



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

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 24 No. 1

APRIL, 2008

[www.pichachohills.org](http://www.pichachohills.org)

## David Zeemont

President, Picacho Hills Property Owners Association

April 18

*April, as always, is a time of transition for the PHPOA Board. As I start my second year as president, there are many things to look back on with a feeling of accomplishment. I'll get into those in a moment, but first I need to thank those board members who are leaving office.*

*Sadly, we have lost one member not by his term expiring, but by his untimely passing. Jack McIntyre was a member of our board for less than a year, but no one came to our meetings with a greater sense of dedication to "get the job done", and his dedication to the improvement of our community is legend. The relationships he forged with county officials, I hope, will continue to our benefit. Through Jack, we were able to complete one of our long standing projects of several years, that of the curb and gutter project along Picacho Hills Rd., up to Via Norte. Not only was the original project in front of Las Casitas completed this year, for which we and the Las Casitas Homeowners Association contributed funds, but Jack helped in convincing the county to do the other side of the street at their expense. John Kutney will be taking Jack's place as head of the Community Improvements committee. I'm sure that he will bring the same desire to accomplish things to the job that Jack did.*

*Nancy Fuller was our Vice-President and longest standing board member in terms of consecutive service. Quite frankly, the only reason that I was chosen President was that she didn't want the job. She was also the editor and publisher of this newsletter for that period of time, an arduous and demanding task that Bruce Coryell will now be undertaking. Knowing Nancy as I do, Bruce will have plenty of help in his editing duties.*

*Pat Anderson is our outgoing Secretary, a position that is the most difficult and thankless in any organization. Pat not only performed that job admirably for two years, but this past year was asked to serve as Fundraising Chairman, which includes running our annual Golf Outing. Those of you who participated know how well she did. Those of you who didn't, I invite you to join us next year, because Pat has consented to run the outing again. Not only that, but I'm hoping that the project for which we have been raising the money, that of the landscaping and improvement of Via Norte in front of the maintenance shed, will have been completed, and we can look to a new project for our fundraising efforts. The Club advises that the final plans and drawings have been submitted to the county; only the issuance of permits is preventing the start of construction. The county has also offered to participate in the project by building the drain from the roadway down to the culvert themselves. Our thanks go out to Don Biad and Chuck Dunn of PHCC for taking this project off the back burner and giving it high priority.*

*Kathy Rodger also served on our Board for the past year as Directory Chairman. Quite frankly, she ran for the post only because I (and her husband) asked her to. You'll see the results of her labors in this year's directory, which should be accompanying this newsletter. I'm hoping that her time off the Board will only be a sabbatical, and that she'll be rejoining us in the coming years.*

*Dave*

### Inside This Issue

NM Public Regulation Commission Hearing Update • Art in the Garden  
Spring Cleanup • Upcoming Events • County Drainage Plan  
PHPOA Web Site • Covenant Reminders • Flood Insurance 101

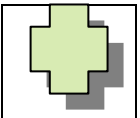


## **Annual Dinner and Meeting**

Sylvia Bizzell, Membership Director

A big THANK YOU to the 79 PHPOA members who attended our annual dinner and meeting. These members asked questions and shared their views during presentations on a variety of community activities and initiatives.

Many attendees left with big smile thanks to the generosity of door prizes donated by: Picacho Hills Country Club, Howard Dukes/Coldwell Banker, Laurie Beougher/REMAX, John and Joyce Paulin/Simply POSH, St. Clair Bistro, Desert Sage, Patrick and Jovonna Hanolin/Brigid's Pub, Bob Pofahl/Picacho Mountain, Laura Smart/Arbonne.



## **Thank You, Donors!**

Sylvia Bizzell, Membership Director

PHPOA thanks those who turned out to give blood on Sunday, April 13. We would also like to thank Mr. Chuck Dunn and Picacho Hills Country Club for hosting the United Blood Services Bloodmobile on the Club's parking lot.

We hope to be able to organize this event again in the near future. Please consider participating in this most worthy cause!

This month's donors were: Rod and Marty Blasche, Sylvia Bizzell, Joe Bullock, Steve Butler, Francine Foster, Nancy Fuller, Harvey Kapner, Ray Leuenberger, Franklin McKay, Becky McNair, Don Miller, Ray and Nicki Morton, Dave and Lynn Zeemont.

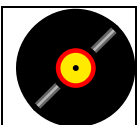


## **PHPOA Goes Live at <http://www.picachohills.org>**

Nancy Fuller, Newsletter/Website Committee

When Sylvia Bizzell began working with Enchanted Graphics, the goal was to make this newsletter available to our residents on-line. The vision grew and grew and we are now on-line with not only a Newsletter Archive, but also numerous resources such as the Annual Events calendar, pictures from recent activities, a Board directory, and an easy way to contact the PHPOA. You can even download an application to become a member.

We hope you find the web site informative and useful, and that you will contact us with comments and ideas for what you would like to see on the site.



## **For the Record**

Steve Benson recently signed up to become PHPOA's 400<sup>th</sup> member. This milestone is a measure of our success in serving the community. Thank you, Steve!

For those interested in helping the Bureau of Land Management develop walking trails around Picacho Mountain, stay tuned: the project continues to slowly move forward.



## Mark Your Calendar . . .

(for a full listing of events visit [www.picachohills.org](http://www.picachohills.org))

Keep your calendar open for our first ever **Picacho Hills Art in the Garden Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, from 11 to 4**. This event is open to all Picacho residents and their guests and is free to PHPOA members. If you are a Picacho Hills resident but not a member, we welcome you to come and find out more about PHPOA. Details are on the enclosed flyer.

Stop by the **Country Club between 10:30 and 3** to pick up maps, meet our PHPOA Board, and enjoy music and refreshments courtesy of PHCC and Citizens Bank. Mr. Sanchez of Citizens will be there to answer your questions about the new branch on Motel Blvd. and Picacho Ave.

Thanks from all of our resident artists for your support of our community: Marty Blasche (gaouche, jewelry), Gini Donnelly (photography, children's cards), Sherry Gara (fiber, pastels), Cherie Gamboa (jewelry), Jan Harrison (basketry & weavings), Peggy Hoffman (oils), Woody Hoffman (photography), Kathy Lawitz (jewelry), Sally Marsh (watercolors), Ellen Martin (pottery), Rosemary McKeowen (oils), Nancy Mimoso (watercolors), Abby Osborne (fiber), Diane Powers (oils), Roxanne Rockwell (oils, pastels), Sharon Rooney (weavings), Vi Pupp-Scroggins (watercolors, oils), Angie Sears (jewelry), Wanda Sparks (gourds), Gregg Tracy (woodworking) and Janey Walch (watercolors).

- Sylvia Bizzell and Howard Cohen, PHPOA Membership Committee (524-9273)

We need **you** to participate in the **Spring 2008 Clean-Up Day, Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup>**. (In coordination with our nation's "Keep America Beautiful" campaign). We will begin **7:30 at 1380 Via Norte**. Trash bags, gloves, grabbers, donuts, coffee and water will be provided. Please come and get acquainted with your neighbors and help make our community sparkle.

- Franklin McKay, Covenants, Safety and Security Committee (527-4750)

Please note that the **Garden Club** now meets **every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 2:30**. For more information contact Marty Blasche (524-2989), Elaine Childs (523-0245) or Sherry Gara (647-2137).

Mark your calendars for **Friday, September 19**. We are holding our **Annual PHPOA Benefit Golf Scramble**. Beginning at **noon**, you are invited to enjoy a hot buffet lunch with dessert and tea or coffee. At one o'clock there will be a shotgun start of this 18-hole scramble. For those of you with day jobs, this is a perfect excuse for a 2½ day weekend!

The cost is \$40 for members and \$60 for non-members, which includes lunch and cart rental. The proceeds from this tournament will of course be recycled back into our community. For example: beautification projects along Via Norte and wining our case in front of the Public Regulation Commission. We thank our hole sponsors for helping our community improve.

- Pat Anderson, Chairperson (541-4570)

Upcoming **Board Game Days** at the Picacho Hills Country Club are **May 9<sup>th</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>, July 4<sup>th</sup>, August 8<sup>th</sup>, September 5<sup>th</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>**. Please note that PHCC General Manager Chuck Dunn has asked us to be more rigorous in complying with the Club's policy for attendance: participants need to be club members or a guest accompanying a member in order to attend. If you have questions about this please contact Grace Quiros, PHCC Membership Director, at 523-8641.

- Sylvia Bizzell, Membership Director (524-9273)



## **Concerning the Covenants . . .**

Franklin McKay, Director, Covenants, Safety and Security

Your covenants are an important, legally binding document related to home ownership in Picacho Hills. They protect your property from the infringement of others, and others from your violations. By reading your covenants, you will understand what is expected and enforceable for you and your neighbors and prevent misunderstandings. I'm sure that we all want to protect our property values and be good neighbors.

I need to again remind dog owners that we are receiving a lot of complaints about owners not picking up after their dogs, and not keeping them leashed. The Country Club is having the same problems. There are only a few violators, but it looks bad for all dog owners. If you see a dog owner not picking up after their dog or using a leash, please report it to Las Cruces Animal Control (528-4100).

Your board is working on safety and security issues in Picacho Hills, including walking and driving on our roads. Please face oncoming traffic when walking so that you can take evasive action if necessary. These days, with so many DWD (Driving While Distracted) drivers, you as a walker need to be aware and be careful.

The security of your home is as important as ever, especially in light of the recent story in the Las Cruces Sun News about a rash of burglaries on the east side during daylight hours. I urge you to get to know your neighbors and to watch each others' homes for suspicious activity

If you have any concerns or suggestions that would increase safety in our community, please call me at 527-4750 or e-mail me at [memckay@zianet.com](mailto:memckay@zianet.com).



## **Bidders Sought for a Master Drainage Plan**

Dave Zeemont, President

This past February Doña Ana County issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to engineering firms for bids on its Master Drainage Plan. The scope of the project is:

Part 1: Picacho Hills Storm Drain Master Plan, Storm Runoff Model, and System Analysis

Part 2: Recommendations for resolving deficiencies over a 15-year period beginning in 2009

The RFP calls for three public meetings to exchange information with residents. The RFP also states that all portions of the work are to be completed within three months of the notice to proceed.

The project includes not only what we commonly think of as the community of Picacho Hills, but also Linda Vista Estates, the Nafzinger Arroyo watershed south of Picacho Hills, the village of Old Picacho and the arroyo along the base of Picacho Peak.

We residents of Picacho Hills will have to lobby our state representatives to provide funding for the recommended projects. However, this study should provide guidelines for future allocations and make it harder for the powers that be to ignore this important issue.



## **PHUC Rate Case Update**

Dave Zeemont, President

On April 11th, 2008, testimony from our witnesses, Paul Gradwohl and Monte Shriver, was filed with the NMPRC. At the same time, three members of the PRC Staff submitted their own testimony to the Hearing Examiner. On April 14, Paul Gradwohl gave deposition here in Las Cruces. Counsel for the Utility Company spent the entire day going through his bag of tricks trying to impugn Paul's background, his knowledge of commission regulations, and attempting to impeach his testimony. He was not successful.

Paul's knowledge of the issues, the background of our struggle with PHUC, and his grasp of commission proceedings far exceeds that of anyone else in this case (with the possible exception of our own attorney). After reading the testimony of Staff, I'm including them in this statement. The hardest thing for me at the deposition was to sit there all day and keep my mouth shut. Fortunately, Paul did not need my assistance, only my encouragement.

Both sides are still engaged in the Discovery and Interrogatory phase of the proceeding, with lawyers exchanging correspondence with each other and Staff on an almost daily basis. Next comes rebuttal testimony, which should occur sometime in May. As a result of all this wrangling, fighting this case is turning out to be a more expensive proposition than was planned for. (I'm sure this surprises nobody.) In fact, we may well use up our budget by the end of April or May, well in advance of the actual hearing. I am convinced, however, that had we not intervened, the commission would have allowed the rate increase to go through as filed, which would have meant that everyone's combined water and sewer bills would have doubled.

The Board has not quite figured out how to raise the additional funds, but somehow the residents of Picacho Hills are going to be asked to reach further into their pockets. Compared to the potential increase, this will be a price well worth paying. I thank the membership for their support in this matter, and especially those who have already made donations to our "defense fund" over their annual dues payments.



## **Neighbors Helping Neighbors: The Adopt a Road Gang**

Becky McNair, Director, Hospitality

Please take time to thank those who have volunteered to pick up litter along a road in your community: Picacho Hills Drive: The McNairs & The McIntyres & Elaine Childs & Ken Eastlak, Fairway Village: The Izens & The Buchs, Castile Ct./Puerta de Picacho: The Fullers, San Savino Ct: Diana Pohl, Contana Ct: The Millers, Barcelona Ridge: The Oheims & The Kapners, & The Stepros, Camino Blanco: The Halls & The Newmans & The Woods, Camino Nueveo Mejico: The Bixbys, Alhambra Ct: Ruth Olmick, Catalonia Ct: The Bizzells, Saragossa Ct: The Boulwares, Tuscany Dr: The Kapners & The Bigards, Via Norte: The McKays, Via Campestre: The Glaziers, Via Emma: The Carrs, Vista Del Cerro: The Shultzs & The Rasmuussens, Desert Blossom: The Coryells, Bright View: The Cotters, Vista Hermosa: The Whites.

## YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008/2009

As a result of the elections at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual PHPOA membership meeting on March 11, 2008, the Board is as follows:

			Term Expires			Term Expires
President	<b>Dave Zeemont</b>	523-0913	2010	Directors	<b>Bruce Coryell</b>	541-0876 2009
Vice President	<b>Sylvia Bizzell</b>	524-9273	2009		<b>John Kutney</b>	525-8470 2010
Secretary	<b>Anna Leuenberger</b>	525-1052	2010		<b>Franklin McKay</b>	527-4750 2010
Treasurer	<b>Larry Goforth</b>	527-1707	2009		<b>Becky McNair</b>	526-9369 2009
					<b>Vacant</b>	2009

<u>Standing Committees</u>	<u>Committee Chair</u>	<u>Members</u>
Budgets/Planning	Larry Goforth	Dave Zeemont
Community Improvement/Roads/ETZ	John Kutney	Franklin McKay
Covenants/Safety/Security	Franklin McKay	Nancy Fuller
Directory	Bruce Coryell	Bob Oheim
Fund Raising	Open	Pat Anderson
Hospitality	Becky McNair	Hospitality Representatives
Membership	Sylvia Bizzell	Howard Cohen, Board members, Hospitality Committee
Newsletter	Bruce Coryell	David Rodger, Nancy Fuller, All Board members
Nominating	Open	
Utilities	Dave Zeemont	Paul Gradwohl, Franklin McKay

## HOSPITALITY REPRESENTATIVES

<u>Street or Area</u>	<u>Representative(s)</u>	<u>Street or Area</u>	<u>Representative(s)</u>
Alhambra Court	Ellen Martin	Pueblo Gardens	Polly Dias
Barcelona Ridge Area	Sharron Stepro, Sylvia Bizzell	Pueblo Vista	Marlys Kleppe
Bright View Road	Cindy Oheim, Eva Jane Cheyre	Ranchos de Picacho	Nancy Fuller
Butterfield Ridge	Sherrie Dobson	Spanish Ridge	Terry Bates
Calle Vista Bella & Barcelona Ridge Rd.	Elaine Childs	Tuscany	Clare Kapner, Mydra Miller, Sandy Weber
Camino Blanco 6704 - 6756	Jan Hall	Via Campestre	Becky McNair Joan Sheehan
6760 - 6848	Doris Walker, Donna Wood	Via Emma	Mary Mulvihill
6894 - 7146	Diane Nelson	Via Norte 1130 - 1413	Mary Ellen McKay
Camino Nuevo Mejico	Renee Smith	1415 - 1600	Jean Windels
Cordova Circle.	Pat Anderson	1601 - end	Marilyn Hansen
Coronado Ridge	Jan Severson, Kathy Mayer, Carrie Gaddy, Hilde Lee, Judy Miller, Joyce Gautheraut, Patricia Felhauer, Ronnie Wright, Laura Smart	Via Rubi, Via Turquesa & Via Diamante	Phyllis Taylor
Desert Blossom & Deer Ridge Court	Carole Coryell	Villa Chiquita	Barbara Moon
Fairway 18	Pat Bigard	Vista del Reino	Marilyn Hansen
Fairway Village 1300 - 1399	Pat Retig	Vista de Oro	Becky Fuller Anne Fanelli
1400 - 1499	Janet McIntyre	Vista del Cerro 1305 - 1412	Marion Mills
1500 - end	Robin Cohen	1432 - 1590	Janie Elliott
Las Casitas	Rosemary Chaffee, Sandy Miles	1595 - 1676	Mary Ann Waddell
Murano Estates	Lu Bucci	Vista del Monte	Frances Stevens
		Vista del Valle	Sue Brown
		Vista Hermosa	L. & C. Wright



## A Primer on Flood Insurance

Dave Zeemont, President

With the monsoon season coming up, the decision as to whether or not to buy flood insurance should be on every resident's mind. For those of you who have purchased it, the decision, in most cases, is still yours to renew or not. For those who live in the flood zone (and some of us do), the decision has already been made. One of the first things to learn about this program is that all federally-regulated mortgages require the homeowner to purchase flood insurance if their home is within a designated Flood Hazard Zone. In Picacho Hills, approximately 95% of homes are located in Zone X, which is considered outside the Flood Hazard Area, and therefore flood insurance is not mandatory. Those of you who live in Pueblo Gardens and parts of Linda Vista Estates, which fall in Zone AO, are within the Flood Hazard Zone. The commercial buildings at Picacho Plaza are also in Zone AO. At the annual meeting I incorrectly stated that some portions of Fairway Village and Via Norte were in the flood zone, based on my own initial reading of the flood maps at the county office. Fortunately, Mr. Paul Dugie, the County Flood Control officer, set me straight.

Another thing to consider is coverage. Do not assume that part of any potential flood loss will be covered by your homeowners policy, because it isn't. Most, if not all, homeowners policies specifically exclude losses due to flood and earth movement, even those that may say that they cover "all risks of physical loss" elsewhere in the policy. It is a common practice in insurance policy verbiage to give with the one hand, and take away with the other. Don't be fooled by the newer "simplified" policy forms, because although the words may be simpler, the concepts they apply to are not. A homeowners policy may refer to "water damage" but this does not apply to damage caused by a flood.

The best way to secure insurance coverage against flood damage is through a separate policy issued by or on behalf of the National Flood Insurance Program. Since this program was created by an Act of Congress, it is truly national, meaning there is only one set of rates. (Not one premium, but one rate sheet). Most insurance experts urge you to shop around, for if you get two different premium quotes for the same coverage for flood insurance, one of them is wrong! So if you have two different quotes, get a third, and chances are those in the majority will be correct. Like your homeowners policy, you can purchase separate limits for Building and Contents, but flood policies do not cover for consequential losses, such as Loss of Use or Additional Living Expense.

So why do we have to think about this now? Monsoon season is still several months away, but flood policies cannot be bound or coverage be put into effect for thirty days after the application is signed and the full premium is received. This thirty day waiting period applies to substantial increases in coverage or new coverages added on to existing policies as well. And if you remember, we had a very heavy thunderstorm last year in May. While there was no actual damage to any homes, there was substantial earth movement, most notably in the Alto Estates III and Butterfield Ridge area. This year we may not be so lucky, for while the county, your homeowners associations and developers are trying to identify those areas where water and dirt caused the most damage, new construction may create some very wet and muddy surprises.

### Calling All Wordsmiths: Let's Give This Rag a Name!

Thanks to Nancy Fuller's fine stewardship, the PHOPA Newsletter has outgrown the generic name **Newsletter**. My wife nixed my suggestions like **The Bulletin** ("booring!") and **The Tattler** ("Oh Please!"). So I am appealing the matter to you, dear reader. Send your suggestions to [brucory@aim.com](mailto:brucory@aim.com), but first run them by your spouse! Thank You, Bruce Coryell

