and effort they spent making improvements to the association and to the community. Here are some of the highlights of 2014.

- Coordination of signups for our new water provider and town hall meetings with a question and answer session.
- A complete renovation of the website. Please take the time to look at the improvements and updated information.
- Reconstruction of the triangle at Picacho Hills Dr. and Barcelona Ridge Rd.
- Expansion of the Merchant Discount Program.
- Started a welcome program for new residents.
- Elimination of claims and debt. The financial posture of the association is strong again and this will enable us to make further improvements to the community.
- Beginning the establishment of a Neighborhood Watch program that will encompass all of the tracts in Picacho Hills.

I am sure that 2015 will bring its own set of new challenges and opportunities, but in the near term we have some upcoming events that are of importance. We will be welcoming new residents on February 8th when we hold the annual Newcomers Social, and the Annual Member Meeting will be held on March 11th.

Please read on and learn in more detail what is happening around you. And, if you happen to see any of the board members out and about, please give them a heartfelt thank you for the work they are doing.

Kay Trujillo

President. PHPOA

Water Projects Update– Bruce Jay

In our last newsletter we discussed briefly some of the current activities related to the acquisition of the PHUC water supply by Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (DAMDWCA). Since then there has been a lot of activity particularly related to fixing our water supply infrastructure. Prior to DAMDWCA acquiring the assets of Pichacho Hills Utility Company they were aware of a number of upgrades that were needed in the system. For several years there was little or no effort made to expand or even maintain the capabilities of the system to meet the current and future water requirements of the growing community. As result our water supply is in need of some serious repairs and replacements.

To help the community better understand these issues, on October 16 the PHPOA hosted a meeting at the clubhouse in which DAMDWCA Management and Project Leader presented to a standing room audience several major projects required to restore and expand elements of the infrastructure. At that time they discussed plans and current status of these projects. This article is an update on those projects identified at that meeting

The projects include:

- Replacement of the current water tank
- Increasing the capacity and performance of the wastewater treatment facility
- Adding a utility building near the wastewater treatment facility to house a test laboratory and equipment
- Expanding capacity through the testing and use of a third well
- Testing and servicing fire hydrants

Water tank

There are several problems with the current water tank. At 367,000 gallons capacity it is undersized for the growing number of residences. Additionally the tank has severe condition issues which limit the useable capacity and thus represent a threat to our total water supply. DAMDWCA had the tank evaluated by an engineering firm in March of 2014, and their report on the condition of the tank states that because of a crack and leak, the useable capacity is limited. Further, there is some question that the strength of the materials used was compliant with current standards. Their recommendation was to replace the tank rather than try to repair it. The complete engineering report is available on the DAMDWCA website (www.dawater.org).

As a result, two new tanks are planned which will accommodate a total of 1.7 million gallons. They will be located at a higher elevation than the current tank which will result in greater water pressure needed for emergency (fire) situations. DAMDWCA is currently waiting for funding to be completed, and it is estimated that construction of the new tanks would begin in the summer of 2015 and should be completed within six months of start-up. The estimated cost of the project will be \$2 million which includes Engineering and Construction costs.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

The capacity of the current wastewater treatment plant is inadequate for the growing population of Picacho Hills. The plan is to improve not only the volume of water that can be processed but also to improve the quality of the processed wastewater. Several improvements have already been made in the wastewater processing which have resulted in the reduction in the amount of solids in the treated wastewater. Plans to actually increase the size of the retaining area have been completed but are being held pending a decision by the Picacho Hills Country Club to build an additional pond on the course.

Storage and test building

A utility building is planned to be located next to the wastewater treatment plant. This building will house a testing laboratory as well as tools and equipment. The equipment will include a backhoe, so that in the event of a problem somewhere in Picacho hills, they will not have to wait to truck in a backhoe from another site. The building should be started in February and take a few months to complete.

Third well

While the PHUC had three wells, only two were in use. DAMDWCA has evaluated the third well (well #15), and at 1350 gallons per minute, it is the most productive of the three. Documentation is being prepared now which will be submitted to the state for approval, and once approved, this well will be put on line. This well will not only provide capacity to support increasing use, but will also provide a cushion in the case that any one of the three goes out of service.

Fire Hydrant testing

You may have noticed that a growing number of fire hydrants have been painted bright red. This is not just cosmetic. The hydrants are being painted after they have been serviced and tested. Many of these hydrants had not been turned on for many years, and thus are not reliable in case of the emergencies that they are there to support. Fire testing the hydrants requires use of a lot of water for flushing, and with our limited storage capacity, DAMDWCA is only able to do them in limited numbers. However, progress is being made as evidenced by the growing number of bright red hydrants. Crews are working every week, and DAMDWCA estimates that about one-third have been completed.

Summary

The question has to be asked "How will we prevent future erosion of the infrastructure from occurring?" First, the DAMWC is under the oversight of the New Mexico Environmental Division which, unlike previous overseers, performs an inspection of the elements of the infrastructure periodically and issues directives for fixing anything not meeting their standards. Second, the fact that DMAWC is currently investing in restoring and expanding the system is testimony to their commitment to maintain required facilities. This situation is vastly different from what has been in place previously, and provides assurance of future reliable water supply to Picacho Hills.

Neighborhood Watch– Bruce Jay

The fall newsletter included an article that discussed increasing crime rates in the area and provided advice on actions that people can take to diminish the chance of becoming a victim. Since then several PHPOA Board members met with a deputy of the Doña Ana County Sheriff's department to discuss the potential benefits of a Neighborhood Watch Program for Picacho Hills. We also discussed what the requirements would be in terms of responsibilities, available support, cost, etc. Following that meeting and subsequent discussions with many neighbors, the board made a decision to institute a neighborhood crime watch program for Picacho Hills. This is a major undertaking for us, but one that we believe will benefit the entire population of Picacho Hills.

Key to the program is the development of neighborhood cells or "blocks." At this time we have divided the region onto 30 blocks. Each block has a captain who is the link between the Neighborhood Watch Organization and the residents of the block. Block captains share information to and from the block and are key to the overall success of the program. We currently have volunteers for about 25% of the blocks. In some cases we have more than one person volunteering for the same block which is great. Block captains are essential for the success of the program

Soon you will see Neighborhood Watch signs posted around the neighborhood. The signs alone are a crime deterrent, but the benefits are limited without active participation of the blocks. If you have an interest in becoming a block captain or supporting the block captain, then please get in touch with us.



Landscape Update– Chris Leyva and Sheila Eilers

The landscape committee has been very busy these last few months with several projects that have had a very positive impact on the look of our community.

Street Signs

The iconic street signs were in desperate need of some TLC. Tiles had fallen, and some were missing. Wood was cracking and coming apart. Paint was sadly deteriorated. Signs have been repaired, reinforced, and painted to preserve them for years to come. Additionally, a custom border was constructed and installed around the tiles to aid in retaining them. Our thanks go to Bob Taylor for repairing the worst sign out there. There has been an overwhelming positive response to the paint color and repairs, not only from the homeowners where a sign was on their property but also from people out walking. "Before and after" photos are below.



"Y" Triangle Landscaping

Annually, heavy seasonal rains would damage the landscaping in the triangle. This year, weather really took its toll. Previously, the tan rock in the center of the triangle was surrounded by contrasting pea gravel, which was easily washed away. This year, in repairing the area, a larger, deep rose colored stone was used to replace the pea gravel. The color contrast enhances the triangle landscape.



Landscape Update (continued)

Teaming with Doña Ana County Road Commission

We have been in contact with the Dona Ana County Road Commission for some needed repairs.

- 1) They have been working on and continue work on a washed out area at the end of the curbing on Picacho Hills Drive.
- 2) They will be repairing a drastically buckled section of sidewalk on Via Emma.
- 3) They will repaint the curbing around the "Y" Triangle at Picacho Hills Drive.
- 4) They will be replacing some of the curve marking arrow signs on Picacho Hills Drive due to the loss of reflective quality.

Website Update - Bruce Jay

It has been almost one year since we installed the new PHPOA website. While feedback has been supportive, hits have been somewhat constant except for months in which a new newsletter is published. With so much happening in the neighborhood, the website is a great way to communicate. For example, any changes to the Merchant Discount Program are made available on the website as soon as they are known, and the current membership listing is updated on the website as soon as we are advised.

In the future, as we develop the Neighborhood Watch Program, important information for that activity will be also be published on the site.

If your club or group wants to promote events, this is a great way to do so. Just let us know the date, time, event, contacts, and any links that are appropriate, and we pleased to feature it in the "Headlines" section of home page. If you are planning a garage sale, we will post the time, location, and date for that as well. We envision the site becoming a bulletin board for the neighborhood.

We invite you to visit the site and let us know how we can be more effective in giving you what you need. You can contact us either through the website "Contact Us" page or by email to phpoanews@gmail.com. We urge everyone to visit the site and provide your comments.

Great American Clean Up

The Great American Cleanup Day (GAC) is scheduled for April 11. The McKays, who live at 1380 Via Norte, have opened their home once again for donuts and coffee at 8:30 prior to the cleanup. The city supplies trash bags and gloves, and GAC t-shirts will be distributed to each volunteer along with a designated cleanup area. A drawing will be held for volunteers, and the winner will receive a dinner for two at the Country Club. South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA) will provide complimentary dumpsters for the disposal of the accumulated trash bags. The dumpsters will be located at the entrance to Fairway Village as well as the corner of Via Norte and Vista Hermosa. They will be dropped off on Friday, April 10th and removed on Monday, April 13th. Residents may discard items that are too large to be handled by regular trash pick-up. (No food or hazardous waste). Please join your fellow neighbors in helping to maintain the beauty of our community. For any questions, please contact Rosie Jay at 649-3594.

Welcome Bags

Welcome Bags were delivered to new residents since mid September of last year. To date 18 bags have been delivered and we hope that many more will be provided this coming year with the increase of real estate activity. Please contact Rosie Jay (649-3594) if you know of a new resident in your neighborhood so that a bag may be delivered in a timely fashion.

Newsletters

A year ago we announced in the newsletter that we were considering going to paperless distribution of the newsletter. In the spring 2014 issue we stated in that issue that it would be the last to be hand delivered. This is our second newsletter that is being delivered electronically. A savings of \$342 in printing cost was achieved by electronic delivery of the fall 2014 edition since fewer hard copies were printed. Note that hard copies are available at the club in a sleeve on the wall over the drop off box for those who do not have electronic access.

We need to point out also that if anyone is unable to obtain one either off the website or unable to go to the club please contact Rosie Jay at 649-3594.

Updated Directories

This April the updated Picacho Hills directory will be available for members. Please make sure that we are made aware of any changes in phone numbers or email addresses so that the directory is accurate.

The nature of the information contained in the directory necessitates that they be delivered to the members in person. Please contact Rosie Jay 649-3594 if you are interested in helping with the distribution in your neighborhood.

Recycling – Mulching with GLASS!!!–Rosie Jay

A lot of folks are not aware of the excellent recycling center available only a few miles away from Picacho Hills at 2865 West Amador. South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA) accepts many items that are not accepted by the curbside pick up such as paint, motor oil, electronics, etc. This past year they began accepting glass at this facility. They provide bins for recycling clear, green, blue, and amber glass. They initiated a program whereby they crush the glass so that it can be used for many different purposes. An article in the Las Cruces Sun-News (Dec.16,2014) stated that approximately 20 tons of glass had been crushed as of that date. The program has been successful so the plan is to increase the operation this year. There are bins located near the entrance to the recycling center that contain the different colored crushed glass. One bin has the clear glass crushed so finely that its texture is that of sand. The glass is tumbled which eliminates sharp edges. The best part is that residents are invited to come and take the crushed glass at no cost.

The concept of using crushed glass (cullet) in landscaping has become quite popular. In addition to commercial applications, the glass can be used as mulch in different areas of your backyard or in potted plants. Some people have chosen to put it in a fire pit or to make walkways. Basically one's imagination is the limit as to what you can do with the crushed glass. If you have an interest in learning more the internet offers several sites where you can obtain more information by Googling recycled crushed glass. You may contact SCSWA at (575)528-3800 or visit www.thescrappypages.com.



NEWCOMERS Social -----February 8, 2015

This year's Newcomers Social will take place at Picacho Hills Country Club on Sunday, February 8 from 3-5 p.m. Hot hors d'oeuvres and wine or beer will be served. All new homeowners are invited.

Picacho Hills Real Estate Statistics

provided by Laurie Bougher, RE/MAX Classic Realtor & Picacho Hills Resident

Description	#	Ave. List Price	Ave. Sold Price	Ave Days on Market
Active Listings	44	\$356,118		195
Under Agreement	6	\$364,800		145
Sold	12	\$320,267	\$309,600	34

Who let the cows out?

There have been some stray cattle wandering about Picacho Hills from nearby ranchland. Property owners should be aware of this and photo document hoof prints or landscape damage on their property. The nearest ranch is from the northeast corner of Picacho Hills wrapping around to the west side. There has been evidence discovered, attributing ranch fence damage to All Terrain Vehicles, where the fence has been cut for access. The rancher performs daily maintenance of his fences due to the frequency of the damage.

After discussions with Greg Bettmann of the Bureau of Land Management, he is requesting submission of any documenting photos with addresses sent to his e-mail address, gbettman@blm.gov.

If any cows are spotted in Picacho Hills, please call Greg Bettmann direct at 575-525-4408.

Also watch your step as the cows have left evidence of their presence!!!

PHPOA Annual Meeting:***7:30 PM, Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at PHCC Clubhouse***

This annual meeting looms important because once again we will be voting on a change to the PHPOA by-laws. So it is essential that we have a quorum.

The PHPOA operates under a set of by-laws that were established back in the 1980's. There are a few that have been changed, and as time goes on, there are others that need updating. You can read the by-laws in their entirety by going to our website (picachohillspoa.com).

The change currently under consideration is the Mission Statement, which reads as follows:

"The PHPOA was chartered on June 12, 1984 for the purpose of representing owners of Picacho Hills property in matters affecting the community as a whole: Upgrading and maintaining our roads, intervening in utility rate changes, conducting beautification projects, addressing safety and security concerns, reviewing Dona Ana County ETZ, new sub-division and Master Plan proposals, changes and variances and any other subjects that may have impact upon our neighborhood environment and property values. We also publish a phone directory listing of homeowners which is distributed each year in April."

As we discussed at last year's annual meeting the legal costs alone of pursuing in utility rate intervention was proven to be monumental when compared with the PHPOA annual membership dues receipts. Also we have been advised by our legal counselor that a property owners association, not just ours, has very little say when it comes to challenging a utility company. Thus we are proposing to eliminate that item from the mission statement. We are voting on eliminating the phrase, "intervening in utility rate changes," from the Mission Statement.

Once again we express our gratitude to the Picacho Hills Country Club management for allowing us to have our annual meeting at the clubhouse.

The notice of the annual meeting mailing will go out approximately 21 days prior to the meeting date and will include a ballot. Please RSVP promptly so that we can determine if a quorum will be present.

Please note that only members with currently paid dues will be eligible to vote.

As an added attraction a drawing will be held, and the winner will receive one of the following door prizes: (1) dinner for two at the Country Club, (2) a \$50 service at Glitz Nail Technology, or (3) a wine dinner for 6 at Ump88.

PHPOA Board of Directors

Position	Name	Phone	Term	Email
President	Kay Trujillo	575-649-2280	2015	katpaints@aol.com
Vice President	Bruce Jay	575-649-3594	2015	rbjay44@gmail.com
Secretary	Hazel Coelho	575-523-0004	2016	hazelcoelho@hotmailmail.com
Treasurer	Forrest Beeson	575-642-4939	2016	fmbeeson@gmail.com
Directors	Chris Leyva	575-323-3055	2015	elnino1@comcast.net
	Rosie Jay	575-649-3594	2016	rbjay44@gmail.com
	Sheila Eilers	575-526-6858	2016	sheilaeilers191@comcast.net
	Nancy Fuller	575-647-0505	2015	the fullers2@comcast.net
Standing Committees		Committee Chair	Members	
Annual Meeting		Kay Trujillo	Hazel Coelho, Bruce Jay, Marilyn Leyva	
Community Improvements/ Landscaping		Chris Leyva	Forrest Beeson, Marilyn Leyva, Sheila Eilers	
Covenants/Safety/Security		Kay Trujillo	Bruce Jay	
Directory		Rosie Jay	Nancy Fuller, Bob Oheim	
Membership/Social Functions		Hazel Coelho	Rosie Jay, Marilyn Leyva, Kay Trujillo, Sheila Eilers	
Merchant Discount Program		Rosie Jay	Hazel Coelho, Chris Leyva, Sheila Eilers	
Neighborhood Representatives/ Distribution		Rosie Jay	Marilyn Leyva, Sue Dueland	
Newsletter		Kay Trujillo	Bruce Jay	
Nominating		Hazel Coelho	Kay Trujillo	
Website Coordination		Bruce Jay	Forrest Beeson	
Welcome Package		Rosie Jay	Kay Trujillo	

Join Us

If you are a property owner in Picacho Hills, but not yet a member of the PHPOA, we invite you to join us. A membership form can be found on our website picachohillspoa.com.

Openings exist on the PHPOA Board of Directors. If you would like to become more involved in the community, this is a great way to do it. Contact any of the current board members listed above for additional information.